

Kay Maly

EDUCATION FOR SOCIALISTS

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Towards a History of the Fourth International, Part 4

Struggle in the Fourth International

INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT DOCUMENTS 1951-1954

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INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT DOCUMENTS,
1951-1954

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Volume II

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Volume III

Section VI: Deepening Differences Over Stalinism

Section VII: Deepening Commitment to "Entryism
of a Special Type"

In 1953, sharp differences over Stalinism and organizational matters divided the Fourth International into two public factions, the International Committee of the Fourth International and the International Secretariat of the Fourth International. This division lasted until the Re-unification Congress of the Fourth International held in 1963.

The articles, documents, correspondence, and circulars published in these *Education for Socialists* bulletins are presented as an aid in tracing the evolution of this dispute. The material is divided into two parts. The first (Part Three of *Towards a History of the Fourth International*) is composed of four bulletins and contains materials from the International Committee. The second (Part Four of *Towards a History of the Fourth International*) consists of four bulletins containing material from the International Secretariat faction.

Both sets of bulletins begin with the discussion prior to the Third World Congress of the Fourth International held in 1951. They are divided into sections dealing with key stages in the development of the dispute. Each section opens with a brief introductory note. To the extent that these notes include historical interpretations or conclusions, the views expressed are my own.

The documents, correspondence, articles, and circulars have been subjected to minimal editing. In general the style, grammar, etc., have been retained as in the originals. Additions to the text for explanatory purposes appear in brackets.

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.

The faction struggle in the world Trotskyist movement

occurred when the McCarthyite witch-hunt was at its height in the United States. Similar manifestations of political repression appeared in other capitalist countries, as the ruling class sought to whip up anticommunist hysteria. In view of these sharp attacks on democratic rights, many radicals found it necessary to use pseudonyms or pen-names in carrying out their political activity. This was true of the Trotskyist movement as well. In line with a policy of printing this material as it originally appeared, these have generally not been changed. Instead, a glossary of these pen-names is included in each volume. Note that some individuals used more than one pen-name on occasion.

The 1953-54 dispute was worldwide in its scope and repercussions. Many parts of the Trotskyist movement that participated in the struggle are not represented in this collection. An instance of this is the lack of documentation from Latin America. Material from the dispute in the Latin American Trotskyist organizations is now being translated and will appear in a future volume.

This selection is based on the documents and correspondence presently available to the National Education Department of the Socialist Workers Party. Because of the speed with which the dispute developed, once the differences had become apparent to both sides, many aspects of the struggle are not fully dealt with in official documents. Therefore, it was necessary to include a considerable amount of correspondence to allow maximum clarity for the reader.

Hopefully, the publication of these bulletins will inspire others who were involved in the dispute to make available the relevant materials in their possession. Special thanks are owed to James P. Cannon, National Chairman Emeritus of the Socialist Workers Party, and Tom Kerry and Karolyn Kerry for making their personal archives available for this project.

Fred Feldman
February 1974

Glossary of Pseudonyms and Pen Names Used by Key Figures

The individuals' names appear on the left, with the pseudonyms following in italics.

Harry Braverman: *Harry Frankel*
James P. Cannon: *Walter, Martin*
George Clarke: *Campbell, Livingstone, Livingston*
Colvin R. DaSilva: *Roy*
Farrell Dobbs: *Smith, Barr*
Ross Dowson: *Kane*
Leslie Goonewardene: *Tilak*

Sam Gordon: *Tom, Harry, Burton, Joe*
Joseph Hansen: *Herrick*
Gerry Healy: *Burns, Mason, Jerry*
John Lawrence: *Collins*
Ernest Mandel: *Ernest Germain, Albert, Jeb*
Sherry Mangan: *Patrice, Terrence Phelan, Patrick O'Daniel*
George Novack: *Manuel, William F. Warde*
Michel Raptis: *Michel Pablo, Gabe*
David Weiss: *Stevens*
Milton Zaslow: *Mike Bartell*

SECTION VIII: HEADING FOR A SHOWDOWN

[As soon as it became clear that Gerry Healy, the leader of the British Trotskyists, was planning to support the SWP majority against Pablo's political line, a pro-Pablo faction surfaced in the British section. Organizational threats were made against Sam Gordon who was charged with "factional activity against the International" for participating in the preparation of an anti-Pablo tendency.

[On September 23, the Bureau of the International Secretariat wrote to Healy, ordering him to support the documents proposed by the International Secretariat or to keep silent in the internal discussion in the British section. Pablo's supporters in England were instructed in this letter that they could ignore the discipline of the section with impunity. This letter convinced Healy and the SWP that Pablo was determined to split the Fourth International rather than risk losing the vote at a democratically prepared world congress.

[Towards the SWP leaders, Pablo adopted a more conciliatory tone. But, nonetheless, his October 3 letter made

it clear that Pablo regarded the emergence of a tendency or faction opposed to his line as equivalent to "a break with the rest of the movement."

[The behavior of Pablo's American supporters gave further evidence of the estimate that Pablo had a split perspective. They boycotted party activities and refused to support the party financially. Finally, they organized a public boycott of the Twenty-fifth anniversary celebration of *The Militant*. In doing so, they make it unmistakably clear that their quarrel was not merely with the party leadership, but with the party as a whole.

[At the November 7-8 1953 Plenum of the SWP National Committee, it was proposed to suspend the leaders of the Cochran-Clarke-Bartell faction and to expel those supporters of the faction who did not repudiate the boycott. At the same plenum, the decision was made to issue an open letter to Trotskyists throughout the world and to give fraternal political support to the launching of a public faction in the world Trotskyist movement.]

1. Letter from the International Secretariat to Sam Gordon

To Comrade Tom
Comrade,

The IS, as you should know, is informed in detail on your factional activity against the International. It profoundly regrets this irresponsible attitude on the part of a leading comrade, who has at other times participated in the international leadership, and to whom it had in full confidence even recently confided important tasks. We insistently request that you cease such activity which places you in flagrant opposition with the statutes and the

rules of functioning of the International. Temporarily residing in England, we ask you to integrate yourself in our national section as a member as is stipulated in the statutes of the International and to submit to its discipline. We call upon you also to utilize, for the expression of your differences with the International, as we have recommended to you on several occasions, the normal discussion channels through written documents which we will submit to the entire International.

The IS
3 Sept. 1953

2. Letter from the Bureau of the International Secretariat to Gerry Healy

September 23, 1953

Rough Translation

Dear Comrade Burns,

We are aware in detail of what has just taken place at the meeting of your NC and of your attitude in particular.

Before the struggle is opened in your section and before the IS and the IEC take a position on it, as they have the duty to do, very firmly to preserve the political and organizational discipline of the International, more particularly in what concerns you as a member above all of the IEC and of the IS, and before this struggle demoralizes, as it will probably be in danger of doing, a series

of elements of your organization which is so restrained in spite of everything, we advise you very strongly:

a. To circumscribe strictly the struggle on the political plane of ideas, conducting yourself as a member above all of the IEC and of the IS who defends until the 4th Wd. C. the majority line and the discipline of the International.

b. To cease to act as a member of the majority American faction and to await from it the political line to defend, and to cease to have circulated its documents in your faction in England, before you make known to the IS and to the IEC your eventual political divergences.

c. To abstain from any organizational measure in opposition to the comrades in your section who defend, as they ought, as you ought to do yourself first of all, the

line and the discipline of the International.

d. To reach thereon an agreement with the comrades on the normal functioning of the organization, as a section of the International and not as an independent national unit.

The IS and, we are certain, the IEC will never accept the organizational measures which you have proposed against the defenders of the line and the discipline of the International. They will judge with an extreme severity your attitude if you persist. We shall never in any case leave without defence the comrades who are devoted to the line and the discipline of the International. We shall invite them as we have the duty, to remain extremely firm on their bases and to accept no other discipline above that of the International. We shall address ourselves directly to the section.

You have reached a decisive crossroad in your political life in the International. Do not let yourself be carried away by your impulsive and authoritarian temperament. Pay attention, Comrade B, you are an element which the International wishes to keep in its bosom. No one prevents you from having finally reached political opinions which diverge from ours and the internal regime of the Inter-

national gives you all guarantees to express them and make them known throughout the International. But in the framework of a sound democratic centralism which preserves the essence of our movement as a world party and not a mechanical assembly of national groups. We do not wish to return to what has been the prehistory of our movement. Do not deceive yourself on this.

Think again and again, without considerations of false prestige, pride, etc., but as a Bolshevik, Trotskyist leader. The fate of a part at least of your section and of yourself is at stake. The International will appreciate enormously if you recover possession of yourself again, even at this moment. It is our sense of responsibility which urges us to write to you thus, in spite of your extraordinary attitude all this recent time and at the time of your recent NC. Do not think that we are intimidated or machiavelian. We are in reality more convinced than ever of the support of the overwhelming majority of the International, including in the end your own section.

With our internationalist communist salutations,
The Bureau of the IS

3. Letter from Michel Pablo to George Novack

September 24, 1953

Dear Comrade,

Still no reply from you to our letters of August 10, 1953, of September 3, 1953, together with that informing you of the convening of the plenum at the end of November. I have before me a document by Morris: "Remarks on the Rise and Fall of Stalinism," which explains the delay. You are discussing amongst yourselves beforehand to arrive at a line which will be opposed to the IS document opening the discussion for the Fourth Congress. That is naturally your right. However, I can only regret the way in which this preparation of a faction (moreover not simply American but International) is being done against the line that you declared only yesterday was common to us.

I can only regret the combination of a simultaneous organizational and political attack you are preparing against "Paris," and which will cause immense harm to our international movement. What reasons can explain this unbelievable about-face? This furious assault upon a common organizational and political achievement? Already Jerry, criminally encouraged by you, has sowed a terrible crisis in his section which will end who knows where, which will demoralize his weakest elements in every way, and which will now halt for a long period the extremely encouraging progress of recent times. The International as a whole has taken a constructive road since the Third World Congress everywhere realizing more or less important progress, full of confidence and optimism. Its leadership appeared more homogeneous and united than ever. You know all that very well, for you followed this evolution very closely, and witnessed it on many occasions in your own section. What has happened meantime?

The factional struggle amongst yourself which, far from being fomented by Paris, or more particularly by me, has deep roots in the American situation, the evolution

and situation of your own organization in particular. You wanted the IS and myself personally to pledge ourselves basically to support you against the minority. When you saw that that was not possible, for no one here was ready to pronounce themselves on the political essence of this matter, since the political differences over the American situation in particular did not really appear clearly, you concluded that it was above all necessary to center the struggle against "Paris," before returning again against your own minority and definitively settling accounts with it. What baffling logic!

But don't you understand that apart, I repeat, from the immense harm you will thus cause the international movement, cancelling all your positive work done up to now in this field, you will demoralize your own organization. For who will swallow so easily what you have already said and what you will be forced by the logic of your new road to say still further on the International, its leadership, its past and present line, its perspectives? For naturally, you will be led to revise all up and down the line "through and through," to fundamentally oppose yourself against the Third World Congress, to take the opposite of everything you have said, written and done in these recent years.

It is essentially Bleibtreu and Tom who will appear to be right and it is upon them and their extreme positions that you will align yourself. Morris has already launched himself on that road. Hesitating at nothing, he wants to "re-Trotskyize Trotskyism," and sets himself lightly to the task. Can you really read what he writes without becoming indignant at the manner in which he presents our thought, without deploring the lamentable confusion, without recalling the confusionist, sectarian and profoundly pessimistic writings of Bleibtreu, without even recalling the struggle with the right-wing in France, and even with Morrow. Here

is a serious, responsible man, whom we had always respected who, without faltering, is now to write that we "are revising and liquidating" Trotskyism as no one else has ever done. Here are his "arguments":

We are revising the Trotskyist appraisal of the objective situation. We are revising the Trotskyist appraisal of the role of the party. We are exaggerating the objective revolutionary period which has issued from the Second World War, we profess an infantile and romantic optimism in that respect. We minimize the role of the revolutionary party and the Fourth International, and we are quite simply liquidating it in reality!

All this in reference to the document "Rise and Decline," which is not principally occupied either with the objective situation, the role of the party and the F.I., but with a more precise subject: the past, present and future of Stalinism. Along with the "Rise and Decline" we have presented another document bearing the title: "To Construct Genuine Marxist-Revolutionary Parties, To thus assure the victory of the world socialist revolution."

A lengthy final section of this document which is moreover entirely occupied with these ideas is devoted to the more special role of the Fourth International (how to understand its functioning, its perspectives, etc.). However, Comrade Morris knows nothing about all that. Like so many others in the past, he wants to see repeated in each document, and on each page of each document, generalities and axioms which "guarantee" the continuity of the tradition. Otherwise our severe censor is ready to cry scandal.

As for the so-called "revision" of the objective character of the period we are living in which "Rise and Decline" contains, it is the same as that of the Third World Congress and all the documents and analyses made since then by the International. I promise you that we will have a very lively discussion on this matter, since it is really fundamental. But to return to the "Rise and Decline."

Our censor has found that the citation from the Transitional Program on the program of the political revolution in the S.U. is amputated at its end. Why, asks the clever comrade Morris, it is not at all accidental, and he embroiders a whole novel of political explanation on this point for people who are both very honest and very intelligent in discussion. But the "Rise and Decline" cites the Transitional Program in respect to the *program* of the political revolution, and not the *means* or the *end*, of this revolution. The means is revolutionary action of the masses, guided by the revolutionary party. The aim is the overthrow of the bureaucracy. All that is not the *program*. And what is cited is above all the *program*.

The two other ideas—by what means to realize this *program*, and for what end—all that moreover is to be found in the text (very explicitly stated and underlined).

Another example of Comrade Morris' intelligent manner of cutting up the text and discovering its "revisionism," he isolated one phrase from the preface of the text which refers to the role of the F.I. *in relation to the crisis of Stalinism*. He extracts from that that the *entire* role of the Fourth consists for us only in that. I repeat, an entire other text is devoted to this question, as well as an entire part at the end of "Rise and Decline." But the very essence of this text is, moreover, to show how much our task finds itself facilitated, etc., in the new conditions of disintegration beginning within Stalinism: this main obstacle

on the road to the construction of genuine revolutionary parties and a new leadership. But in reality, what is involved with Morris is not a simple enterprise of a wrong interpretation of a text which is, moreover so clear. There is actually at bottom a profound divergence between us and him.

It consists in the manner of appraising the objective situation and its dialectical relations with the party. For us, the fundamental and determining thing is actually the objective conditions upon which in the last analysis there depends the possibility of creating, not small groups labeling themselves parties, but genuine revolutionary mass parties. For us, it is not the previous existence of such parties which determines whether a situation is pre-revolutionary or revolutionary, but the objective conditions of the capitalist regime. The party does not create this situation, it simply accelerates it if it exists, and intervenes as decisive element only to assure the victory of the masses fundamentally set into motion by the objective conditions.

On the other hand, the party, the decisive element from this viewpoint, is not created in a chemical retort, outside of a given objective setting, in no matter what objective conditions. Neither the study of the "classics" nor any other similar means can supply a lack of favorable objective conditions. All that is so elementary, so often debated in the workers' movement, and in our own movement, that it is merely ridiculous to return to it and insist upon it. All that we are doing tends to the creation of genuine revolutionary mass parties, not in order to thus create revolutionary situations, but to accelerate their ripening, and above all, to have them culminate in the conquest of power, which is impossible without the party, etc. That is also likewise the meaning of the phrase in the Transitional Program: "Only the Party of the Fourth International is capable of leading the Soviet Masses to Insurrection." That is to say, not to *revolt*, but to the revolution, *in the sense of the conquest of power*.

If we insist so much on the objective conditions and the revolutionary movement of the masses that these engender, if we have analyzed as we have done, the new period issuing from the Second World War, the new conditions of capitalist and imperialist domination, the new relation of global forces between the forces of the revolution in all its forms, and those of imperialism, that is only to set forth the favorable and real perspectives for the formation of revolutionary mass parties and of the Fourth International. To wish to overthrow this manner of viewing and setting forth the revolutionary character of the situation, above all, by the previous existence of such parties, is truly to be shut off in a blind alley, at bottom as idealistic and pessimistic as can be. Parisot and Morrow stuffed us with similar conceptions.

Morris reproaches us for our optimism which is fictitious in addition, according to him. It seems that we expect everything from the objective situation, etc. We expect the essential thing from the revolutionary movement of the masses, that is true, from the revolutionary potentialities of the class, which creates its vanguard, the party, in its struggle. The party is created in the struggles of the class, by the class. Any other conception of its construction is bookish, idealistic and sectarian.

As for what is or is not the present period, its relationship of forces, etc., we shall speak at length in the international discussion. We shall then see who is revising on

this plane, and who is maintaining the line hitherto un-
animously adopted. We will also see who minimizes the forces
of the enemy or of the revolution, who is submitting to
pressure, and what is its class nature, who sees in the
Korean armistice only "important concessions to imperi-
alism" and not the greatest defeat American imperialism
has yet had, with what eyes we look at the S.U. today,
the Chinese Revolution, the other anti-capitalist states,
how this one and that appraises the new revolutionary
potentialities in all these countries since Stalin's death,
the mass movement in Western Europe and in the col-
onies, etc. We will see all that in detail.

Morris calls his contribution "Re-Trotskyize Trotskyism."
He sets himself up as a defender of our traditions in the
process of being "revised and liquidated." You know as well
as I what Lenin and Trotsky said a thousand times about
the people "of the old guard," the "Old Bolsheviks" stuck to
their dear schemas, their formulas, their citations. The
tradition of Leninism, of Trotskyism, of Marxism above
all consists in the study of new realities, with a fresh
and critical spirit, rid of all conservatism. That was true
at all times in the past. It must be now an absolutely
imperious need in an essentially new period, extremely
dynamic, perpetually changing and so complex.

The solution of our problems is not to be found in any
book of the "classics." It is to be found in the application
of their method to current conditions, an application which

demands a great intellectual effort, mastery of this method,
and profound understanding of the actual facts of the sit-
uation. I am certain that the very great majority of our
movement is now of such a disposition. It will never go
backward. It will cast off scholasticism, conservatism of
thought, sectarianism in all its forms, and it will go for-
ward. The destiny of our movement is lighted up in a
more promising and grandiose manner than ever. De-
spite all obstacles it will be achieved.

I write you all this without equivocation, as I feel it,
for I am genuinely upset over what is happening amongst
you, over your actions and your document. For I know
what immense harm all that will provoke despite every-
thing, in our ranks. For I cannot believe that you will
march along this road up to the end. For your political
thinking appeared to me to espouse the same lines as
ours. For finally, I still want to believe that at least some
among you will resist the fatal course which is being pro-
jected, and that you will stop it.

We hope that you will soon reply to us, among other
matters on our request for a meeting. No one can under-
stand so prolonged a silence, so strange at the very mo-
ment when there is being developed such an activity and
elaboration and organization of an international faction.

Fraternally,
Pablo

4. Letter from Michel Pablo to George Novack

October 3, 1953

Dear Friend:

I fear it will soon be midnight in our relations. Your
Plenum risks crystallizing yourself on a position funda-
mentally hostile to our line, to the line which we had in
common until recently. Tell Old Jim not to commit this
foolishness, as the French say (and pardon the expres-
sion). We have nothing, and I personally, have nothing
against you. We do not like this struggle against you.

We still think it possible to arrive at clarifying certain
questions before you take a definitive position, to dis-
sipate misunderstandings, to reduce, if not to eliminate
or fill up, the gulf which now seems to separate us. Pro-
vided we can arrive at discussing face to face with you.
Your stubbornness in refusing any such contact, of hiding
yourself in a so-called haughtiness is deprived of any
sense.

You are surely going toward a break with the rest of
the movement (its overwhelming majority), the weaken-
ing and setback of your own organization. Why all that?

There is undeniably political divergences between you and
us, a different way of viewing certain things, for we live
in Europe over which the shadow of the Revolution is
cast and you in America, the incontestable citadel of the
power and reaction of imperialism.

But despite that we have a common formation and
past which can, perhaps, permit continuing living together
in the same organization. Let us make an attempt to
verify this possibility. The harsh, ultimatic, rigid, manner
camouflaged by big words about conserving orthodoxy
against revisionism, etc. make no impression here. We
all understand well what is involved. Don't have any
idle illusions about that.

I write you, counting on your political intelligence, al-
though your practical attitude strongly disillusioned me.
If you have any small influence upon Jim, tell him not
to commit the irreparable. Tell him to see us, to see me.
It is worth the trouble.

Fraternally,
Gabe

5. Resolution of the Cochranite Minority of the SWP Political Committee on the Internal Party Situation

I. Internationalism and Our International Relations

1. The Fourth International was set up in 1938 under
Trotsky's guidance as "a single world-wide organization,

under a centralized international leadership, and a single
discipline." (*Statutes of Founding Conference.*) It has con-
tinued to function to this day with these organizational
conceptions.

2. Naturally, due to the weakness of the sections and the poverty of material resources, the International could not and cannot exercise the authority of a world organization representing mass parties. Its activities remain limited by the reality of its influence and possibilities. But the functioning of the organization and representative character of its leadership improved steadily in the period after the war, and represents today the highest point of effectiveness yet achieved by the International since its foundation. Especially was its role as ideological leader discharged magnificently with the Third World Congress reorientation and rearmament of the world movement.

3. The actual functioning of the leading bodies and personalities of the International was, until recent weeks, approved by the public opinion of our whole movement, and similarly esteemed by the leadership of the SWP. In the two cases of recent years where disciplinary actions were invoked (in relation to the Haston group in England, the Bleibtreu group in France), the measures pursued were approved by representative International bodies, and supported by our own observers as well.

4. Cannon's speech of May 18, "Internationalism and the SWP"—the policy of the Majority caucus—represents a fundamental break with this whole tradition of internationalism which has always animated the Trotskyist movement. The proposal to convert the International into a federationist, letter-box form of organization, a center solely for the exchange of opinions and information, represents a regression towards national and sectarian exclusiveness. The attack on the International has as its purpose nothing less than an attempt to blow up the International organization, give by indirection, intrigue and subterfuge de facto leadership to the Cannon caucus and convert the other parties into satellites. It is probably as infamous and irresponsible an intrigue as has ever been launched in the history of world Trotskyism.

5. The discussion up to the May plenum demonstrated that the Cannon faction leaders were, at best, politically confused and disoriented, and did not grasp the new world reality. In recent months a veritable gulf has developed between ourselves and the mainstream of world Trotskyism on the one hand, and the Cannon faction on the other.

Cannon's Social Democratic conception of internationalism and his threats to split the International do not derive from this or that grievance over its functioning that he may have been nurturing for the past several years. Such criticisms can always be discussed on their merits and settled on their merits. Cannon's break with internationalism stems from the growing hostility of his caucus toward the policies and political direction of the International movement. His caucus has broken with the main lines of the Third World Congress on the nature of the epoch, how the revolutionary mass parties are to be built, etc., etc. His caucus has reversed its former attitude and effected a reapproachment with the Stalinophobe-sectarian Bleibtreu group in France. The SWP press has been subverted into a Cannon caucus sheet, and polemical center against the policies of world Trotskyism. This political break with our movement is now climaxed by Cannon's drive to split the International.

II. The May 1953 Plenum "Peace Agreement" and How It Was Broken

At the final sessions of the May 1953 plenum, the Cannon caucus leaders reversed their previous course of "no compromise" and "war to the death" on the Minority, and proposed a peace agreement to us. We accepted the proposals and entered into the agreement in good faith. The agreement recognized the reality of the existence of faction formations, proposed to organize collaboration in the leadership, and to continue the discussion in a more moderate and restrained form.

The ink was scarcely dry on our respective signatures than the Majority leaders proceeded to tear the agreement to shreds and make a mockery of the proposed collaboration:

1. A few weeks after the plenum, the Cannon leaders declared war on us in New York out of a clear sky. They started a drive to purge Bartell and his administration from leadership of the New York local. They brusquely rejected every one of our conciliatory proposals. They introduced a new concept of authoritarian organization that the Majority caucus has to have the "power" in a local administration, in effect barring members of a minority from holding positions of responsibility in the localities while loyally carrying out party decisions. This crude campaign to dump Bartell and the other New York local leaders was a political reprisal, pure and simple, as the record of the comrades involved was an admittedly excellent one.

2. At the same time we learned that immediately with the conclusion of the plenum, Cannon, the new "Foreign Secretary" of the Majority caucus stepped up a character-assassination campaign against Pablo. In his speech to the Majority caucus in New York on May 18, Cannon admitted: "We have no tangible evidence to prove that there is any conspiracy against us, or any actions against us, on the international field." Yet immediately after the plenum, he accused Pablo in a private poison-pen letter to "Dear Tom," dated June 4, of instigating a "power fight" in the SWP, an accusation based not on evidence, but his private "deductions." He proposed to "Dear Tom" to help organize an international faction on the "principled" basis of who is for or against Cannon; in other words, as a clique, which intends to formulate its political platform as it goes along.

3. The collaboration called for in the May plenum agreement has been from the first—as practiced by the Majority faction leaders—an empty gesture, with no positive content. The Majority leaders make their decisions in their private caucus meetings, and then come into the Secretariat or PC and read off their decisions to us. There is absolutely no give-and-take. The "collaboration" is strictly limited to permitting us to make counter-motions or amendments, and then voting our propositions down. The degenerate Haston clique ran its two-bit dictatorship in the British RCP by excluding the minority from the Political Committee. The same monolithic purpose is achieved by the Cannon caucus—except with a little more finesse.

4. The Cannonites arrogate to themselves the right to proclaim by fiat the "party line" on any and all questions without submitting their private caucus decisions for adoption by any legal party body. As the PC Minority Statement of October 5 shows, this was the way they set party policy on recent developments in the USSR, as on most other questions, and at the same time sup-

pressed articles of the Minority on the same subject matter. They opened the magazine by private caucus decision to attacks on the Minority—under the same compulsion that pushed the Shachtmanites in 1940 to justify themselves before Stalinophobe public opinion—but would not print the Minority polemics against the Majority. They adopted no clear-cut official positions, but preferred to operate under the hazy banner of a "general party line" which, in practice, they interpreted as license to write and do anything they pleased.

This exercise of "leadership" via an uncontrolled clique was climaxed by convoking the present plenum in the manner of a faction conspiracy through cutting out the Minority representatives from all participation, and even information as to the nature, the purpose, or the agenda of the plenum. The aim of this high-handed usurpation is to drive the opposition out of the party, so that the Cannon clique can conduct its war and carry through its split against the International without hindrance.

III. Conclusions on Nature of Cannon Faction

The foregoing experiences since the May plenum added to that of the previous year's struggle permit the drawing of firm conclusions as to the nature of the Cannon group and where it is heading.

1. The present Cannon faction was gangrenous at its very birth. It consolidated itself from the start, not on the basis of a secure political platform, which it lacked, but on prestige, tradition, seniority, personal loyalties and sentimental attachments.

2. The Cannon caucus leaders openly voiced the concept at the May plenum that the faction debate constituted only a naked "power struggle" *on both sides*, and they triumphantly announced that they had emerged as the victors in the "power struggle." They thereby flaunted their disorientation and degeneration in the party's face and attempted to legitimize their concept of personal leadership and clique politics.

3. Devising their political line from day to day because of this or that pressure, impression, or momentary need, the Cannon caucus leaders maintained themselves as a majority on the basis of vague, general doctrinaire pronouncements, which, in practice, enable them to exercise leadership as an arbitrary and uncontrolled clique. Thus, democratic centralism has been scrapped in favor of clique politics, and personal leadership has been substituted for a political line.

4. The Cannon caucus leaders never honored the agreement to which they adhered at the Plenum. It proved beyond them. They demonstrated in life that they are too ingrown and politically disoriented, too thoroughly indoctrinated with mysticism about their "ordained leadership," and hypnotized with crackpot notions of "power" to actually understand what it means to practice collaboration with another Party tendency or faction. They make speeches on holiday occasions about "Leninist organization principles," but they do not understand them and they reject them when put to the test.

5. But no clique can long survive in our organization without filling its political vacuity with some program. As the pre-plenum discussion progressed, it was becoming clear that the Cannon caucus was hardening its scholastic

traits, providing "theoretical" grounding for its ultimatic approach, deepening its sectarian habits of thought, political outlook and positions. Since the May plenum, the sectarian ossification of the Cannonites is proceeding apace. Unless the process is halted—and reversed—the Cannonites are due to emerge as the new De Leonism of the American radical movement. On the international field, what began as a personal intrigue against Pablo, is already developed as a full-blown campaign to dynamite the International, and furnish a rallying center for all the conservative, retrogressive, sectarian tendencies, based upon the past.

The "new sectarianism" reflects no trend of circles in the American labor movement, or even of American radicalism, but arises out of the petrification of the "old Trotskyists," who have succumbed to the environment bred of a quarter century of isolation, and who have taken refuge in a make-believe world of their own creation, getting a vicarious thrill of playing at "revolution." If the "Old Guard"—as it denominates itself—goes through with its project to cut itself off from the last remaining sources of critical public opinion represented by the opposition and our cothinkers abroad, it will signify that ossification has conquered.

In this event, the present Cannon faction—the museum pieces of the "Old Guard" combined with the Weiss contingent of YPSL's—would have no future in the American labor movement. Its old role as popularizer of Trotsky's program and struggle is played out. It will be engulfed by the events of our epoch as were the "old Wobblies" three decades ago, who did not understand in their time the new world of the Russian Revolution and the post First World War period, and could not comprehend the new problems and tasks imposed on revolutionists. The future in this country as elsewhere is with the mainstream of World Trotskyism which understands the new epoch, and the tasks of the revolutionists in fusing themselves with other left-wing forces to form the mass revolutionary parties of tomorrow—and thus validate the Trotskyist struggle and program.

IV. Tasks of This Plenum

In view of the fact that the 5-month interval between the May plenum and the present one has made clear that the gulf between the opposition and the Cannon faction has widened immeasurably, pointed up by the growing deep-going differences on a host of key questions;

In view of the fact that the SWP press has been converted into a caucus sheet pushing policies in direct contradiction to and violation of the basic lines of the Third World Congress, endorsed by the 1952 SWP convention;

In view of the fact that the Cannon caucus leaders have come into sharp collision with our International leaders and the mainstream of world Trotskyist thought, and now threaten to split the International movement;

The plenum declares:

1. That the present period of discussion preparatory for the Fourth World Congress shall be utilized for the full exposition of the authoritative positions of the Majority and Minority as well as other tendencies within the SWP.

2. That the Majority faction leaders stand instructed

to practice collaboration in the leadership and organization of party activities, to cease circumventing, ignoring and excluding the representatives of the Minority, so that the discussion can proceed in a calm and objective atmosphere, and achieve the maximum in clarity and the political education of the membership.

3. That the party press must reflect the basic positions of the Third World Congress which has been adopted by the latest SWP convention and constitute party law, and that the Cannon faction leaders stand instructed to confine their attacks on these positions to the internal discussion.

4. That, since the magazine has been permitted to carry attacks on the Minority, it be opened for a limited discussion permitting the publication of the authoritative positions of the Minority on the USSR and East Germany.

5. That both the Majority and Minority stand instructed to participate loyally in the discussions and preparations for the Fourth World Congress, and to abide by majority rule in line with democratic centralist practices upon the conclusion of the discussion and the adoption of the Congress decisions; an organization principle that applies, and is to be applied, not only nationally, but internationally.

6. The plenum further declares that all threats, intrigues and campaigns to break with the International movement are a crime against World Trotskyism, and calls upon the Majority faction leaders to remember their responsibilities before history, and to discharge their obligations as responsible and disciplined revolutionists.

November 1953

SECTION IX: PABLO DECLARES A "SPLIT"

[Pablo's course towards a split continued to gather momentum even before the SWP issued its "open letter" in *The Militant* of November 16, 1953. On November 15, the Bureau sent a circular to all the sections of the Trotskyist movement informing them that if the Cochran-Clarke-Bartell faction were disciplined this would place the SWP "outside our movement."

[With the publication of the "open letter," pro-Pablo factions in the SWP and in the sections opposed to Pablo proceeded to simply declare their opponents "expelled from the Fourth International" without even awaiting a decision of the Pablo-dominated IEC. Articles in the pro-Pablo press discussed the "split" as an accomplished fact, even though no supporters of the "open letter" had called for a split.

[The December 25-28 meeting of the IEC approved these decisions. It ordered the suspension from membership of anyone who solidarized with the "open letter." Sections which aligned themselves with the "open letter" were informed that this constituted a "split" on their part. The Cochran grouping in the United States and the Lawrence grouping

in Britain were recognized as "continuators" of Trotskyism in their respective countries.

[In response to the International Committee's declaration of a public faction and "no confidence" in Pablo's leadership, Pablo chose the road of declaring a "split." Excerpts from a letter by Sherry Mangan to Pablo (Mangan was an American Trotskyist who lived in Europe) indicate that not all of those who agreed with his political views were pleased with the organizational methods he had chosen for handling differences in the world movement.

["They Desert, We Go Forward," by Michel Pablo, "An Attempt at an Anti-Trotskyist Atlantic Pact," by Ernest German, and "Against the Treachery of the Cannonites," by the Bureau of the International Secretariat, were translated from the December 1953 issue of *La Verite des Travailleurs*, the publication of the pro-Pablo wing of the French Trotskyists. An article hailing the formation of the Cochran-Clarke-Bartellite American Socialist Union was translated from the January-February 1954 issue of *Quatrieme Internationale*, which was then published by the International Secretariat.]

1. *Letter from the Bureau of the International Secretariat to the November 7-8 Plenum of the SWP National Committee*

Dear Comrades,

For a number of months now the IS has asked for a face-to-face discussion with a delegation of members of your majority, and subsequently with a representative delegation of your entire NC in order to limit, if not remove, the difficulties which have arisen between your leadership and the International leadership.

More recently, despite the documents which have come to us and despite the activity which your majority has undertaken against the International leadership, we again

emphasized the necessity for such a meeting before the taking of a definitive position on your part.

In place of any other reply to this request, we were simply informed of the convening of your Plenum. We then asked you to communicate, as we have the right and the duty of doing, the precise agenda as well as the documents which would be finally submitted. We know that such documents are now circulating both amongst yourselves and elsewhere.

This request is all the more justified since we have no

other means of participating in the discussions of your Plenum, the presence of any one of us, as we ardently desired, being excluded for obvious reasons.

But again, up to this time, at least a week before your Plenum, we have received no reply.

Everything is proceeding as though the majority of your NC has taken the decision to ignore the International leadership from now on, to place it before the accomplished fact, and subject it to the pressure of a kind of ultimatum.

Ask yourselves what is the deepest meaning of such a strange attitude, unique in the annals of our principled and democratic movement.

Is it not exceedingly disturbing that a hostile activity is being developed by your leadership in the International before the taking of any clear political position and without the International leadership having prevented you in any way from expressing your possible divergences through the normal channels of the preparatory discussion for the Fourth World Congress?

Here we are in November 1953, that is to say, more than four months after the documents for the Fourth World Congress were submitted to you, without yet knowing in any responsible manner what your precise position is toward them.

To build a faction under such conditions, then to bring it forth brusquely in the light of day and then violently oppose it to the International leadership becomes, frankly, an unprincipled, unspeakable operation profoundly alien to the traditions and nature of our movement. It can only reflect motives other than mere political divergences. It already appears as a most deep-going break in our ranks and you ought to be the first to be disturbed by its real significance and consequences.

The political basis of this faction is possibly that indicated by Comrade Cannon in his June 4, 1953 letter to Comrade Tom: whether or not there is alignment on the positions of your majority in its differences with the minority. Along this line Comrade Cannon asked to find out who are your "friends" or your "enemies" in the International.

This conception also appears to us absolutely indefensible and alien to our traditions.

The International cannot align itself on this or that position of a national order and cannot identify itself with any national faction. On the other hand, it does not know either "friends" or "enemies" within our movement, but simply ideological tendencies all treated on the basis of absolute equality.

To wish the contrary is to want to repeat the history of the Stalinist faction in the Soviet Union after Lenin's death, which Russified the Third International and converted it into an appendage of the leading clique of the Russian Communist Party.

The International has the right and duty to pronounce politically on the differences which have arisen in any national section, once these differences become politically precise and clear.

Such was not the case, in our opinion, with your internal struggle up to your May 1953 Plenum. This struggle began, in our opinion, in confusion and extraordinary factional tension before its political content clearly developed.

The gravity of the accusations launched, without being proved by written documents, the threats, from the begin-

ning, of split, the changes in the course of the struggle of the principal motive attributed by the majority to the minority (propaganda group against independent party, then tendency capitulating to Stalinism, then a defeatist tendency toward the American working class and its perspectives, finally at the May Plenum the struggle for power) were not of a character to clarify the discussion and permit us to give our opinion, in full awareness and confidence, on the real political content of the differences.

Accordingly, we saluted the resolution unanimously voted at your May 1953 Plenum, for it corresponded to our own conceptions and suggestions on the future conduct of the discussion in your organization: to conduct it on an exclusively ideological ground without calumnies or threats of split, as Trotsky proposed during the struggle against Shachtman in 1939-40, and by fully guaranteeing in this way the rights of the majority and the minority.

But our surprise and indignation were great when we learned of the letter sent immediately after the Plenum, coming after his so magnanimous closing speech at the latter, and without any new fact intervening, by Comrade Cannon to Comrade Tom, envisaging the constitution of an international preventive faction against some future eventual interference of the IS in "the affairs" of your party, and organized on a "basis of military discipline."

From this moment it became clear to us that your majority, deceived, disillusioned by not having received the support it counted on from us in its struggle against the minority, turned against "Paris" before again turning against the minority to definitively settle accounts with it.

On the other hand we were not deceived by the efforts from that time on to find as well a political platform different from that of the International leadership undertaken from the beginning for quite other motives. We became acquainted with this attempt at a platform through the Stein document factionally circulating in the International and recently by another "draft" which repeats and amplifies its line.

Certain articles in *The Militant* moreover do not leave any doubt on certain aspects of the line that you now want to elaborate contrary to that of the International and connecting with the extreme positions of the confusionist, sectarian and anti-International groups like that of Bleibtreu in France.

It is naturally your right to arrive even tardily in formulating essential differences with the line of the Third World Congress and that of the documents presented for the Fourth World Congress which are its equal. But so long as the conception of our International as a world party, regulated by a healthy regime of democratic centralism, remains valid, we protest against procedures which place themselves outside this regime and could culminate only in the breaking of the unity of the International.

We likewise protest with equal energy against the so-called ideological and political polemics against the line of the International which strangely resemble the worse calumnies of Bleibtreu and his acolytes and which have provoked in so recent a past our common indignation. Among others, against the calumnious and stupid campaign which now re-echoes our so-called "revisionism" and our "capitulation before" Stalinism, with the aim of grouping together on the lowest level in an unprincipled bloc all the confusionist, sectarian, Stalinophobe and retro-

grade elements and tendencies in the International.

An enormous responsibility rests on your Plenum, comrades, regarding your relations with the rest of our movement, which in its overwhelming majority is attached more firmly than ever to the line and organization of the International.

Do not have any empty illusions on that score.

Your choice seems to us a very precise one: either you recognize the democratic-centralist regime of the International, the line and the discipline issuing from its Congresses and defended by its directing organisms, the IEC and the IS, and develop within the framework of this regime with all its consequences your possible political divergences with the present leadership of the International, the legal depository of the line of the Third World Congress and that of the 10th, 11th, 12th and 13th IEC Plenums; or else you ought clearly to formulate another organizational conception different from that of the statutes of the International voted at the Second World Congress and based on its present reality, that we will then submit to the judgment of the next IEC Plenum.

We are absolutely convinced that the IEC wishes to permit, and effectively assure, the broadest and most democratic political discussion in the International.

The preparation of the World Congress will be discussed in detail by our next Plenum to which you are invited to send a representative delegation of your organization.

The IEC Plenum will culminate easily and unanimously, we wish to believe, in the adoption of measures concerning the discussion and convening of the Fourth World Congress, giving full guarantee and satisfaction to all organizations and members of the International.

In these conditions no hostile organizational activity will consequently be justified. We would thus then enter into a political discussion on the basis of precise texts defining everyone's ideas and line.

The Fourth World Congress will democratically settle the disputed questions and we declare that we will be the first to respect its decisions in every respect, whatever they are.

Nevertheless, we do not fail to emphasize once again, guided by our sense of responsibility, in this letter and at this last moment what we have repeated in all our appeals for a number of months now addressed to your majority.

Avoid a fundamental political crystallization on this or that line before a previous discussion between delegations responsible to your leadership and the IS or the IEC.

Put above any other consideration the unity of our International movement, the unity of your own organization.

With fraternal greetings,
The IS Bureau
November 3, 1953

2. Statement of Cochran-Clarke-Bartell Faction on the Split in the SWP

(Statement of Minority Faction, November 11, 1953)

The split in the SWP, which Cannon threatened from the very opening of the fight in February, 1952, has now been carried through by his caucus. By his own testimony, he tried repeatedly to quarantine and drive out of the party the leaders of the opposition, but for almost two years, he was thwarted by the "waverers," "weaklings," and "grandmothers of the male sex"—to use his own words—on the National Committee. Finally, by dint of unremitting and unrestrained factional effort, he whipped his own caucus into shape, the full fruits of which was the calling of the National Committee into a plenary session on November 7, and, as the first order of business, expelling the Minority leaders in something less than half an hour, while demanding a McCarthyite "loyalty oath" from the rest of the membership. One has to go to the Stalinist movement for any comparison with this high-handed, bureaucratic outrage.

Cannon has been hatching, maneuvering, contriving, conspiring, intriguing for almost two years to expel the Minority leaders—and at the final execution of his criminal project, he could only offer the flimsiest of pretexts, or more accurately, no pretext at all, if we disregard the slanderous, lying bombast about our alleged "strikebreaking."

The purpose of this charge is to distract attention from the clear record that the Cannon caucus has cut out the Minority representatives from all participation and direction of party activity and work, and has been actively

lining up its cohorts for the past five weeks to jam through the split at the plenum. The wheels were set in motion when the PC at its September 30 meeting decided to call a plenum, but refused to inform us about, a) the purpose of the plenum; b) the agenda of the plenum; c) the number of points on the agenda; d) what resolutions, or documents, or motions, or suggestions would be submitted, or whether anything would be submitted; e) the line of the plenum documents, if any; f) what reporters would report, or ought to prepare, on what topics, etc.

This piece of arrogant usurpation was followed up in the next weeks by completely circumventing, ignoring and excluding our representatives from all decisions, and directing party affairs without any reference to us. The October 30 public meeting—like many other projects—was organized on the basis that the 25-year tradition was the private monopoly of the Cannon caucus. We concluded that we would no longer be supine victims of these unilateral, strong-arm tactics that had repeatedly been used on the Minority, and decided not to attend the open meeting, as an organized protest—long overdue—against the dictatorial methods of the Cannon machine.

How the Peace Agreement Was Broken

Actually, the present split was implicit as soon as the Cannon caucus leaders cynically tore up the peace agree-

ment signed by both sides at the May 1953 plenum. You will all recall that at the final sessions of this plenum, Cannon reversed his previous course of "no compromise" and "war to the death" on the Minority and proposed a peace agreement to us. We accepted the proposals in good faith. The agreement recognized the existence of faction formations, proposed to organize collaboration in the leadership, and to continue the discussion in a more moderate and restrained form. But the ink was scarcely dry on our respective signatures than the Majority leaders made a mockery of the supposed agreement and the proposed collaboration.

A few weeks after the May plenum, the Cannon leaders declared war on us in New York out of a clear sky. They started a drive to purge Bartell and his administration from leadership of the New York local. They brusquely rejected every one of our conciliatory proposals. They introduced a new concept of authoritarian organization that the Majority caucus has to have the "power" in a local administration, in effect, barring members of a minority from holding positions of responsibility in the localities while loyally carrying out party decisions. This crude campaign to dump Bartell and the other New York local leaders was a political reprisal, pure and simple, as the record of the comrades involved was an admittedly excellent one.

At the same time we learned that immediately with the conclusion of the May plenum, Cannon, the new "Foreign Secretary" of the Majority caucus stepped up a character-assassination campaign against Pablo. In his speech to the Majority caucus in New York on May 18 Cannon admitted: "We have no tangible evidence to prove that there is any conspiracy against us, or any actions against us, on the international field." Yet immediately after the plenum, he accused Pablo in a private poison-pen letter to "Dear Tom," dated June 4, of instigating a "power fight" in the SWP. He proposed to "Dear Tom" to help organize an international faction on the "principled" basis of who is for or against Cannon; in other words, as a clique, which intends to formulate its political platform as it goes along.

The collaboration called for in the May plenum agreement had been from the first—as practiced by the Cannon faction leaders—an empty gesture, with no positive content. The Majority leaders made their decisions in their private caucus meetings, and then came into the Secretariat or the PC and read off their decisions to us. There was no give-and-take. The "collaboration" was strictly limited to permitting us to make counter-motions or amendments, and then voting our propositions down. The degenerate Haston clique ran its two-bit dictatorship in the British RCP by excluding the Minority from the Political Committee. The same monolithic purpose was achieved by the Cannon caucus—except with a little more finesse.

The Cannonites arrogated to themselves the right to proclaim by fiat the "party line" on any and all questions without submitting their caucus decisions for adoption by any legal party body. As the PC Minority State of October 5 showed, this was the way they set party policy on recent developments in the USSR, as on most other questions, and at the same time suppressed articles of the Minority on the same subject matter. They opened the magazine by private caucus decision to attacks on

the Minority—under the same compulsion that pushed the Shachtmanites in 1940 to justify themselves before Stalinophobe public opinion—but would not print the Minority polemics against the Majority. They adopted no clearcut official positions, but preferred to operate under the hazy banner of a "general party line" which, in practice, they interpreted as license to write and do anything they pleased.

The fundamental causes for the smashup of the May peace agreement derived not from accidents, incidents, or misunderstandings, but the political disorientation and degeneration of the "old Trotskyists" of the Cannon faction.

The Nature of the Cannon Faction

The present Cannon faction was gangrenous at its very birth. It consolidated itself from the start, not on the basis of a secure political platform, which it lacked, but on prestige, tradition, seniority, personal loyalties and sentimental attachments.

The Cannon caucus leaders openly voiced the concept at the May plenum that the faction debate constituted only a naked "power struggle" on both sides, and they triumphantly announced that they had emerged as the victors in the "power struggle." They thereby flaunted their degeneration in the party's face and attempted to legitimize their concept of personal leadership and clique politics.

The Cannon caucus leaders never honored the agreement to which they adhered at the May plenum. It proved beyond them. They demonstrated in life that they were too ingrown and politically disoriented, too thoroughly indoctrinated with mysticism about their "ordained leadership," and hypnotized with crackpot notions of "power" to actually understand what it meant to practice collaboration with another party tendency or faction. They made speeches on holiday occasions about "Leninist organization principles," but they did not understand them, and they rejected them when put to the test.

But no clique can long survive in the Trotskyist movement without filling its political vacuity with some program. So we observed that as the pre-plenum discussion progressed, the Cannon caucus was hardening its scholastic traits, providing "theoretical" grounding for its ultimistic approach, deepening its sectarian habits of thought, political outlook and positions. With the split, the Cannonites are due to emerge as the new De Leonism of the American radical movement.

On the international field, what began as a personal intrigue against Pablo has developed into a full-blown campaign to dynamite the International, and furnish a rallying center for all the conservative, retrogressive, sectarian tendencies, based upon the past. Cannon's attempt to blow up the International organization, and give by indirection, intrigue and subterfuge de facto leadership to the Cannon caucus, and convert the other parties into satellites, is probably as infamous and irresponsible an intrigue as has ever been launched in the history of world Trotskyism. This rupture with internationalism stems from the over-growing hostility of his caucus toward the policies of world Trotskyism. It has broken with all the main lines of the Third World Congress, a fact underlined by the recent Stein document and the PC Majority "prelim-

inary draft." His caucus has reversed its former attitude and effected a reapproachment with the Stalinophobe-sectarian Bleibtreu group in France. The SWP press has been subverted into a Cannon caucus sheet and polemical center against the policies of world Trotskyism. This up-and-down-the-line political break is climaxed with Cannon's drive to split the International.

The New Sectarianism

The new sectarianism reflects no trend of circles in the American labor movement, or even of American radicalism, but arises out of the petrification of the "old Trotskyists," who have succumbed to a quarter-century of isolation, and who have taken refuge in a make-believe world of their own creation, getting a vicarious thrill of playing at "revolution." When the "Old Guard"—as it denominates itself—went through with its project to cut itself off from the last remaining sources of critical public opinion represented by the opposition and our co-thinkers abroad, it signified that ossification had conquered.

The present Cannon faction—the museum pieces of the "Old Guard" combined with the Weiss contingent of YPSL's—has no future in the American labor movement. Its old role as popularizer of Trotsky's program and struggle is played out. It will be engulfed by the events of our epoch as were the "old Wobblies" three decades ago, who

were not able to understand in their time the new world of the Russian Revolution and the post First World War period, and could not comprehend the new problems and tasks imposed on revolutionists.

The future in this country, as elsewhere, is with the mainstream of world Trotskyism which understands the new epoch, and the tasks of revolutionists in fusing themselves with other left-wing forces as they arise in the course of the coming radicalization and class battles. Thus, and only thus, will be formed the mass revolutionary party of tomorrow and will be validated Trotsky's program and struggle.

We Represent the Future

When the Cannon caucus expelled us from the SWP, they cut the heart out of the party. Because it is we who understand the reality of this world, and this country, and this labor movement, and the correct tactic for Marxists in the present scene. And because with us—a third of the organization—come the overwhelming portion of the working class cadre, the flower of a decade and a half of unexampled experiences and rich participation in the class struggles of this country, men and women who carved a rich tradition in sectors of the broad labor movement. Our group will cut a path for itself in the next struggles and developments. The Cannonites represent the dead past. We represent the future.

3. Letter from the Bureau of the International Secretariat to the Leaderships of All Sections

Comrades,

The most revolting operation has just been launched against the unity of the International. The majority of the American organization, cynically defying the most elementary rules of our international movement, and its traditions as well as its leadership, have just excluded by the decision of its Plenum of November 7-8 the minority which declares itself in agreement with the line of the International.

In England, the wing of the Central Committee of the organization led by Burns is preparing to perpetrate the same crime against the tendency defending the line of the International.

The international faction of Cannonites, announced in the letter of June 4 to Tom, is in the process of applying its premeditated plan to split our movement, *in the midst of the discussion and preparation for the 4th World Congress of the International.*

The IS, aware of this monstrous conspiracy which has already been going on for some months, as is proved by the attentive reading of the appended documents, has done everything to avoid such a development to which these bureaucratic and sectarian elements of our international movement were furiously pushing, not accepting either the discipline of the centralized world party which is the International, nor the political line of genuine fusion with the movement of the masses.

It is possible and even probable that certain comrades of the International will criticize our extreme prudence on this question and our deliberate and conscious refusal to bring it sooner to the knowledge of all members of the International.

We have nevertheless acted in this way, impelled by an acute sense of our responsibilities, because of a deep and sincere desire to exploit every chance of avoiding a split in our movement, because of supreme confidence in the sense of responsibility of elements like Cannon, Stein, Warde and other leaders of the American organization. We say and repeat forcefully, in order to avoid the worse, and likewise to act in a principled way.

For we do not believe that the Trotskyist movement can survive otherwise than as a strictly principled movement on the political and organizational plane.

Maneuvers, duplicity, lies and slanders could never be the arms of a movement like ours. It will inevitably lead to its decay and its complete elimination as a factor of the historical future.

Those who use such weapons hereby give the proof of their degeneration consummated in conditions of their prolonged isolation.

Comrades of the International:

This unexpected crisis arising when our movement seemed to have attained a high level of political maturity and for

the first time in its history effectively penetrated into the real movement of the masses, inevitably poses a series of agonizing questions to which it is necessary to give a clear and prompt reply. The attentive study of the appended documents, we are firmly convinced, will speak for themselves, will enlighten with a cruel light all the phases of this revolting affair. Nevertheless we believe it necessary to emphasize certain outstanding facts which will help your better orientation in this crisis, undeniably the gravest in our movement:

For a number of years our international movement has been led by an entire team of comrades who have found themselves, by the force of things and by unanimous and encouraging assent, at the center of the theoretical and political elaboration of our movement, its reinforcement and its international extension. Their line was always that of the overwhelming majority of the International against the opportunists and sectarians. With all their forces, they worked to apply the method of revolutionary Marxism to the burning problems of our explosive and turbulent time, to break through our isolation and bind us to the real movement of the masses.

The greatest progress in our history was incontestably realized during this period, and the success, almost unanimously recognized, of the Third World Congress marked the highest point in this evolution.

Cannon, Stein, Warde, Burns have up to a very recent date all left written testimony, praising and often exalting this very work and this line. We will not hesitate to publish them all very soon.

Their 100% about-face of today dates only a few months back. How then to explain it?

When were they sincere: when they affirmed their total solidarity with the line of the Third World Congress, or when they today affirm, with an unheard-of cynicism, that we are quite simply Stalinists and even agents of the GPU?

If they now act in this way it is above all to safeguard the personal clique regime in the midst of their organizations that they consider threatened by the extension of the influence of the International as a centralized world party. Finally because at bottom they have *submitted to*, but not assimilated the line of the International toward a real fusion with the movement of the masses and its transformation into a centralized world party. Most often behindhand on the theoretical and ideological renovation of our thought and the tactical turns of our line, imposed by the sharp turns in the objective situation, they in effect represent in our movement the tendency which is showing itself inadaptable to the extraordinary new conditions of the extraordinary new period that the last war bequeathed to us.

Fixed on old ideas and schemas, educated in the old organizational atmosphere of our movement, they really represent politically and organizationally the sectarian tendency which recoils from the movement of the Social-Democratic or Stalinist masses or feels itself ill at ease within it. They further remain profoundly resistant to all real integration into a centralized world party.

The more they isolate themselves from the masses, the more they accentuate their verbiage on their so-called character as a Party and Leadership of the class, which they pretend to be, awaiting the direct influx of the masses

toward them. The more they refuse international integration into a centralized world Party, the more they accentuate within their little groups a caricature of a so-called Bolshevik regime, transforming their leaderships into bureaucratic cliques gravitating around a capricious and uncontrollable chief.

Their detachment from the concrete revolutionary reality of our time is such that all their political constructions and all their organizational methods cry out with absurdity, mythology, the ossification of Marxist thought and arbitrariness.

We have not been deceived about the existence of such a tendency, such a current within our movement, and the difficulty of living together with it. But we thought that the force of events and the dynamic of our positive work toward the masses would pull this tendency further along and diminish its dead weight.

Since the Third World Congress this tendency appeared in manifest retreat, justifying the best hopes. But we have certainly underestimated the process of decline which for a series of years has already been effected within the American organization, more and more isolated from the movement of the masses, which has led, together with the steep drop in its effective forces, to a desolating conservatism of thought in contradiction with the ideological and practical progress accomplished by our movement everywhere else. Isolation from the masses and the drop in effective forces were and remain in a great measure the result of adverse objective conditions. A leadership at the height of its tasks should have combatted their effects by accentuating its advance on the ideological field and by fusing further with the rest of the international movement.

That has not been the case, especially with Cannon. Far from saluting the progress accomplished everywhere else and the affirmation of an international leadership of which his own organization and himself was a part, he began to see in it a rival capable of intervening in his own "affairs" and disputing with him political influence over his "own" organization. His struggle against the American minority for him evolved mainly around the motive of a struggle "for power." He subsequently rose up against the IS as is clearly proven by the appended documents, for this same reason. He sought to construct a platform of "fundamental political divergences" with the International only afterward, with difficulty and bit by bit.

To the degree that he has fabricated certain political ideas, he has succeeded in manifesting all his political disorientation, the profound sectarianism of his thought, and the pressure to which he is submitted by the present reactionary environment prevailing in the citadel of imperialism. His methods of struggle equal his thought. Without even having formulated a clear political platform, he envisaged and built an "international faction based on military discipline" with the most heterogeneous political elements and groups: Tom whom he knew to be a strong opponent of the Third World Congress, the Johnsonites in his own organization, Bleibtreu whom he fought with the rest of the International and his observers at the IS and at the IEC.

With a big and generous hand he now scrapes together all the "orthodox," all the politically compromised and bankrupt, discontented, sectarian, confusionist, anti-Interna-

tional elements and tendencies who are dying and agonizing under the blows they have received from events and from the line and achievements of the International, lifts them to their feet and launches them with all his force against the International.

The meaning of his so brutal and brusque undertaking is still better illuminated if we place it within the framework of the political conditions external to our movement, that of a new pre-war period, of the preparation of the decisive struggle between imperialism and the concrete forces of the revolution, and the extreme social pressures which result, brutally exercising themselves upon individuals and movements.

The crisis which Cannon has caused to break out has its epicenter in the United States in 1953, and that is not accidental. On the other hand, it is not the first in our movement. It suffices to establish the parallel with what happened on the threshold of the last war and the ensuing dislocation within our movement. It is sad to observe that Cannon, who was then with those defending Trotskyism against the defeatists on the question of the Soviet Union, now places himself at the head of the Stalinophobic sectarians within the setting of the regime of the witch hunt now raging in his country, the bastion of preparation for the counter-revolutionary war.

However, we will see to it that the blow of the desertion and the demolition of 1939-40 is not duplicated this time on a parallel scale. The International has likewise changed since 1939, it has been strengthened and has been hardened. It will not come out broken into pieces from this crisis, but more consolidated than ever. We are convinced of that.

Cannon is grossly deceived if he believes that he can thus destroy an achievement already inscribed in the ascending course of History. In the best of cases for him, he will

reestablish only a constellation of vassal elements and groups gravitating around him, which are politically disparate and will lamentably disintegrate when the fever of their common struggle against the International will have subsided.

Comrades of the International:

The International was, remains and will remain a political movement and a principled organization. It will not compromise on its principles, it will never permit the expulsions effected by Cannon, nor those which Burns is preparing in England.

With all our forces we ask the IEC to stigmatize these measures, to enjoin those who have taken them to immediately withdraw them and to reintegrate forthwith the expelled members within their organizations.

Any other road followed by anyone whatsoever could only place them outside our movement. We are certain that the International, informed on the facts and the substance of this crisis, will firmly draw the same conclusions as ourselves and more solidified, more homogeneous, more confident than ever will resume its forward march. There is no force capable of extinguishing the spirit of living revolutionary Marxism or of halting the intimate fusion of the proletarian vanguard that is animated by it with the real movement of its class. There is no force capable in this sense of burying Trotskyism.

The IS Bureau

M. Pablo, P. Frank, E. Germain

November 15, 1953

The American organization mentioned in different texts, as is known, is not an organic part of the International and is not formally a section of it.

The IS Bureau

4. Letter from John Lawrence to the Members of the British Section

London
December 8, 1953

Dear Comrade,

The history of our international is a history of struggle and sacrifice—first to hammer out and defend a programme against all varieties of revisionism, and then to battle against sectarian and opportunist currents who have continually tried to bar the way to the penetration of the living working class movement by our sections.

This is not the first time that our movement here in Britain has been split over the issue of the defence of the international organization and the penetration of the mass movement which this involved. The WIL attempted it in 1938 and Haston again in 1947—but never have we witnessed such a rapid, unprincipled, and utterly criminal split from the international as that which has recently been prepared and consummated by the Cannon-Burns-Bleibtreu tendency.

In the U.S., Cannon threw out the supporters of the international on the flimsiest of pretexts and then, con-

temptuously brushing aside all opportunities for settling his hitherto *undeclared political differences* within the international, has publicly declared war on the leadership and the policy of the international and called for a split in our international on the eve of its most decisive tests.

In Britain, Burns—who similarly refused to make known his political differences and to discuss them within the international—carried through the same brutal operation against the supporters of the international and endeavoured to seize the press in order to turn it into an anti-internationalist rag from which to denounce the ideas and the policies of the movement. Before there had been a single discussion in the ranks in Britain, and against the declared opposition of a majority of the party members, this petty little bureaucrat, Burns, attempted to remove all the supporters of the international from their posts on the press and hatched a public provocation to carry this through.

But this rotten operation failed completely—thanks to the firmness of the comrades concerned and thanks to the loyalty to the international of the great majority of the British Section.

All this mad haste to tear down all that five years of fruitful work has built up has a deep underlying reason. Just as the middle class opposition fled from the international in 1940 over the question of the defence of the USSR—a split which the Old Man correctly characterized as "a capitulation to capitalist pressure"—so today in the U.S. another tendency led by Cannon has similarly capitulated to the pressures which American Imperialism has unloosed to condition the workers for World War Three against the Soviet Union.

In their scanty documents, the Cannonites have already shown their utter demoralization and pessimism before the perspectives of the coming world revolution and the political rag bag of this clique has been borrowed by Burns and incorporated into his all-time masterpiece of confusion "The Struggle Against Revisionism."

Comrade: This contemptible faction of Burns-Cannon which fled from the ranks of the international, not waiting even to present its political differences to the coming World Congress, has now not surprisingly united with every dissident and sectarian current to form an "international of refugees from the mass movement."

Such a course has been tried before and has always broken down because of the irreconcilable contradictions and antagonisms which sectarianism breeds. These people who cannot accept the discipline of the international are invariably petty despots within their own little circles. Their usual fate is to end up as high priests of dried-up cults—and this Burns clique will be no different.

The Burns group has demonstrated that it can build nothing, it can only tear down what has already been created. Its political funeral is assured. Devoid of any perspective, deprived of a press, without the great majority of the members of the section, and now *expelled from the international*—this pitiful grouping can only maintain the semblance of organization for a short time to come on the basis of the most abominable lies and slanders against loyal internationalists. Right now they are displaying their natural aversion to all forms of mass work by conducting a despicable "campaign" among the readers of the paper

to secure the reversal of recent attempts to penetrate with the paper deeper into the mass movement. In this also they will fail and fail miserably. There will be nothing left of this pretentious Burns outfit very soon—for surely its tiny handful of supporters will inevitably begin to question the sectarian course they have been dragged along to support.

I write this letter to you because you and others may still believe that Burns represents the official section. He does not—he has been expelled for his open support of the foul attempt by Cannon to split our international.

Now that you know the truth, comrade, I am sure that you will condemn Burns and Cannon and condemn also the contemptible conspiracy they have tried to hatch within the international. I appeal to you, as a loyal internationalist, to stand by the international and its only British section. Stand by its perspectives, its policy and its work we have jointly helped to create and carry through against many difficulties in the past five years.

We are holding a National Conference on Saturday the 12th December. If you want to preserve the international against the splitters and deserters, if you recognize that without the international we are as nothing in the coming titanic world class battles, there is a place for you at our conference. You do not have to be in complete agreement with every dot and comma of the I.S. documents for the 4th World Congress for you to place yourself in our ranks. We are not a monolithic, stalinist organization. We are based upon the principles of democratic centralism. There is all guarantees for democratic working out of policies. In their haste to run out of the international Burns and company have refused to avail themselves of this democratic procedure, and thus proved themselves totally bankrupt politicians.

Comrade: Join the British Section. Attend our conference. Contact the loyal internationalists in your area for the time and place. Long live the International!

Fraternally,
The IEC member for Britain
On behalf of the British Section

5. "They Desert, We Go Forward," by Michel Pablo

"Another crisis among the Trotskyists," say our enemies, or those who follow our movement superficially, from the outside, as amateurs, and who are not very much stirred by the evolution of the workers movement in general, its setbacks, its defeats or its successes.

However, by its very nature, the revolutionary movement is a lengthy, convulsive process, enveloped and intersected as it is by the explosive and tumultuous struggle of the classes in our epoch. There has not been any rest or peace in its ranks, nor will there be up to the final victory and completion of socialism.

Struggles of tendencies, of factions, splits are part of the dialectical progression of the workers movement. Only an intimate and profound fusion of the revolutionary Marxist vanguard with the real movement of its class could attenuate the scope and frequency of the convulsions.

But the vanguard does not at all form itself apart from

the class in order to ally itself and then become fused with it. It emerges, it is formed from the struggles of the class, and is subjected to all the repercussions of the evolution of the class struggle. The more profound and extensive its bases in the class are, the more chances it has to evolve in a less convulsive manner.

For example, such could have been the case with the movement of the Third International if its Leninist line of the first four Congresses had been maintained and if the Soviet Union had not experienced the bureaucratic degeneration in which it is still involved.

Trotskyism has experienced many crises and will probably go through others for this principal reason: because it has not been able to secure up to now, broad and profound bases in the class because the historical conditions until the aftermath of the last war did not lend themselves to it.

The other tendencies in the workers movement, reformism and Stalinism, are passing through an infinitely more profound and devastating chronic crisis than our relatively benign splits for a quite different reason: mainly because of the incompatibility of their line, reflecting the direct pressure of the bourgeoisie in the case of reformism or of the Soviet bureaucracy in the case of Stalinism, with the interests and aspirations of their mass base. Those who comment on the crisis of Trotskyism with complacency or skepticism would do well to look at what is happening around them in the other currents of the workers movement beginning with the crisis within the USSR.

But let us examine more closely the present concrete crisis our movement is passing through.

Here is a tendency including among its cadres some of the "oldest Trotskyists" of our international movement, with Cannon and the other American leaders, some Englishmen, some others here and there, which is revolting against the organization and line of the International, is detaching itself and preaching a new "regroupment" of "orthodox" Trotskyists. The documents, both those published internally as well as those we make public today, demonstrate clearly that up to very recently this tendency solidarized with the rest of the International and loudly proclaimed its perfect agreement with the line of the Third World Congress and the subsequent Plenums.

This fact alone demonstrates that, independently of the personal and conjunctural causes which have naturally existed, especially in the cases of Cannon himself and Burns in England and have played a great role in the form and precipitation of the crisis, there was an objective basis for the crisis which must be understood.

What has been the orientation and immediate objectives of the International's policy in recent years? To integrate our nuclei of the Marxist revolutionary vanguard into the real mass movement in each country in order to create thereby the revolutionary mass parties of tomorrow and at the same time to fuse them all into a genuine world Marxist revolutionary party, the International.

In the framework of what political appraisal and perspectives? Of an international situation characterized by the energetic preparations of a united imperialism is devoting itself, for war against the Revolution in all its forms: anti-capitalist states, colonial Revolution, international workers movement, and of the extreme polarization of opposing social forces heading toward a decisive and final struggle.

In this order of ideas, the instance of our attitude toward the organizations and movements influenced by the Soviet bureaucracy has held our particular attention. For, if we were ready to accept more particularly any orientation of our work toward reformist, certain centrist or national-revolutionary organizations and movements, the resistances were far greater in regard to a correct and non-sectarian attitude toward the organizations and movements at present still influencing the majority of the most politically developed elements and forces which are in practice directed by the force of circumstances against capitalism and imperialism.

In 1938 at the time of the proclamation of the Fourth International, at the apogee of the counter-revolutionary course of Stalinism in the USSR and in the world at its lowest level of influence upon the international labor

movement, our perspectives seemed to be those of a definitive defeat and destruction of Stalinism through the war which was rapidly approaching and through a direct rallying of the masses to our nuclei acting as independent poles of attraction from the outside.

This entire assemblage of predictions and of the correct tactic at the time was overturned from top to bottom by the different course taken by History. The Soviet Union came out victorious from the war and a whole constellation of other anti-capitalist states has arisen. Far from disappearing, the organizations and movements influenced by the Soviet bureaucracy or bound to it in one way or another, have acquired an importance unequalled in the past.

At the same time through the conjunction of the revolutionary forces outside and within the USSR, which have ripened meanwhile, Stalinism, that is to say the rule of the Soviet bureaucracy in the Soviet Union and its grip on the international workers movement, has entered into its phase of decline. Stalin's death precipitated the evolution.

Consequently the crisis of international Stalinism takes the aspect, not essentially of an organizational dislocation but of a fermentation and differentiation contained within it from which it is necessary to profit.

Far from losing their importance for us, the organizations and movements influenced by the Soviet bureaucracy have on the contrary acquired all the more importance in the present situation.

However that is not the opinion of Cannon and his international tendency. In reality they remain genuinely "orthodox," faithful to the schemas and tactic of 1938. They proclaim themselves revolutionary parties of the class and its leadership, acting independently from the outside, expecting the masses taught by Stalinist and reformist treachery to leave them and rally directly around themselves.

They have the same attitude as in 1938 toward the Stalinist organizations and movements as well as what concerns the USSR. Regardless of the colossal facts and events which have since happened.

For them these organizations and movements are quite simply reformist and counter-revolutionary "through and through." When these are small they have to be ignored completely, or when they are relatively important they have to be demolished from the outside.

In the USSR, on the other hand, they see no notable change. Everything continues essentially as before. Malenkov is a second Stalin and makes concessions only to the bureaucrats and restorationist elements. For example, Bleibtreu, their new-found ally, writes on this subject without laughing, that the whole new agricultural policy undertaken in the Soviet Union is designed to block the numerical progress of the proletariat which threatens the bureaucracy, by the compulsory reconversion of a part of its forces into peasants through a return to the land.

The greatest pedantries, the most desolating ossification of thought, are spread through the columns of *The Militant* and the Bleibtreu organ presented as the quintessence of "orthodox" Trotskyism, 1953.

However, in Cannon's case the matter is not limited to a crying tactical sectarianism, sterility and a tragic-comic dogmatism of thought. Cannon and his tendency function in the United States in 1953, the citadel of imperialism,

the advance-post of the counter-revolutionary war, saturated with Stalinophobia, McCarthyism, the "witchhunt" and "spy scares."

An organization and policy like those of the International today demands political intelligence, courage and sacrifice from American Trotskyists. They are like blazing garments on the bodies of the militants who bear them in this country. More than hollow phrases on "orthodox Trotskyism," the "program" and "principles" are needed to carry them.

Cannon, who so hastily casts off these garments and furiously breaks the walls of the prison which our international movement has become for him with its conception of centralized world organization and its policy of genuine fusion with the real forces of the revolution; Cannon, who recaptures his "liberty" just now on the eve of the new war and rises up as the champion of the "anti-Stalinist" struggle in the United States in 1953, demonstrates this by all that: that he is not only the representative of the sectarian and ossified tendency produced by the isolation of our movement, but of that part which is buckling before the reactionary pressure now prevailing in the United States, indirectly promoted in a deformed manner through a series of ideas and methods of struggle of the Cannonite faction.

Herein is the basic explanation of the so-sudden and brusque coup d'etat of this faction, of its shameless lies and calumnies launched against the International.

Cannon, who praised us up to May, 1953 and counted on our support to conduct his unprincipled struggle against the proletarian minority of his organization, discovered our "capitulation before Stalinism" practically only in July-August, 1953.

When, so to speak, we "betrayed" the revolt of the German workers in East Germany and the "Revolution" of the French workers during the August strikes. In effect Cannon needed a "proof" of our "treachery," located precisely after May, 1953, a sort of duplication by us of the sudden Social Democratic treachery of August 4, 1914, belated, but "decisive."

However, an enormous dose of cynicism and effrontery proper to people caught red-handed in betraying under hostile social pressures the policy and organization to which they had declared themselves attached for years was required to distort facts and texts to such a point, to dare to drape themselves in all their dignity as "old and orthodox Trotskyists" and to give themselves over to such

grotesque exhibitions of confusionism, sectarianism, political adventurism and to such revolting factional operations in the name of "program, principles, tradition."

The truth is that the Cannonites precipitately deserted our international movement without daring to face it in its democratic organisms, before any political discussion, while the Fourth World Congress was being thoroughly prepared, having already unmasked and exposed themselves through the unprincipled struggle they have sought to conduct against the International and the confusionist, pessimistic and sectarian platform they were forced to begin to fabricate the better to embroider this unprincipled struggle.

Naturally no one in the International who knows its democratic functioning, the almost unanimous votes and decisions of its Congresses and Plenums in the recent years as well as the documents and true political positions taken by all concerned, could swallow the far-too-great lies to which the Cannonites now have recourse. Their hypocritical indignation against our "uncontrolled, secret and personal regime," our "methods," is aimed only to camouflage their own sordid operations in this domain and to facilitate the unprincipled combination which this faction is now practicing on the international plane. Its methods and morals equal its consummated degeneration. Can they really think they can deceive History in this way and mark out even a small road in it and build any future in that way? Cannon cries out "stop thief" hoping to catch some ignorant or simple-minded people in his net.

However, one would indeed have to be naive to believe that our time is propitious for such operations. The faction of Cannonites, by the methods it uses and the ideas it strives to express, is a group condemned by history. It represents the current of our movement which went through the events of the war and the post-war period without understanding them, without having been able to find the capacity of readjusting itself to new conditions, and thus blazing a salutary trail into the heart of the real mass movement. With the approach of the new war it is now decomposing ideologically and morally.

As for us, we will so act that its desertion, as lamentable and distressing as it is, instead of weakening us still further clarifies our ideas and our perspectives, better specifies our way of constructing revolutionary mass parties, binds us more closely to the real movement in each country and forges the International.

November 22, 1953

6. *"An Attempt at an Anti-Trotskyist Atlantic Pact,"* by Ernest Germain

A grave crisis has just broken out within the Trotskyist organization in the United States, the Socialist Workers Party. Hardly had the political discussion in the international Trotskyist movement opened up than the SWP leadership acted to expel more than a third of the members of its party, including all the principal working class sections. This bureaucratic expulsion is unprecedented in the history of the Trotskyist movement. The expelled comrades committed no public act of indiscipline. What they were

condemned for is their defense of the political line of the Fourth International which the SWP leadership itself pretended to agree with up to a few months ago. They have been expelled for their ideas.

To divert the attention of the international Trotskyist movement from this act of bureaucratic expulsion, the SWP leaders have at the same time opened an unspeakable attack against the leadership and the political line of the International. Without setting forth their suddenly dis-

covered divergences within the movement, without even previously calling them to the attention of the members of the Fourth International, they immediately publicly appealed to them to eliminate its present leadership.

This appeal is backed up by ignoble calumnies collected from the dustbin of imperialist agents: the International has capitulated to Stalinism; it is opposed to the withdrawal of foreign troops from Germany; it has abandoned the perspective of a political revolution in the USSR to overthrow the Soviet bureaucracy, etc., etc.

Naturally there is not a word of truth in all that. The SWP leaders who express their approval and even enthusiasm for the work of political elaboration of the present leadership of the International, including the work of the Third World Congress of the Fourth International, are fabricating "political divergences" in a cynical manner to justify their attack against the existence of a world party of the socialist revolution.

For that is precisely what is involved.

The SWP leaders, themselves guilty of bureaucratic actions of unheard-of brutality, pretend to defend democracy in the International against the organizational interventions of its leadership in the national sections. In reality the leadership of the International has never expelled anyone for his political opinions. It has always safeguarded the functioning of the Trotskyist movement according to the healthy rules of democratic centralism. It has always defended both the right of the majority to apply its political line in public and the right of the minorities to defend their conceptions within the movement. But it defended these rules on the *international* scale and not only in the framework of a single section. It thus expressed the maturity of the revolutionary movement conscious of the impossibility of an adequate political elaboration in the framework of a national section. It is because the SWP leadership took account of the fact that the International would never accept the bureaucratic expulsion of the majority of the worker cadres of the Trotskyist party in the United States that it suddenly discovered the utilization of "Cominternist methods" in the International. As Trotsky so pertinently wrote: Sectarians who complain about the "methods" of the Fourth International as a rule maintain a despotic regime within their own groupings.

The SWP leaders are not embarrassed to heap up calumnies on lies, lies on calumnies. They speak of the International leadership as "usurpers, agents of Pablo." They take over from the little Bleibtreu-Lambert clique which deserted the Fourth International, the accusation that the International is oriented toward "Pabloism." In reality, the "usurpers" who direct the Fourth International, were elected at the Third World Congress by representatives of almost thirty sections, by unanimous vote (including those of the Bleibtreu-Lambert tendency which had not yet at that moment deserted the Fourth International.) These same "usurpers" have been confirmed in their function by each meeting of the International Executive Committee held since the Third World Congress. The SWP leaders

are not embarrassed to accuse this collective leadership of the International of "supporting itself on the apparatus." A more ignoble lie cannot be imagined; the SWP leaders know better than anyone else that the international leadership has no "independent apparatus." It has no material force, no weight other than that of ideas, of the correct political line it is defending, confirmed many times by the facts. These so-called "capitulators to Stalinism" have been the only ones to predict the crisis now shaking the regime of the Soviet bureaucracy. They were the only ones to predict the rebirth of the movement of the masses against this bureaucracy as it has already been manifested at a future stage in the USSR itself. It is thanks to this political line that the international Trotskyist movement has succeeded in dealing with the world situation for three years without any disorientation, and with increasing confidence in its own future, confirmed for the first time by brilliant organizational successes in numerous countries. Therein is the origin of the unity of the present leadership of the International. But that remains un-understandable to little apprentice-bureaucrats full of scorn for political ideas and having appreciation only for "the apparatus."

The irresponsible action of the SWP leadership, deliberately trying to split and disintegrate the Fourth International, incontestably delivers a harsh blow to the international Trotskyist movement. Above all it delivers a blow to the American Trotskyist organization, it destroys an important part of its achievement, of 25 years of patient efforts to construct a revolutionary cadre on a principled basis. It above all results from the stagnation and slow disintegration of this organization, derailed by a leadership which has lost its principles under the pressure of the reactionary atmosphere imperialism imposes in its country.

All the sections, all the members of the Fourth International will find in their political convictions and in their organizational loyalty the strength to repel scornfully the arguments of the splitters and calumniators. The International will continue on its road, the road of a compact political majority expressing itself in the Congress prepared under perfectly democratic conditions. The International will continue to build itself as a united world party regulated by a single discipline and not as a vague federation of national sects, each dominated by unprincipled "bosses." The International will continue to root itself in the real movement of the masses in each country, resolutely turning its back on all the adventurers and fantastic sectarians who think that repetitions replace the necessity for constant political elaboration, that invectives replace the necessity for a patient effort to convince the proletariat of the correctness of revolutionary ideas. Herein is the road of Trotskyism, of Trotskyism which is being verified and realized in the historical facts of our epoch. This is the road which will lead to the growing affirmation and final victory of the Fourth International.

7. "After the Treachery of the Cannonites": An Appeal
by the Bureau of the International Secretariat

(Extract)

Comrades:

The American majority has just betrayed our cause.

In an infamous communique published in its paper *The Militant*, it breaks in practice with our international movement, calumniously accuses it of having capitulated to Stalinism and takes over the infamies and ignoble lies of the confusionist and sectarian Bleibtreu group in France, with which it is now allied, as well as with all the sectarian Stalinophobe and politically compromised and bankrupt elements, in order to fight us.

On the other hand it announces the exclusion of the American minority, about a third of the organization, which includes the majority of its working class base, especially the proletarian cadres of the automobile and steel industry in Detroit, Flint and Buffalo.

It launches an appeal "To the Trotskyists of the Whole World" to rid themselves "of Pablo and his agents" but it dares not present itself before the leading organisms of the democratically and unanimously elected International, the IEC and the IS, to back up its grotesque accusation and ask for the change of leadership it now desires.

The International is a democratic organization which does not bear any comparison with the gangster-like clique procedures now used by the Cannonites against their own organization and against our international movement. This mode of behavior will forever remain a shame in the history of the latter.

It can only be explained by the complete degeneration of the Cannonites, resulting from their prolonged isolation from the masses and from the terrible pressure exerted on all social milieu in the United States by American imperialism preparing its counter-revolutionary war. From every viewpoint it is absolutely inexcusable.

The Cannonites who cynically exhibit their anti-International fury and joyously embark upon chasing "Stalinists" out of their own organization and the International, are really adapting themselves to the atmosphere prevailing in the citadel of imperialism and camouflaging under "extreme left" language their own buckling under this reactionary pressure.

In the most lamentable manner they exemplify the ultimate consummation of sectarianism and Stalinophobia in the present concrete conditions of the preparation by the united forces of imperialism of its counter-revolutionary crusade. All tendencies in the workers movement are now subjected to the supreme test: with or against the real revolution in our time, with or against the real movement of the masses in each country.

The crisis Trotskyism is now passing through is rela-

tively benign compared to what is happening and will further take place amongst the reformists and Stalinists. It is a deep-going social and class differentiation, but highly progressive in the last analysis, through which the entire workers movement placed face to face with its own destiny, is passing: the decisive and final struggle between the revolution in all its forms and the counter-revolution in all its forms, now relatively close at hand.

Individuals with their faculties of political intelligence and revolutionary courage diminished by their long life of frustration and isolation from the masses, deformed, who have lost their sense of reality and the measure of their own capacities and their objective importance in our movement, in history, are now desperately trying to turn back the wheel of our revolution, of our destiny, and to thrust us once again into sectarianism and the most desolating ossification of thought.

Comrades:

Let the dead bury their dead. Let us redouble our energy. Let us rapidly repair the losses. Let us resume our irresistible march forward.

There is no force now capable of burying living Trotskyism, living revolutionary Marxism.

There is no force capable of burying the Fourth International.

The Fourteenth Plenum of the IEC will be held in December and among other matters will decide the definitive date of our Fourth World Congress, which will once more bring together the very great majority of the Trotskyists, won and animated by the spirit of the Third World Congress.

Collect the biggest possible financial means to sustain the functioning and activity of the International. Let each leadership pose this question with extreme acuteness in its section.

The greatest sacrifices are now necessary to maintain and increase the activity of the International.

Put above any other obligation ample and prompt aid to the International. We have to go through a difficult moment, to hold on, to act by multiplying our efforts, by developing a spirit of sacrifice to the highest point, to quickly conquer the current of deserters and capitulators before the pressure of the class enemy who in a desperate and ignoble attempt aims to stab the International cowardly in the back.

Let the IS know as soon as possible your efforts and their results.

Long live the Fourth International!

November 20, 1953

8. *The 14th Plenum of the International Executive Committee*

The 14th Plenum of the International Executive Committee was held December 26, 27, 28, 1953.

The agenda was as follows:

- a. The crisis in the International.
- b. Preparation of the 4th World Congress.
- c. Reports on the summer trips.
- d. Changes and enlargement of the IS.

The following members did not attend, though they were duly informed: United States majority, Burns and Jacques.

We publish herewith the principal resolutions and documents adopted by the 14th Plenum of the IEC.

A reply both to the Open Letter published in *The Militant* of November 16, 1953 and to the split appeal of the "Committee of the Fourth International" was adopted unanimously by the Plenum and will reach the sections in a few days.

Resolution on the Causes and the Lessons of the Crisis in the International

After a long discussion of the crisis precipitated by the Cannonite faction in the International, the 14th Plenum of the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International states:

1. That the immediate origin of the crisis was the justified refusal of the international leadership, and especially the IS, to give the majority leadership of the SWP carte blanche to smash the minority with the tacit approval of the International, before the political discussion had fully revealed the basis of the political differences, and even independently of them. This method of procedure lies at the bottom of the organizational concepts of the Cannonite faction, as regards their own organization as well as the International. This concept consists of the belief that their majority rule in their organization is consecrated for all time, and that the role of the International is one of an unprincipled ally of this consecrated leadership. It thus represents, in the last analysis, a bureaucratic clique concept, and a complete negation of the character of the International as a centralized world Party with a principled line both politically and organizationally, a Party within which the national organizations are fused.

2. The background of the crisis is nevertheless political. That is to say, even if the International had allied itself with the majority in their unprincipled struggle against the minority, with a longer period of "peace" most likely then ensuing between the majority and the International, still the basic political differences would not thereby have been really eliminated. In other words, this would really have been at most a tacit compromise, with the American majority interpreting the line of the International in their own way and carrying it out in their own way in the United States, and the International closing its eyes to their conduct and contenting itself with managing its "own" domain, that is, outside the United States.

The present crisis highlights the sectarian concepts that the SWP majority leadership—which, moreover, is clearly suffering the pressure of the present reactionary climate in the United States—is impregnated with. Having started, in 1946, from the perspectives—which have proven false—of an upsurge of the American workers' movement parallel

to that of the workers' movement in other parts of the world, this leadership was unable to readapt itself in the course of events to the real development of the situation in the United States. Moreover, to the degree that the situation worsened, developing in a direction diametrically opposite to that of the situation in the rest of the world, it imposed on the SWP leadership a reactionary pressure which diminished considerably their ability to comprehend and to reorient to the international situation. All this has finally led the SWP leadership to objectively betray the cause of the International, and to unfold and to spread within its midst a set of political and organizational ideas of a sectarian, Social-Democratic and capitulationist character before the pressure of imperialism.

The sectarian and retrogressive development of the SWP majority leadership in the recent period is embodied both in its concepts of the perspectives and tactics in the United States, and in the way it conceives of the international revolution at the present stage and the place of the Russian question in the international revolution.

In its estimate of the present situation and perspectives in the United States, this leadership is essentially carried away by the idea—advanced sometimes directly, sometimes with a certain constraint—of the precipitate outbreak, or at least within a brief period, of the revolutionary crisis in the U.S., which will turn the entire present situation upside down, nationally and internationally. This estimate and perspective have led the SWP leadership to believe, or make believe, that the Trotskyist cadres, already formed, will then finally and fully play their role at the head of the masses, who will flock directly to the present Trotskyist nucleus. Moreover, such a perspective for the near future would really make the American revolution the center of the international revolution and would automatically—and correctly—minimize all the revolutionary successes hitherto won elsewhere. The question of Stalinism, furthermore, would also be automatically settled by the perspective of the close and direct victory of Trotskyism in the United States.

3. What we have here is obviously an estimate and a perspective which are wrong from beginning to end, which falsify both the tactics in the United States and the evaluation and view of the international situation. So long as the American Trotskyists will not accept the present reality in their own country and will not understand that the revolutionary eruption of the American proletariat can come about only as a result of blows infinitely more important than a few strikes limited to immediate demands, a few moves and a few political actions of a liberal-democratic and non-proletarian character, or a small economic recession but not a real major economic crisis, they will be building on sand. Only the blows resulting from a major economic crisis or a war will seriously shake the present foundations of the relative power of American imperialism. And there is every reason to believe that the real revolutionary eruption of the American proletariat will come only after the outbreak of the war, which the reactionary bourgeoisie will precipitate rather than let itself be caught in the catastrophic vise of a major economic crisis. Meanwhile, it is the progress of the world revolution which saps the power of American imperial-

ism, and prepares and makes worse the conditions under which the major revolutionary crisis of the future will break out.

Historically, the American revolution seems, as before, to take its place most probably as the final link in the chain of world revolution, and not as one of the next successive links.

Furthermore, preparation for the virtually inevitable struggle of the revolutionary forces throughout the world against the last bastion of reaction—Yankee imperialism—must be freely accepted with all its consequences.

4. From all these considerations flow the precise national and international tasks of the American Trotskyists. Nationally, their tactics at the present stage must be flexible and oriented toward the practical activity of their forces in all the living political milieus that are polarizing the working masses. This is necessary in order to avoid the petrification resulting from a long isolation, and at the same time to facilitate both the development of the best elements and currents in these milieus toward proletarian and class positions, and also our own fusion with the genuine left tendencies that will develop in the future through various channels and under various forms.

It is in the process of such a fusion with the larger revolutionary forces of the working class which have not yet had the occasion to reveal themselves, that the genuine revolutionary mass party of tomorrow will be formed, through a series of phases and forms as yet unforeseeable.

In this sense, the slogan of the formation of a Labor Party based on the unions must be the center of the present Trotskyist propaganda, both as the concrete form—and by far the most likely one—of the political awakening and organizational polarization of the proletarian movement for an entire period, and also as a concrete method of combatting—no matter with how little effectiveness, since it is imperative that the task be done—the American imperialist policy of reaction and war.

Internationally, the American Trotskyists must stand forth as the best defenders within the United States of the revolutionary conquests and the revolutionary forces throughout the world, in whatever forms they may take: the USSR, China and other anti-capitalist states, the colonial revolution. They must denounce and fight against the war preparations of American imperialism, not in general but concretely, as preparations which are directed against the USSR, the other anti-capitalist states, the colonial revolution and revolution in its every form. They must truly base themselves on the World Party of the International; only this, moreover, will make it possible for them—as for every other section—to withstand victoriously the hostile pressures and to maintain themselves on a correct class line.

5. The so-called optimism of the SWP majority leadership concerning the present situation in the United States is translated in practice into sectarianism on a national plane and into incomprehension and a spirit of defeatism on the international plane.

They are obliged to keep advancing the slogan of a Labor Party, but deep inside they fondle the idea that this is by no means the indispensable road, and that the "most likely" road is that the masses will flock directly to the SWP. (See, among others, Cannon's letter to Warde of July 2, 1953, and Dobbs' final speech at the May 1953 Plenum.)

Moreover, after the expulsion of the minority and the break with the International, this leadership, disavowing with a stroke of the pen its entire struggle against the "pessimism of the minority," sounded the alarm on the fascist danger in the United States, "greater than in 1939," which it has suddenly discovered in McCarthyism.

On the international arena, they place the accent on the "threat of barbarism"; the growing danger of capitalist restoration in the USSR; the limited importance—despite everything—of the Chinese revolution, the Korean war, the other anti-imperialist conquests and victories; and the power of imperialism—which we "underestimate." They see the revolutionary character of the objective situation as dependent upon the prior existence or non-existence of mass Trotskyist parties; and in general they revise into its opposite the Third Congress evaluation of the relationship of global forces, on which the policy and the tactical conclusions of the International have been fundamentally based since that time.

6. The international extensions of the Cannonite faction embrace the sectarian elements and tendencies running through our movement which have developed as a consequence of our long isolation from the masses, and which have experienced but have not understood or assimilated either the meaning of the fundamental changes that have come about in the post-war situation, or the policy of the International corresponding to these changes and to the new situation.

The Bleibtreu group in France, which has suddenly become the ideological leader of the international Cannonite faction, has clearly manifested its character as both sectarian and adventurist in relation to the real movement of the masses in France.

The Swiss leadership, in addition to its extravagant positions on every question and its systematic opposition to the policy of the International since the war, has succeeded so well in camouflaging its activity in the real movement of the masses in its country that neither the movement led by the Social-Democrats nor the various movements under Stalinist leadership have had the slightest reason to worry about them.

The tendency of the leadership of the Chinese section, put to the test by historical events, was responsible for the blindest and most catastrophic of policies when confronted by the revolutionary movement of the Chinese masses and the victory of the revolution in that vast country. Following the line of "orthodox Trotskyism" they led the section to complete ideological confusion and practical dismemberment.

The Burns group in England is reverting to the thoroughly sectarian and anti-internationalist traditions of the WIL.

The coalition of elements and groups in the Cannonite faction is not based on a principled platform, but on a common foundation of sectarianism in relation to the real movement of the masses and the common practical rejection of the dual and contradictory character of the USSR and of Stalinism. This is clearly manifested, moreover, by the "principles of orthodox Trotskyism" formulated in the declaration of the so-called "Committee of the Fourth International" which consist, in effect, of a pedantic repetition of the first truths of the Communist Manifesto on Capitalism and Socialism, plus the taking of a summary position,

sectarian and mechanical, on the question of Stalinism which negates all that the International has learned in this sphere and can only completely disarm our movement once again.

As for the concept, the structure and the functioning of the International as a centralized world Party, all these elements and groups are distinguished by a common rebellion against such a concept, and they actually oppose to it the concept of a federated union, a sort of Bureau of "ideological liaisons and exchanges," with full autonomy and freedom of action for each section.

7. The existence of these elements and groups in the International, nevertheless, was and still is possible, on condition that they respect the discipline and the rules of functioning of the International as a centralized world party.

Contrary to the Cannonite concept of the party and the International, a concept which, when political differences arise, wipes out the importance of the organizational structure of the International, overthrows all organizational rules, takes every difference down to "fundamental principles," designates everyone in opposition as "class enemies," and thus from the outset carries on a struggle of extermination that inevitably ends in split—contrary to this, the International, faithful to the true spirit of the teachings of Lenin and Trotsky in this sphere, is always open to all elements and tendencies who respect its discipline and its rules of functioning, and accords them full and real rights in its midst.

The policy and the leadership of the International are determined by the free play of discussion and the decisions democratically reached by majority vote at its World Congress and IEC Plenums. Under these conditions, anyone who leaves the International shows simply that he refuses to submit to the rule and decisions of the majority of the international movement.

8. The lessons of the crisis that has just broken out contain a grave warning for our movement. They reveal sharply the advanced decomposition of an important part of our forces who suffered most deeply the effects of their isolation from the masses and became profoundly disoriented in the extraordinary new conditions following the war.

If there is not an ideological reorientation in the direction outlined by the Third World Congress, and if we do not intervene with all our forces, at no matter what cost, in the real movement of the masses, there is the danger that this decomposition may overtake the entire movement.

On the other hand, the objective conditions have never been more favorable than at present for the penetration and success of the ideas of revolutionary Marxism which we represent. Never have the opportunities been greater to capitalize on the 30 years of tenacious efforts of the international Trotskyist movement.

To the degree that we achieve a real fusion of our forces in a centralized world party, carrying out our practical work on a national plane in the real movement of the masses in each country—to that degree will we see to it that the present crisis is resolved by the greatest leap ahead ever made by our movement.

Adopted unanimously

Resolution on the Minority in the United States

The 14th Plenum of the IEC warmly salutes the U.S.A. Trotskyist tendency faithful to the International.

It is convinced that this tendency, drawing the same lessons as the rest of the International from the betrayal and the unprincipled struggle of the Cannonite faction against the concept, the structure and the functioning of the International as a centralized world Party, will be able to root a real section of the Fourth International in the U.S.A.

The IEC therefore decides:

a. To maintain henceforth regular organizational relations with this tendency, and to consider them in practice as the continuators of the U.S.A. section of the Fourth International, with all the rights and duties due, according to the statutes of the International, to each section.

b. To leave the final decision on this question to the Fourth World Congress.

c. To include in the pre-Congress discussion, and on the agenda of the Fourth Congress, the question of the policy to be followed at the present stage by the U.S.A. section of the Fourth International.

d. To ask them to consider as an essential task for an entire period, and at any rate until the World Congress, to keep the members of the Cannonite faction informed of the international pre-Congress discussion and of all the political documents of the International; and finally, to miss no opportunity to let all the Cannonite members know that the U.S.A. section of the Fourth International is fully open to them, with no conditions other than acceptance of the discipline and the rules of functioning of the International.

Adopted unanimously

Resolution on the English Section

The 14th Plenum of the IEC warmly salutes the English Trotskyist majority which remains faithful to the International and which held its special Conference December 20, 1953.

It decides:

a. To establish henceforth regular organizational relations with these comrades and to consider them in practice as the continuators of the English section of the Fourth International, with all the rights and duties due, according to the statutes of the International, to each section.

b. To leave the final decision on this question to the Fourth World Congress.

c. To ask them to consider as an essential task for an entire period, and at any rate until the World Congress, to keep the members of the Cannonite faction in England informed of the international pre-Congress discussion and of all the political documents of the International, and finally, to miss no opportunity to let all these members know that the English section of the Fourth International is fully open to them with no conditions other than acceptance of the discipline and the rules of functioning of the International.

Adopted unanimously

Resolution Suspending Members of the International Committee

The 14th Plenum of the IEC decides:

a. To suspend from membership in the International all members of the IEC who signed the split appeal which appeared in *The Militant* of November 16, 1953, or the appeal of the "Committee of the Fourth International," or who support the appeal and endeavor to rally the sections of the International on this basis.

b. To suspend from their posts in the leadership of the sections all those who signed these appeals, or who support them and endeavor to rally the sections of the International on this basis.

c. To leave the final decision on these cases to the Fourth World Congress.

Adopted unanimously

Resolution on the Fourth World Congress

The 14th Plenum of the IEC decides:

a. To set the definitive date for the Fourth World Congress as the period from May 1 to June 15, 1954.

The IS is authorized to fix the exact date for the Congress within that period.

b. To proceed with establishing the mandates according to the rules followed in holding the Third World Congress.

c. To put as points on the agenda:

1. Report on the situation in the International.

2. Political report.

3. "Rise and Decline of Stalinism."

4. Our integration into the real movement of the masses.

The question of the present situation and perspectives in the United States, as well as the tactics to be followed there, will be dealt with both in the Political Report and in the report on "Our Integration into the Real Movement of the Masses." This applies also to the Chinese question, the Bolivian question, and our tactics in general in each country of Latin America.

The draft of the Political Resolution, and of a resolution on China, will be sent to the sections not later than February 15, 1954.

d. To give the Fourth World Congress a broader character by inviting a number of individuals in the revolutionary movement who are now coming closer to the Fourth International. To start giving immediately, in all the organs of the International, the widest possible political publicity to the significance and importance of this Congress.

Adopted unanimously

Appeal of the 14th Plenum of the International Executive Committee to the Leaderships and Members of All Sections of the International

The crisis provoked by the unprincipled Cannonite faction aims in essence at the destruction of the International as a centralized world Party. What is at stake in this crisis is not simply the present policy of the International; it is its very existence. The Cannonites have clearly declared in their documents, and still more clearly indicated in their actions, their deep-going hostility to a centralized World Party.

Actually they are fighting in order that each one of them —

Cannon, Burns, Bleibreu, the Swiss — may preserve his domain and carry on within it the policy he wishes, without having to submit to the control and discipline of the International movement organized as a centralized World Party.

This is the most certain road to the finish of Trotskyism as the highest expression of the profoundly internationalist character, politically and organizationally, which Trotskyism requires if it is to survive and conquer as the revolutionary Marxist movement of the proletariat and of the world colonial masses.

The 14th Plenum of the IEC is unanimous in its belief that the struggle of the Cannonites aims at the criminal destruction of the International, and that the political differences — painfully concocted *a posteriori* — should not blind anyone to the real meaning of what they are doing.

The International was and is an organism strictly directed by a healthy regime of democratic centralism. As a centralized World Party, it has functioned hitherto far more democratically than any of its sections, and in any case without any comparison with the methods and means employed by Cannon, Burns, Bleibtreu and the Swiss in their own organizations.

The 14th Plenum of the IEC calls upon all the leaderships and all the members to understand clearly that what is involved here above all is a crisis that puts in jeopardy the existence of the International. It appeals to all, regardless of whatever political opinion or difference, to safeguard above all the greatest acquisition of our International movement, its essential strength, *the International as a centralized World Party*.

In the pre-Fourth Congress discussion and at the Congress itself, every tendency has full opportunity to present its views and to fight for their success. The only condition is discipline to the rules of functioning of the International as a centralized World Party.

The 14th Plenum of the IEC calls upon the sections, members and sympathizers of the Fourth International to demonstrate the greatest spirit of sacrifice, more than ever in the past, in order to make possible the functioning of the International and the best possible meeting of the Fourth World Congress.

In this connection, the Plenum decides: that every member, in every section without exception, is asked to contribute the sum of 1,000 French francs, or \$3, in the period of January 1 to March 31, 1954; that the leadership of each section undertake in any case to collect a total sum calculated on the basis of such a contribution per member; that upon receipt of this appeal, the leaderships launch a vigorous campaign to collect this sum, and that they assign a leading comrade especially to this task; that they send the funds thus collected to the IS no later than April 15, 1954.

It is especially on this that the holding of the Fourth World Congress depends.

Adopted unanimously

Decisions on Composition of the International Secretariat

The 14th Plenum of the IEC decides:

a. To replace Burns with Comrade Collins.

b. To enlarge the IS by adding Comrades Edward (Germany) and Bos (Holland).

Adopted unanimously

9. *The Socialist Union of America*

(From the January-February 1954 issue of *Quatrieme Internationale*)

The Trotskyist minority that was bureaucratically expelled by the majority of the leadership of the SWP, a minority that includes the better part of the working-class membership of that organization, has formed the Socialist Union of America, 863 Broadway, New York City.

It has already held its first regional conference in Detroit, which was a great success. Seventy-five delegates were present, all working-class cadres from the automobile and steel industries. A fund-raising campaign for \$5,500 has already achieved marked success.

In addition, it has begun to publish a monthly journal, *The American Socialist*, which seeks to put forward—in a lively and educational format and without making unwarranted concessions to vulgarization—revolutionary

Marxist politics in a way particularly suited to current conditions in America. Judging from the first issues that have come out—which are put together very well, both technically and from the point of view of the contents—this ought to facilitate the evolution toward revolutionary Marxism on the part of the broader layers of advanced workers. From these first issues of *The American Socialist*—which we salute—we draw attention to several articles and studies on the present conditions and perspectives of the American workers movement, the danger of McCarthyism, the situation in the USSR, etc.

Living Trotskyism carries on with increased vigor in the United States.

10. *Letter from the Bureau of the International Secretariat "To the Leaderships of all Sections"*

Confronted with the firm resolutions of almost unanimously all the sections and of the 14th Plenum of the IEC, which condemn its splitting action, its lies and revolting slanders, what we may now well call the *unprincipled clique* of the Cannonites replies by decreeing the "liquidation by the Pabloite IS of the International Executive Committee elected by the 3rd World Congress."

Did they imagine that the international leadership would congratulate the splitters without sanctioning them, or that it would yield, frightened in the face of their literally gangster-like tactics?

Actually, no longer entertaining any hope of winning over democratically the overwhelming majority of the International outside of its framework, the Cannonites thus put the seal on their own split with the International. They proclaim themselves the "International," avoiding the issue of presenting themselves at the 4th World Congress, and prepare their own "Congress."

They have begun to attack individual members of the IS, as well as the IS, as "usurpers." They now extend their attacks to the overwhelming majority of the IEC, the cadres and sections of the International. The "Pabloite clique of usurpers" turns out to be the overwhelming majority of the International.

Lying and bluffing to the face of their own ranks which is kept in the most complete ignorance of anything concerning the real reactions of the International (they have not published any of the answers by the sections to their "Open Letter"), they send hypocritical bouquets to the sections of Ceylon and Bolivia, they "greet" them and seek to have us believe that these sections still "hesitate" between their counterfeit "Committee" and the IV International! They claim further, always in the same cynical and lying manner, to have the self-styled "majority" in England. They now are launching a new "scandal" that of Peng, whose allegiance to the "Committee" they now announce.

There is every reason to believe they have utilised this

last-mentioned deliberately for a scandal, and that Peng lent himself to this task with eagerness. Peng, for two years now, has left nothing undone to break off all direct contact between the IS and the International and the Chinese group of Hongkong. No correspondence exists with this group, and no document of the International can have gotten through, Peng using as pretext the absence of reliable addresses.

These facts are well known to all members of the IEC, including the observer Warde and Burns, present at the 11th and 12th Plenums of the IEC where this question was brought up. In actuality Peng never discontinued correspondence with these men on the spot, and maneuvered to destroy the majority tendency of the Chinese section which declared itself in agreement with the line of the International on the Chinese question and condemned its own policy. By his political positions, his character, his mentality, Peng was ready from way back to join such a "Committee." The split in the International gave him an unexpected chance to save the face he had lost through his bankrupt politics and to rehabilitate himself, thanks to Cannon's generosity, as an "authentic representative of Trotskyism in China," naturally of "orthodox Trotskyism."

But having done this, Cannon, the "principled" man who now, equipped with such criminal cynicism, juggles with the most burning problems and ideas, most serious at the present time, clearly indicated once again where he stands politically, what is the true political character of the political tendency he sponsors, as well as the value of his "principles."

Peng was visited a first time by Comrade Germain immediately after the publication of the "Open Letter" of the Cannonites so that the former could make known his own position. He then declared "in favor of Cannon" and his splitting action. In spite of this declaration he was summoned to the 14th Plenum, as was done for all other IEC members without exception, including the splitters Burns

and Jacques and the Americans. Comrade Privas, under instruction of the IS, had set an appointment for the very day of the Plenum in order to assure his presence; he waited for Peng *for over an hour* without the latter making his presence.

In a conversation subsequent to the Plenum, between Peng and the IS Bureau, he pretended to still desire to continue discussion with the International and to remain in it. But at that very moment he was sending letters to his acolytes of the "Committee" denouncing the "scandal" as well as a "resolution" of the "leadership" of his group dated the 10th December 1953 supporting the splitting act of the Cannonites. The "Committee" of these "principled" men is now enlarged with another bluffer, not to say more.

Some day it will clearly come to light—we are sure of this—that Peng, exploiting the absence of contact by the International with the Chinese section, an absence of which he was purposefully an interested artisan, maneuvered to present a "resolution" at the time specified by the "Committee" abusing the good faith of the majority of Chinese Trotskyists. In acting thus, Peng delivers a supplementary blow to the blows already struck on them by his bankrupt policy—prize specimen of "orthodox Trotskyism"—in the light of the experience of the great Chinese Proletarian Revolution.

COMRADES:

The Cannonites, disapproved vigorously by the very great majority of the International, want to burn the last bridges with the latter. They well know that the 4th WC is open to all Trotskyists respecting the discipline of the International, as a *centralized world party*. But it is the *reality* and the *discipline* of the International as a centralized world party which they flee.

Their unprincipled coalition has no other reason for existence than their hate and their common struggle against the International.

It is only outside the framework of the International, outside of its discipline, that each one of them can act as he pleases, as they do now, breaking all discipline of thought, developing all sorts of false ideas, contradictory, sectarian and confusionist ideas and directing their organizations like uncontrollable tin gods.

Cannon, the "principled man" who swore only in the name of Lenin and Trotsky to cynically cover over his unworthy methods and his thought in full defeat, now open to all winds from any direction, as was the case for all those who left the International, has transformed *The Militant* into an organ of slander and tearing down the International. That is how he understands the transformation of this organ into a more agitational paper against the alleged views of the minority whom he reproached for wishing to remove the paper from the level of understanding of American workers!

In May 1953, still undergoing the atmosphere of the International, he greeted in his final speech to the Plenum

of his organization:

"According to all signs, a rebirth of the October Revolution, in all its splendor and power, is dawning in the Soviet Union, bringing into the world arena a factor independent of all others, the immeasurable power of the new Soviet proletariat, which now rivals the powerful American proletariat in numbers and social weight."

Now he no longer sees anything in the USSR, gazing through the spectacles provided him by far-sighted and intelligent collaborators, but the pure and simple continuation of the Stalin regime by Malenkov's team, the "new Stalin" "bloody purges" on the same scale as 1936-38, the usual "self-criticism" on order by the Soviet intellectuals, concessions not to the masses but to the "restorationist" elements alone, setbacks, grave crisis and failure of Soviet economy.

Together with his acolytes of the "Committee," he sheds warm tears over the execution of the arch-policeman Beria, "promoter" according to Bleibtreu of the "liberal" wing of the bureaucracy, an execution which constitutes "an open challenge to the Soviet toilers" and a "new blow to the Soviet Union"!

The pressure of the Soviet masses, favored by the international revolutionary progress, as well as economic and cultural forward steps of the USSR itself despite the bureaucracy, putting the latter on the defensive, wresting from it concessions, no longer exists for Cannon, and this whole process is interpreted by him exactly in the opposite direction. However events and facts more and more deep-going will completely smash the confusionist sectarians who, to the degree that they claim to be Trotskyists, dishonor and ridicule Trotskyism before the advanced workers, thus feeding in the best way grist to the Stalinist slanders.

Comrades:

Let us prepare with greater fervor for the 4th World Congress and let us make of it *the broadest, the most enthusiastic assemblage of world Trotskyist cadres, representatives of living revolutionary Marxism*.

The presence of the greatest possible number of delegates from all sections at the next congress is of *cardinal importance for the future of our movement*.

No sacrifice will be great enough to achieve this goal.

We ask you to push with untiring energy the campaign for the political preparation of the Congress and the sending of delegates.

We ask you to make the campaign for 1,000 French francs (\$3) per member, as decided by the 14th Plenum, a complete success: to take charge firmly, scrupulously of the collection of these sums and their speedy remittance to the IS once the whole commitment due from the section has been collected, without forgetting the deadline: April 15, 1954.

Bureau of the IS, Feb. 1, 1954

11. *Letter from the International Secretariat to the Revolutionary Communist Party (Chinese Section of the Fourth International)*

France
Feb. 15, 1954

Dear Comrades:

The IS has just been acquainted with the answer of your CC to the Open Letter of the majority of the leadership of the SWP. Your answer raises many questions. We wish to give you our point of view on the main ones, i.e., your contacts with the International, the fundamental political divergences in the International, and the nature of the enterprise undertaken by the majority of the SWP.

Your Contacts with the International

In your document, you say that you have had "very weak contacts with the International" owing to "extremely difficult circumstances." Therefore you add that in the recent crisis in the International due to "technical reasons" you have received *only* the Open Letter of the SWP and no other document. It is very true that the relations of the IS with you have always been very weak owing to circumstances independent from you as well as from us. It is very true that in the years following the end of the war our contacts with you have been very irregular. However since about two years we have not had direct relations with you, because *Comrade Peng told us that there was no safe address to write to you and to send you documents.* For the last two years we have only learned from time to time from Comrade Peng that he received private letters from China but that it was impossible for safety reasons to send you the material of the international. The only letter he delivered us from you was a letter dated November 1953 asking us questions about the situation inside the International, at a time when the SWP majority had already split from the International. This letter was also without an address and Peng told us again that there was none to send you an answer.

Until recently we believed Peng's word. Today we must observe that his statements about the lack of safe addresses have started about at the time when the IEC adopted a resolution on the Chinese revolution against which he voted. These facts are well known by all the members of IEC and also by Manuel, an observer at the sessions of the IEC.

Concerning the relations between Peng and the International, it is not true as he has written recently that he was not convoked to the 14th Plenum. He was informed of it more than a fortnight before by Comrade Germain. He received, as usual for the other sessions, an appointment from a French comrade, under instructions of the IS, to bring him to the session. This comrade waited for him for more than an hour. To this 14th Plenum were convoked not only Peng, but also the members of the IEC who had joined with the SWP in a public attack against the IS.

The Political Divergences

In your answer it is briefly stated that we have

"capitulated to Stalinism." We are accused of having said that "Stalinism will gradually transform itself and adopt the Trotskyist program under the pressure of the masses." In no document of us are formulated such things and they even cannot honestly be deducted from any IS document. Until recently such an accusation was thrown against our movement by the POUM, Shachtman, the Yugoslavs . . . This slander has now been taken up by the SWP majority.

If you would have had our documents, especially the one most criticized by the Cannon faction called "Rise and Decline of Stalinism" you would have known our real positions on the present process of disintegration of Stalinism. You would have seen that they have nothing common with the distortion presented by Cannon, but that they are a careful attempt made by the overwhelming majority of the International to apply our Trotskyist methods to a situation greatly changed by comparison with the past, and to deal with new problems in the light of the events in the Soviet Union, in the last year. The whole International—and Cannon and Peng—at the time of the Third World Congress—thought that one of the main dangers for our movement would be to misunderstand the present situation and to live on past schemas. The majority of the International—and the Cannonites—had drawn this lesson first of all from the events in the Yugoslav and Chinese revolutions.

Everyone in our movement is entitled to have other views about the way through which Stalinism is disintegrating as on any political problem. We would welcome a discussion with facts and arguments. But to distort our views and slander us about "capitulation to Stalinism" is not a discussion. The SWP Open Letter was first published without any previous discussion with the International. Only later did they publish another document aiming to give a political justification to their split.

We have to emphasize strongly the unprincipled attitude of the Cannonites on the question of the Chinese revolution. They approved the resolution adopted on this question by the 11th Plenum in June 1952. They since then had never said that they were mistaken and for what reasons. But in their Open Letter they defend a position opposed to one they voted for. Moreover because we defend this very position they supported for nearly two years they accuse us of "capitulation to Stalinism." Such an unprincipled attitude can be explained only by their intention to associate Peng in their fight against the International.

There is also another fundamental divergence between the Cannonites and the International. Our movement has been built and can live only as a centralized world party. We are for democratic centralism on an international scale and not only a national scale. Cannon who for many years defended such a point of view has repudiated it in the following terms: "We conceive of internationalism as international collaboration, in the process of which we get the benefit of the opinions of international comrades, and they get the benefit of ours, and by comradely discussion and collaboration we work out, if possible a common line." (May 18, 1953)

Collaboration only, meaning that he is against a centralized world party and in favor of a bureau of international contacts without any political authority. This is truly the biggest revision of Trotskyism. And Cannon applied these views in the recent conflict. For a long time there has been a discussion inside the SWP. The IS did not put the question on the agenda of the IEC not (as Peng pretends it) because we wanted to hide the matter, known by all sections which received the SWP internal bulletins. We did not put it on the agenda, first because the divergences on the American problems were not clearly formulated and also because we were conscious that Cannon would have admitted from the International nothing else than a pure and simple approval of his tendency and of the measures of expulsion he wanted to take against the minority. Last May, at a session of the CC of the SWP, the two tendencies came to an organizational truce, we, the IS, greeted this decision. Unfortunately, for Cannon this truce was only a move to prepare—as he wrote confidentially to a friend four days later—a faction "on a military basis" against the IS. At that time, he had not discovered our alleged "capitulation to Stalinism" nor any important political divergence. He did it, according to his own words, preventively in case the IS would organize a factional fight in the SWP. Three months later we learned about his organization of a secret faction. We wrote to the American majority warning it of the danger of such an attitude and proposed a meeting in order to have a frank explanation. This letter as well as others from us (the copies of which have since been presented to the world movement) remained unanswered. The IS was only informed in October that a new session of the CC of the SWP would be held in November. Neither we nor the members of the American minority were told the agenda of this session. In the first half hour of it the minority was expelled. The IS, the IEC, even the individual members of the IEC had never received previously a single document of the SWP leadership expressing a political divergence with the International internal discussion. The whole International learned about divergences, "capitulation to Stalinism" and so on when they received the issue of the Militant with the Open Letter. It was no more a discussion to convince someone, but a fight against the bodies elected by the Third World Congress.

The Aims of the Battle

The SWP majority did not ask from the sections, as you seem to have understood by your letter, "the dismissal of Pablo and the reorganization of the IS." This could have been done and can be done by bringing this proposal to the proper body, the IEC, or even better to the coming Fourth World Congress, which had been convoked by the 13th Plenum of the IEC, and for which the discussion was already open in the International. The SWP majority started by a public attack in its public organ, and asked all the sections to split with the elected bodies of the FI, launching the accusation of "capitulation to Stalinism" against positions it had approved.

Immediately after this public attack a "Committee of the FI" was created. You find in it: a minority of the British section led by Burns—the Swiss section, a sectarian group which has always been on the verge of indiscipline in the International—and the French group, Bleibtreu, which had been expelled for indiscipline from the International in 1952 with the vote or the approval of Burns, Peng and the SWP.

This Committee is not seeking to convince the International that its policy is wrong, it does not try to change the policy of International. This committee has never presented a genuine political platform upon which it wants to win the International. It is only carrying a public struggle against the International. That is the reason why the overwhelming majority of the sections have taken a clear stand against the split organized with the Open Letter and the Committee. The following sections: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Ceylon, Chile, Cyprus, France, Germany, Great Britain (majority), Greece, Holland, Italy, Indochina, Peru, Uruguay, that is the overwhelming majority have said that their organization is only the FI and condemn the split committee. All these sections, not an alleged "Pablo clique" know as well as Cannon or Peng where is Stalinism and revisionism and bureaucratism, and they would certainly have taken a clear position if they had seen manifestations of such orientation in the leading body of the International.

The SWP majority, their allies have organized their committee against the International because they are actually opposed to the idea of the International as a centralized world party, and intend to follow each one in his country his own policy, whatever is the opinion and the decision of the International as a whole. In their alliance there is no unity of position on essential problems, but they unite on one point: each one is free to act as he likes in his own country. In the present world situation where every man and every organization is submitted to tremendous pressures from alien forces, the main source of power to resist such pressures is in our international organization and its unity. Who acts otherwise makes himself most vulnerable to the alien pressures. Already there are signs of such pressures in the policy of SWP.

We will do our utmost to have this letter delivered to you. We have no confidence in Peng to honestly inform you on the situation in the International; we take in consideration that during two years he said that there was no safe address to send you the documents of the International, but as soon as the Open Letter against us appears, you receive it. Please write us where we can send with all due precautions the documents you have not received for such a long time. You will then be able to take a position after a full knowledge of the opposed points of view and the facts. We are confident that after having studied them, you will—as all the sections of the International mentioned above—condemn the splitters and remain inside the International.

Yours fraternally,
The IS

12. Letter from the International Secretariat to the Canadian Section of the Fourth International

France
Feb. 22, 1954

Dear Comrades,

We have received the minutes of your leadership of Jan. 17, 27 and 30th. They unfortunately confirm its division in two groups, one of which with Comrade Kane approving the split action of the Cannonites and the ideas they defend at present.

We have only to regret very much this change of Comrade Kane, as well as the so strange arguments he puts forward in his statement to justify it. Before all the documents of the International answering the slanders and lies of the Cannonites are made known to you and discussed in the organization for a full preparation and discussion of the Fourth World Congress, Comrade Kane taking position for the splitters accuses the unanimous decisions of the 14th plenum of the IEC of prohibiting "the true development of the discussion not only in the Canada party but in the entire International!" In the same statement Comrade Kane considers that the Cannonites are an "international fraction." That is true, but they are not acting as a fraction in the International. They have built a fraction which has broken publicly and in an unqualified manner the elementary discipline of the International, whilst we were in full preparation and discussion of the Fourth International. They openly state that they do not recognize any rule of the International. Their aim is to destroy it as a centralized world party and they are trying to build instead a loose federation of national groups in an "International Committee" actually satellites around the SWP.

The majority of the SWP never started a political discussion within the movement, it started by an open split. The only argument given by Cannon to justify this attitude is that the political positions which we, the IS, defend are revisionist. But many of the political positions condemned today by the SWP majority had been adopted by the whole movement, and approved by the SWP majority, during the last three years. The SWP majority had also approved the expulsion of the Bleibtreu group for indiscipline. Of course everyone is entitled to think that he had made mistakes and to correct them. The normal procedure was for the SWP majority to ask the International during the discussion for the Fourth World Congress, which had already been open, to reconsider the positions taken by the Third World Congress and the measures taken since then by the IEC. The world movement would have discussed and at the end of the discussion adopted or rejected proposals made by the SWP majority or have found some solution. And it would have been everyone's duty to abide by the decisions adopted by a majority of the movement, whatever they are.

But the majority of the SWP ignored the movement, proclaimed revisionist even positions they had previously defended, made an open split and called every section and every Trotskyist to ignore the International as it was. Now Cannon even says that the split is "forever," and their International Committee, though knowing the answers of the overwhelming majority of the sections, speaks of some preparations of some World Congress

in opposition to the one regularly prepared by the elected bodies of the International.

Your leadership was shocked by the publishing of the Open Letter in *The Militant* without any previous attempt of a discussion.

The actions made by the SWP majority are not directed against this or other comrade, they are blows against the whole movement as a centralized world party. The measures taken unanimously by the 14th Plenum are flowing normally from the importance of the *actions*—not the opinions—of the splitters against the structure of the International.

What else could we do? Let things go? What organization could actually claim to be an organization, remain as such if, faced with so revolting action of the Cannonites, it did not react and let them do their destructive work?

The sanctions taken by the IEC testify that this international leadership has shown its high sense of responsibility. First of all, it is not true that, by these sanctions the Cannonite supporters are forbidden to participate in the international discussion and the World Congress. The IEC as well as the IS have always said that they are ready to discuss any proposals from them on the best way to carry the discussion and the preparation of the World Congress but in the organizational framework of the International. The sanctions do not prevent them even now to participate in the discussion and at the World Congress.

On the other hand, the sanctions do not prevent comrades, like Comrade Kane or any other leading comrade, to fight for political positions or a political line different from those contained in the documents presented by the IS. Let us remind you that we published at the opening of the international discussion the counter-document presented by J. Monnier for the Swiss section. Nobody at that time spoke of a split or of sanctions. The discussion was launched normally. Today Comrade Kane or any comrade in the movement is perfectly entitled to share the political criticisms and grievances formulated at present by the Cannonites. *The sanctions decided by the 14th Plenum are intended only for those who would try to bring a section to split with the International and to rally the dissident committee.* That is the only thing which is in question about the sanctions.

Comrade Kane is an old member of the International. He knows what is a political opposition inside the International and the difference with a group trying to split the world movement when it had started a large discussion for the World Congress. No one has ever forbidden Comrade Kane to express opinions different of those of other members of the IEC. As all other members of the IEC we have sent him last summer the documents prepared for discussion by the IS and asked his opinion. He has still time to do it before the Congress.

Comrades: The Cannonites are trying to destroy the greatest asset of our international movement, the International as a centralized world party. Read Cannon's speech to his fraction on "Internationalism and the SWP" in May 1953, even before he thought of any political divergences with the IS, of any alleged "Pablism." There is no doubt that on this very question of the structure of the international movement he is doing the most important revision of Trotskyism. On the other hand, we are

sure that it will not take a too long time before everyone will see clearly that their criticisms of the International rely on horrible lies and reflect actually their own confusion, pessimism and revision of the dual and contradictory nature of Stalinism.

To leave the International and join an unprincipled alliance (as we prove it in our documents) would be the biggest mistake you could commit, the biggest crime against your own organization and an efficient work among the masses of your country. A split with the International would—as it is doing now for the Cannonites—make you very weak against hostile social pressures.

TAKE THE TIME TO KNOW AND DISCUSS ALL THE DOCUMENTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL ON THE CRISIS AND THE PREPARATION OF THE WORLD

CONGRESS. Thus you will be able to judge the scope of the confusion and lies of the Cannonites.

PARTICIPATE IN THE WORLD CONGRESS! SEND TO IT YOUR DELEGATES! YOU WILL SEE THERE THE LIVING PROOF OF THE REALITY OF THE INTERNATIONAL BY A DIRECT CONTACT WITH ITS OVERWHELMING MAJORITY PRESENT AT THIS CONGRESS. ADJOURN YOUR FINAL DECISION AFTER HAVING HEARD THE REPORTS OF YOUR REPRESENTATIVES TO THE WORLD CONGRESS.

We are asking all members of the section to discuss our present letter.

With our fraternal greetings,
The IS

13. Excerpt of a Letter from Sherry Mangan to Michel Pablo

Dear G:

On receipt of your note of 8 January, I went to 116 [116 University Place in New York City, the former national headquarters of the SWP]. . . .

I did affectionately curse you for asking me to do this, because, just as I expected, I was very cordially received, and overwhelmed with invitations to meet everybody privately—most of which I fended off. But I shall now have some very awkward evenings, I can foresee. Only to Han. [Joseph Hansen] did I spit out anything: he was so friendly that my wit got the better of me, and I said on parting: "Thank you for your cordial reception. But look out. Remember Terence-Patrice's [pseudonyms used by Mangan] reputation as 'the great unifier'. Maybe in another year I'll be back with full powers and reasonable propositions; and then you'll be embarrassed." Forgive me for this frivolity, but il etait plus fort que moi.

May I add that the atmosphere in University Place is, despite all, very busy, active, efficient, and hopeful—which is more than I can say off hand for our people, whose paper, as I read it each month, is never against the general line, but so dilutes it that, as my girl remarked the other night, the Farmer-Labor "Progressive" [a liberal monthly] sounds much more radical. I can't too much blame them, because the atmosphere here is irrespirable. Still . . . You remember my old formula about legality: that one prepares the second-line trench with the most foresighted technical care, but one does not abandon the first-line trench until literally blasted out of it. . . .

Affectionately,

12 January 1954

SECTION X: IN REPLY TO THE OPEN LETTER

[The following statement was issued as a reply by the International Executive Committee to the "Letter to Trotsky-

ists Throughout the World."]

"To the Defense of the Fourth International!"

The open letter of the National Committee of the SWP, published in *The Militant* of November 16, 1953, is the most shameful manifestation of an unprincipled policy which has ever occurred in the history of the Trotskyist movement. It reveals the existence of a terrible sickness which has possessed a part of the Trotskyist cadres in the USA and the no less terrifying rapidity with which this sickness has progressed. It is necessary to tear away from the authors of the Open Letter the claim to be covering themselves with

a political argument. It is necessary to expose their real object; to provoke an unprincipled split in the Fourth International. It is necessary to reveal the sad degeneration of method and policy which characterizes the effort to reach such a criminal objective.

"The Pablist Minority"

The Open Letter selects Comrade Pablo, secretary of

the International, as the principal target of its attacks. It designates with contempt the leadership of the Fourth International, in the term "Pablo and his agents." It accuses them of constituting a "secret personal faction." It treats the international leadership as a "Pablist minority" which by bad faith and with bad intentions, claims to represent the majority of the movement and "prepare a foul blow" to impose its line "by splits and expulsions."

What are the facts? The political line of the Fourth International, the political resolutions adopted by the leadership of the Fourth International, are the product neither of Pablo nor of some fancied "Pablist" but the work of the leading bodies, regularly elected, of the collective leadership of our world movement. The present International Secretariat is composed, in addition to Pablo, of representatives of the four most important sections in Europe. It was elected by a unanimous vote of the International Executive Committee, itself composed of members of all the important sections of the International. The International Executive Committee, in turn, had been elected at the Third World Congress by the representatives of 27 sections of the International, including the representatives of the Bleibtreu group, the new allies in Europe of the authors of the Open Letter. What this Open Letter calls the "Pablist minority" is therefore the official collective leadership of the Fourth International, the authorized representative of the collectivity of the international organization.

The preparatory documents for the Fourth World Congress, which suddenly revealed to the majority of the National Committee of the SWP the existence of a "revisionist" danger in the Trotskyist movement, were drafted collectively by the International Secretariat, were unanimously approved—subject to minor amendments—by the Secretariat, and received the written approval of the majority of members of the International Executive Committee. Insofar as documents have been published, they have been published in the organ of the International Executive Committee, "Quatrieme Internationale" in just the same way as such documents were published before the Second and Third World Congresses of our International, and as they were published before the Founding Conference of our movement in 1938, as was the custom of the Communist International in the time of Lenin.

The cynical accusation which is now hurled at the collective leadership, universally recognized, of the Fourth International, that it represents only a "small minority" which is supposed to have usurped its functions, this accusation turns back completely against its authors. It shows clearly the unprincipled organizational attitude of the majority of the SWP leadership towards the world Trotskyist movement. They have basically nothing but deep contempt for the Fourth International, its sections in 35 countries, its Congress and its democratically elected leading bodies. For them, all this represents only a handful of individuals, a "small minority." The true orthodox Trotskyist movement, for them, is simply the leadership of the SWP itself and some "key-men" scattered around the world. As long as the world movement, its cadres and leading organisms, approve the actions of the leaders of the SWP then the latter can collaborate with the former and generously accord to them "liberty for every violent criticism." But as soon as they fear that differences may appear, they exclude the major part of the movement

from the body of the faithful, establishing by definition that they can be dealing only with "liquidators" and "capitulators before Stalinism."

But the extraordinary incoherence of the accusations in the Open Letter suffice to unmask its authors as vulgar slanderers. For the majority of the National Committee of the SWP does not shrink from revealing to the world that the elected leadership of the Fourth International "is working *consciously* and *deliberately* for the liquidation of the Fourth International." It is not therefore a question of the objective consequences of a policy which they consider to be wrong. No, it is a question of conscious and deliberate plans. Every reader of the Letter will conclude that the leadership of the Fourth International is accused of being composed of Stalinist agents, an accusation frequently raised by the imperialist press since our movement declared itself to be unreservedly for the support of the Korean people and the Chinese people during the Korean war. But the leadership of the SWP have discovered in the space of a few weeks that for years they have been supporting and approving the actions of Stalinist agents, that they have filled their press and their bulletins with the writings of these same agents. These same lucid minds write in the same Letter that, to consolidate the leadership of the Fourth International—which they now accuse of wishing knowingly to destroy our movement—they have refrained from all criticism of it. Can one imagine a more lamentable failure of judgment? Does it not strangely resemble the Stalinist affirmation that Lenin was surrounded for years only with agents and enemy spies as intimate collaborators?

The monstrous methods used by the authors of the Open Letter take on an even more disturbing aspect when you compare their present writing with those of the very recent past. On the occasion of his 60th birthday, Cannon sent a letter of greeting to the members of the International Secretariat, expressing his admiration for the "splendid job" that they were doing. In July 1952, the Political Committee of the SWP unanimously adopted a resolution on the Third World Congress, which began in the following way:

"The 15th National Congress of the SWP salutes the work of the Third World Congress as an important realization of international Trotskyism in the field of analysis of Trotskyist strategy and tactics."

In February 1953, a secretary of the SWP wrote to Comrade Pablo: "We are not speaking diplomatically when we say that we are fully in agreement with the line of the Third Congress. In the struggle which will develop we shall defend this line."

On the 6th of April 1953, another secretary of the SWP described to Comrade Pablo an interview with Cannon in the following terms: "There is no divergence with the line of the Congress or with any important document since. He believes that they have marked a great step forward in re-adapting our thought to the changed reality of the post-war world. We have forced ourselves here to assimilate these ideas and apply them in the specific conditions."

And even, on June 4, 1953, in a letter sent to its European representative, giving him instructions for the organization of a secret faction in the international Trotskyist movement, Cannon reaffirms his fundamental agreement

with the line of the Third Congress! What can be said of a revolutionary leader who is incapable over a period of years of distinguishing "the conscious and deliberate liquidation" of our movement from "a great step forward" of the same movement? How can we believe that the brusque change of front on the authors of the Letter has a political character, when we are confronted with these quotations?

Revisionism?

The Open Letter accuses the "Pablist minority," that is to say, the normally elected leadership of the Fourth International, with the crime of "revision of the Trotskyist program." We ask for proofs of this accusation. What proofs? Would someone dare to question the rightness of Cannon's judgment?

Fortunately the Trotskyist movement possesses a different tradition. In the long and hard school of struggle, it has learned not to believe anyone's unsupported statements, to attach no importance to gossip or statements by third parties, to analyze documents carefully, to separate rigorously the truth from half-truths and lies. This healthy tradition in our movement, of instinctive watchfulness and critical spirit which dominates our movement will not help the prestige of Cannon in the world Trotskyist organizations, confronted with the slanderous accusations brutally made against the leadership of the Fourth International.

Has the leadership of the Fourth International "revised" the Trotskyist program on the question of the USSR and Stalinism? What a shameful lie! This program characterizes the Soviet Union as a degenerated workers' state, the Soviet bureaucracy as a privileged caste which has politically expropriated the proletariat, the nature of this caste being dual and contradictory with a world-wide counter-revolutionary record of activity. Hence on the one hand the need to defend the USSR unconditionally against imperialism, and on the other hand the need to overthrow the bureaucratic dictatorship by a political revolution to ensure the victory of Soviet democracy in the USSR. No document coming from the International leadership or one of its members changes a comma in these programmatic conceptions on the question of the USSR. They have been underlined, reaffirmed, reinforced by proofs drawn from recent events in each resolution worked out by the International Secretariat or the International Executive Committee, since they were reconstituted in 1946 and even more recently in the draft preparatory resolution for the Fourth World Congress. The *Militant* and the *Fourth International* themselves have published in recent months numerous articles from members of the IS to reinforce and defend these orthodox Trotskyist conceptions on the question of the USSR. There exists no trace of proof to the contrary.

The leadership of the Fourth International has perhaps revised the Trotskyist program of political revolution in the USSR? What a shameful lie! The draft resolution, "Rise and Decline of Stalinism" (published in the November issue of "Quatrieme Internationale") repeats in numerous places that only a victorious political revolution in the USSR, only the uprising of the Soviet masses following the example of the masses of East Germany, will open the

road to the socialist regeneration in the USSR. It salutes the events of the last year and a half as proofs that the Soviet masses are reawakening, beginning slowly to regroup their forces and will take the road of political struggle. It explicitly warns the Trotskyist movement against any illusion that the socialist regeneration of the USSR has already begun. The review "Quatrieme Internationale" publishes in its issue of November 1953 a polemic by a member of the IS against the writer Deutscher precisely upon this question. The IS intervened in the most energetic fashion in the discussion within the Ceylonese section to fight such ideas. And now the authors of the Open Letter claim, without any proof, to attribute to the international leadership ideas which it has clearly combatted!

Has the leadership of the Fourth International refused to "express the revolutionary political aspirations of the insurgent workers of East Germany" and to call for the withdrawal of the occupying troops? What a shameful lie! The declaration of the IS on the events in East Germany, intended not for the agitation of the German workers in the course of the events but to explain these events correctly for the use of world proletarian opinion, and published in *The Militant* as in the whole international Trotskyist press, characterized these events as the beginning of a political revolution, and formulated a precise program of revolutionary demands which proved to correspond at every point with the demands advanced by the insurgents themselves. As to the slogan of "withdrawal of Soviet troops" during the events, two things should be said: (a) The German workers, for tactical reasons and correctly kept this out of their *agitation* so as not to have to fight from the beginning both the German Stalinist bureaucrats and the Soviet troops at the same time; (b) The propaganda for this always correct demand should always be made within the framework of the more general demand for "withdrawal of all occupying troops from Germany."

It is only with these two conditions that the Trotskyists, especially the American Trotskyists, could show their will effectively to help the German workers without helping the game of the imperialists.

The analysis of the events in East Germany published in the official organ of the IEC, "Quatrieme Internationale," called specifically for the withdrawal of all occupying troops from Germany. The world Trotskyist press was filled with articles saluting the beginning of the political revolution against the bureaucracy in East Germany, branding the counter-revolutionary repression by the Soviet bureaucracy and its Stalinist agents — articles written by the members of the International Secretariat, the "revisionist Pablist minority." The "capitulators to Stalinism" in the leadership of the Fourth International did not just chatter about the political revolution. They took steps to rebuild a secret revolutionary organization in East Germany itself.

Camouflage?

All these facts are well known to the leaders of the SWP majority and their allies in Europe. Every man of normal intelligence, moreover, will find them by reading any public Trotskyist organ. The authors of the Open Letter themselves dare not deny it. But they keep in reserve

a special argument for anyone who may oppose these facts to their unfounded accusations. They write that the "Pablists" aim to "inject their conciliation towards Stalinism by small doses . . . this is the explanation of the strange ambiguity of many of the Pablist formulas and their diplomatic lack of clarity." That is all. That suffices, it appears. Cannon at least appears to think that this is sufficient to provoke the disintegration of the Fourth International. We think that it is sufficient to reveal the terrible methods to which Cannon must now resort!

Proofs? Documents? Speeches? Resolutions? An analysis? Actions? Current activity? Who is interested in all that? For the prophets of Revealed Truth, a phrase picked out here and there and brutally distorted are quite enough to characterize the policy and leadership of an organization like the Fourth International. There are no secrets for them; they probe into the hearts of the leaders of the Fourth International and there discover that they are really revisionists and criminal liquidators.

But this method of accusation arouses in all of us echoes which we cannot fail to recognize. Who were the sages who claimed, before Cannon, that all the activity and all the writings of a group or a person represent nothing but a camouflage of his real intentions? Poor Harry Truman, who can be proud of a career well filled with services rendered to his imperialist class and who will go down to history as the man who tried to check the rise of the colonial revolution by starting the Korean war, has not this former President of the USA just been accused in his turn of capitulating before Stalinism because he dared to express his disagreement on a secondary question with Senator McCarthy? And was there not another Joseph, yet more sinister, who explained confidentially to his supporters that all the revolutionary activity of Trotsky, all his writings, all his efforts to combat imperialism and defend the USSR was no more than a vulgar "camouflage" of his real criminal intentions revealed in a single phrase, naturally distorted: "It is necessary to eliminate Stalin"?

The world revolution, the supreme truth of our epoch, needs neither lies nor calumnies to defend it, said Trotsky. Why do the majority leaders of the SWP resort to the most contemptible witchhunting methods of McCarthy and Stalin against the Fourth International? Why are the only arms of which they dispose the arms of lies and slander. Is this fact not sufficient to condemn the whole policy of this leadership as a policy without principle and the whole course on which they have embarked a course towards political suicide?

"Liquidators"

The Open Letter accuses the leadership of the Fourth International of wishing "knowingly and deliberately" to liquidate the world Trotskyist organization. For an accusation of such gravity two proofs alone are offered in this letter: It is claimed that the leadership of the Fourth International has "slanderosly distorted" the political positions of the Chinese section of the FI denying that it constitutes "genuine representatives of the Chinese proletariat" and has gone so far as to white-wash the murder of the Chinese Trotskyists by the Mao regime. They claim further that in the course of the last general strike in France in August 1953, the French section of the FI

became "jointly responsible" for a real betrayal of the revolution committed by the Stalinists, and crowned this "joint responsibility" by "officially denouncing Trotskyist militants to the Stalinists."

The ignoble effort to mobilize the Chinese Trotskyists who died for the FI for the purpose of destroying that organization, represents a new record "low" on the part of the authors of the Letter. Their contempt for truth is equalled only by their contempt for the Trotskyist readers to whom they address themselves and whom they do not give credit for any memory or political intelligence.

In fact, the IS and the IEC have published two strong public protests against the repression inflicted on our comrades by Mao's regime. These protests were published in all the international Trotskyist press, including the Militant. But we have learned from Trotsky never to confuse a revolution with its leadership, nor a leadership which consciously strangles the revolution with a leadership which accomplishes it partially with a thousand mistakes and hesitations. Whoever cannot understand these differences ought to refrain from engaging in revolutionary politics. It is unfortunately a fact, recognized by many cadres and leaders of our Chinese section itself—as numerous internal bulletins published by the IS witness—that the leadership of this section, far from having always given proof of a "firm, principled attitude" has made catastrophic errors. Even after the decisive offensive of Mao's armies began, it continued to defend the demand for the reestablishment of peace and convocation of a Constituent Assembly, confusing the ebb of the revolution with its flow. Even after the proclamation of the Chinese People's Republic, it hesitated for two years before recognizing that Mao was not in the process of repeating 1927, that is to say, reestablishing bourgeois power, but was in the process of liquidating this power. Until a recent date it has defended the point of view that the Chinese CP is a peasant party. All these errors in no way justify, we must say, the repression carried out against these comrades, who have loyally contributed to the fight to reinforce the People's Republic of China, to fight the capitalists and defeat the imperialists in Korea. But this repression in its turn cannot prevent us from criticizing what was incorrect and fighting for a correct political line. The defense of our Chinese comrades cannot be adequately done if one adopts a false analysis of the reality in China and if still today one closes one's eyes to the gigantic importance of the Chinese Revolution.

The majority leadership of the SWP which in another document ridicules the IS for being infected with "revolutionary romanticism" because it salutes the enormous extension of the revolutionary movement of the masses in most colonial and semi-colonial countries, suddenly discovers, on information from its friend Bleibtreu, that a revolution was betrayed this summer in France. For not having denounced this betrayal, naturally committed by the Stalinists, the leadership of the Fourth International in its turn has "betrayed."

In reality the general strike of four million workers and employees in the public services in France was not the beginning of a revolution nor even, as the Letter claims, the most important general strike in French history. By contrast with 1936 and 1944, there was little occupation of factories, little or no political demands,

little or no spontaneous establishment of workers' organs of self-representation, little or no participation of the decisive sector of the proletariat, the metal workers. This is not surprising. The general strike of August 1953 was the first great movement for immediate demands of great scope in France since the defeat of the miners' strike in 1948. The split in the trade union movement and the absence of unity of workers' action were considered by all the French Trotskyists from 1948 to 1953 as being the essential cause of the retreat of the workers. All the Trotskyists, including those who split with Bleibtreu, have always considered that the struggle for unity of action on all levels represented the principal objective to be attained by the French workers' movement in this period. Further, it is precisely because the CGT under Stalinist leadership left to the non-Stalinist unions the initiative and the leadership of the strike of August 1953 that it robbed them of all excuse for not supporting this movement. This tactic was perfectly correct at the *initial stage* of the workers' counter-offensive. It was perfectly correct that, in order not to embarrass the united front which was established in action the CGT did not advance any political demand which might have risked breaking this unity. We have criticized the Stalinist party because it did not match this action in favor of a trade union united front with action in favor of a political united front with the Socialist Party. We criticized the Stalinists because they did not raise the question of the government, because they did not fight for a communist-socialist government. We have insisted that only the struggle for a governmental objective could make the strike general. But to attack the CP because it "did not take power" and did not do so on purpose "in order to restore capitalism which was on the point of collapse" is to replace politics with delirium. To confuse, on the basis of the fantastic information of which the Bleibtreu group appears to have the absolute monopoly, the beginning of a working-class offensive with its end, the awakening of the masses with a decisive struggle for power, the task of reestablishing the workers' united front with that of organizing the armed insurrection—this is a sad proof of political disorientation. That is what is revealed by the accusation, according to which the Fourth International is infected with "Gompersism," that is to say, forbidding trade unions to engage in politics.

As to the accusation of having "officially denounced Trotskyist militants to the Stalinists," this is absolutely incomprehensible. The French section of the FI has publicly declared to the Renault workers that two militants who have left its ranks and who continue to proclaim themselves as representatives of our movement have not the right to speak in the name of the FI and do not follow the political line of the Trotskyist organization. In what is this a "denunciation"? These militants have always operated in the name of Trotskyism. Does the majority leadership of the SWP think that the Stalinists will attack them any more because we have revealed that they are no longer Trotskyists? Or perhaps the "denunciation" signifies merely that these militants will have more difficulty in getting themselves accepted as *Trotskyists* by the workers? Militants who break the discipline of our movement, who leave it, who spread publicly false and fantastic political positions and risk making us ridiculous or en-

dangering us, these militants perfectly deserve that every worker shall know that they speak only for themselves and not for the FI.

What is hidden in reality behind the accusation that the IS wants to "liquidate" the FI appears clearly in the passage of the Letter which discusses the polemic of the IS against the "struggle for the building of *independent* revolutionary Socialist parties." Thus the tactic of partial or complete entry by our organizations into the mass parties is really the question, the tactic which, certainly all the sectarians have continually called "liquidationist" since the day when Trotsky—and Lenin before him—defended it for the first time. Like all the sectarian groups, the Bleibtreu group claims to lead general strikes effectively with an insignificant number of militants. We recognize that we are fully guilty of the sin of wanting to "liquidate" ridiculous boasts of this kind. Experience has shown for a long time to all serious revolutionaries that such infantile efforts at self-deception result in the end in the demoralization and real liquidation of an organization. The still recent fate of the Haston group in Great Britain is a typical example. Experience has equally proved that it is not sufficient to proclaim oneself the "proletarian vanguard" of the "new working-class leadership" to be able to play this role in practice. It is still necessary that the masses shall be convinced from their own experiences that we are capable of acting as their leaders. The merit of the present leadership of the International consists precisely in the fact that it tries to establish, for each country, the appropriate organizational tactic to permit our cadres to become real and not imaginary leaders of the mass movement.

Why does the majority leadership of the SWP openly attack the application of the entrust tactic in numerous countries, which it actually does by its accusations of "liquidationism"? For the very simple reason that this tactic was not decided during recent months, but two years ago, and the SWP leadership completely approved it! It approved it in the letter from a secretary of the SWP to Comrade Pablo which we quoted above. The tactic was approved by Cannon himself in a letter addressed to Renard on May 29, 1952. In this letter, speaking of the documents of the Third World Congress and of the 10th Plenum of the IEC—documents in which the very wide application of the entrust tactic were first sketched and then widely developed—Cannon wrote in these words: "It is the unanimous advice of the leadership of the SWP that the authors of these documents have rendered a great service to the movement, for which they deserve the appreciation and support of comrades, and not mistrust and denigration."

This advice was given yesterday to Renard. Cannon could well give it today to himself. A policy which, purely for organizational ends, condemns today as revisionist a tactic which it lauded to the skies yesterday, without any changes at all in the objective situation, is the prototype of unprincipled political bankruptcy.

The Starting Point of the Real Disagreements

The manifestation of sterile sectarianism which really hides itself behind the accusation launched against the leadership of the International of liquidationism gives us

the common denominator of the real political differences which the majority SWP leadership is in the process of developing with the International. Clear away the insults, the lies and the slanders which flow so freely from the pen of the majority SWP leadership, and you easily recognize that real political differences are in the process of arising and developing with surprising rapidity.

It is naturally a slander in the Open Letter when it accuses the IS of presenting the thesis that the world revolution has already triumphed and therefore the construction of the FI has become useless. The preparatory documents of the Fourth World Congress speak with complete clarity on this question. Not only do we remain more firmly convinced than ever that the building of the FI and of new revolutionary mass parties in all countries is indispensable to the victory of the world revolution; we even insist on the fact that in countries like Yugoslavia and China where the revolution has achieved a first decisive victory, experience has shown that a Trotskyist leadership and policy are necessary not to endanger the gains of this revolution and to ensure that it is fused with the world revolution. But you will not find a trace of "revisionism" in this analysis with a microscope.

But in reality, another matter is in question. It comes clearly out in the document of Morris Stein, "Some Remarks on the 'Rise and Decline of Stalinism,'" which provides the theoretical basis of the political attacks made by the majority leadership of the SWP against the IS, that they bring into question the traditional Trotskyist conception of the dialectical relations between the spontaneous rise of a mass revolutionary movement and the building of a new revolutionary leadership.

The Transitional Program of the FI starts from the proposition that the crisis of humanity is the crisis of the revolutionary leadership. From that flows the task of building new revolutionary parties and a new international, the Fourth, as the central task of our time. It is true for the whole epoch of declining capitalism, since 1914, if we include in this task the effort undertaken by Lenin and the Third International which he led to build new revolutionary parties, an effort which failed as a result of the degeneration of the Comintern under the Stalinists. But only inveterate sectarians will conclude from this general analysis that so long as there exists no new revolutionary leadership no fundamental change can develop in the general world situation. On the contrary, Trotsky spent twenty years of his life in showing that, in the general framework of the agony of capitalism, fundamental changes can be produced by the autonomous eruption of the masses. Naturally this movement does not suffice in itself to assure the *final victory* of the revolution; for that an adequate revolutionary leadership is necessary. But it creates precisely the preconditions for successfully building the mass revolutionary parties.

The appreciation of the relations of world forces between the classes represents the "fundamental starting point for all revolutionary policy" wrote Lenin. In dozens and dozens of articles and speeches, Trotsky has explained that the fundamental cause of the victory of Stalinism in the USSR and in the Third International was the development of these relations of forces in a way *unfavorable* to the international and Soviet proletariat, that is to say, the

retreat of the world revolution. Every other fundamental explanation of the degeneracy of the USSR and the CI would replace historical materialism with futile idealistic methods. Certainly, from 1923 to 1938 numerous opportunities offered themselves in numerous countries to *reverse* this fundamental tendency of retreat of the revolution which characterized the whole period. The Trotskyist movement fought with all its strength that these opportunities should not again be missed. But as the years passed, no Trotskyist expressed the least doubt about the fundamental tendency to retreat of the revolution in the period 1923-43.

When the world leadership of the FI reconstituted itself on the morrow of the Second World War, it had to reply first to this fundamental question before engaging in any serious political activity: what is the general dynamic of the relations of class forces on the world scale? Are we still living in a period of retreat of the revolution, as on the eve of the Second World War, or rather has a new period of rise and revolutionary flood begun? Our reply, like that of the leaders of the SWP was clear and precise; the fall of Mussolini inaugurated a new period of revolutionary advance, in which the relations of forces are fundamentally evolving in a way favorable to the proletariat. For lack of revolutionary leadership, many struggles can end in this or that country in partial retreats, but the power of the autonomous movement of the masses on the world scale is such that, facing a terribly weakened capitalism, it would need a whole historic period before we could speak of a new world-wide ebb of the revolution. And when the Chinese revolution triumphed in 1949, this fundamental analysis received such reinforcement that all idea of a decisive defeat of the world revolution became identified in reality with the more and more limited possibility of a complete victory of imperialism in the war.

Shachtman, Morrow, the emigre leadership of the IKD and partially Haston opposed a subjective sectarian thesis to this analysis: "How can we talk of a rising revolutionary tide, or progress by the world revolution, when the FI in practice is so weak?" Yesterday we, in common with the leadership of the SWP, replied to this confused chatter that the spontaneous movement of the masses has its own logic, fundamentally determined *in its initial stage* not by the existence of a revolutionary party but by the sicknesses of decadent capitalism. Today, unhappily, the majority leaders of the SWP are beginning to use the same non-Marxist arguments against us.

The Third World Congress started in its analysis of the fundamental estimation of the relations of world forces between the classes on the world scale sketched above. The leadership of the SWP, in agreement with this analysis still yesterday, is beginning today to revise it. It does not oppose clear conceptions to it; it opposes to it an eclectic game made of mental reservations, hesitations and doubts. Perhaps the revolution is too strong to permit a *durable* compromise over its body between imperialism and bureaucracy? Perhaps such compromises are after all still possible? Perhaps imperialism will find other solutions, even so? Perhaps a "little crisis" will provoke a revolutionary wave in the USA which will prevent the war? Perhaps a "big" crisis will precipitate the outbreak of the war. Careful reading of the Militant in the course

of recent months—especially the series of articles by Hansen on the world situation—reveal the pell-mell display of all these hypotheses. The most confused eclecticism begins to replace the rigor of Marxist analysis. This is what explains the real differences on the interpretation of the events which have taken place in the USSR since the death of Stalin.

Capitulation before Stalinism

Shachtman discovered a long time before the majority leadership of the SWP and Bleibtreu that we had "capitulated before Stalinism." He discovered this when we explained that the Kremlin could not long maintain its control over the buffer countries without destroying capitalist production there and making them into deformed workers' states. He discovered it when we characterized the French and Italian Communist parties as mass parties of the working class of these countries. He discovered it when we analyzed, unfortunately late, the proletarian revolution which had triumphed in Yugoslavia. He finally discovered it when we defined the Chinese Civil War resulting in the victory of Mao Tse-tung as a decisive victory of the Third Chinese Revolution.

In other terms, for Shachtman, our "capitulation before Stalinism" consists in our Marxist analysis of *reality* . . . to which he opposes "his position on the Russian question." The sectarians of all kinds have always the habit of refusing the "recognition" of facts when they do not fit into their schemas.

Alas, the majority leadership of the SWP is today applying exactly the same method to accuse us in its turn of "capitulating before Stalinism." What is in question—leaving aside the slanders—is our analysis of the events in the USSR since the death of Stalin. The facts prove that a pressure, a growing discontent of the masses has obliged the bonapartist tops of the bureaucracy to make great economic concessions to the workers and peasants, and to seek at least to create the impression that the arbitrary dictatorship of the police would in future be limited. All the serious observers in the world, from the London "Economist" to the Paris "Monde," the "Tribune" of Bevan and the "Borba" of Kardelj are agreed on this fundamental interpretation. The "Economist" notably published in its issues of August 29, September 12 and October 10 a series of articles on the evolution of the policy of Malenkov, in which we find numerous formulas of the kind that "consumers no longer accept goods of bad quality." "The pressure from below forces the planners to," etc., etc. It is true that, for McCarthy, the "Economist" and the "Monde" have long since "capitulated before Stalinism."

In our opinion, one must have a mind completely deformed by suspicion, fear and demoralization to discover any trace of "capitulation before Stalinism" in the *fact* of recognizing a *fundamental* change in the relations of forces between the Soviet bureaucracy and the proletariat, a change favorable to the latter. Parallel to the change in the relation of forces on the world scale in favor of the proletariat, it obliges the bureaucracy to make real concessions to the masses. Every serious Trotskyist will, on the contrary, salute this *fact* as an important, if not decisive turn in the world situation. He will not find therein the proof that the

bureaucracy has changed its nature. He will not find therein reason to make peace with Malenkov. He will not find therein reasons to create illusions about the possibility of the regeneration of the Soviet Union by reforms. On the contrary, he will salute this fact as a proof that his *class*, the Soviet proletariat, is in the process of reawakening. He will conclude that this same proletariat which today obliges Malenkov to make serious concessions will pass to action tomorrow, when it will feel still more sure of itself and will overthrow the bureaucratic dictatorship. Hardly was the ink dry on our first projects of analysis of what is going on in the USSR when the events in East Germany came to offer a striking confirmation of our forecasts. That is another reason for feeling confident and proud of our Trotskyist movement which had been the sole political current in the world to forecast an extension of the revolutionary rise into the countries dominated by the Soviet bureaucracy!

But demoralized people, frightened and disoriented by the brusque development of the world situation, without real confidence in the world proletariat, in the Soviet masses and especially in the international Trotskyist movement, fear that to "admit" the Malenkov concessions to the masses is to build up the prestige of the bureaucracy and not confidence in the power of the proletariat. They rationalize their fears by denying the facts. Thus we have seen the sad sight offered by *The Militant* seriously affirming that nothing has changed in the Soviet Union since the death of Stalin, that we have seen nothing there but "bloody purges" and "concessions to the bureaucracy and the rich peasants"! The Open Letter itself, does it not sum up the generality of the evolution of the USSR in the last year by one formula only, "maneuvers to reinforce greatly the usurping bureaucracy forming part of preparations to hand to a leading bureaucrat the mantle of Stalin"? The struggle of social forces, the reawakening of the proletariat, the appreciation of the relations of forces between proletariat and bureaucracy and their dynamic, all this has disappeared in the analysis, henceforth replaced by hysterical imprecations. This is the price to pay for an empirical policy, without principle.

However, the affair does not stop there. The majority leadership of the SWP, which at the time of its congress of July 1952 accepted in full the estimation of the Third World Congress of the FI about the dynamic of the relation of forces between the classes on the world scale, is in the process of revising, with giant strides this same estimation. It is in the process of adopting the subjectivist thesis of demoralization contained in the Stein document, according to which there is no fundamental difference between the present period and the pre-war period of retreat of the revolution, "because the FI is feeble," "because there is no adequate revolutionary leadership." The Open Letter goes even so far as to reproach the leadership of our movement for "*not placing the stress (sic) on the danger of a new barbarism!*" In the framework of such a perspective it naturally becomes plausible to play with the notion of the restoration of capitalism in the USSR. The first sample of this discovery incontestably comes from the Bleibtreu group, which for some time has replaced the method of Marxist analysis by using secret information about the poisoning of Stalin, the reestablishment of capital in the USSR and the presence of Stalinist agents at the head

of the FI. In fact, if as before the war, the world revolution is tottering from defeat to defeat, the destruction of what remains in the USSR of the conquests of October lies logically at the end of this road. But if we start from the correct analysis of the world situation as it is, which is not a situation of ebb but of flood-tide of the world revolution, interrupted with armistices and partial retreats; if you admit that it is not the revolution but world capitalism which is ebbing and is fundamentally weakening, though still retaining immense resources and reserves, essentially in the USA, then equally logically the perspective of a real danger of the reestablishment of capitalism in the USSR seems to come out of a sick brain. We think that that is actually the case.

What has really been revised?

To understand that we are living today in a period fundamentally different from that of pre-war days, a period of flood and not of ebb of the revolution, is to understand that it is necessary for our movement effectively to revise something; not its program, but its analysis and tactics. He who considers it "revisionist" to modify one's analysis and tactics when the objective conditions have changed should learn all over again what revolutionary tactics are.

When there were treacherous compromises between the Soviet bureaucracy and world imperialism, which delivered to defeat the Spanish and French revolutions in 1936, the Greek revolution, the French and the Italian in 1944-45, we were the first to denounce the infamous acts of the Kremlin. We added however at once that the success of these betrayals depended in the last analysis not on the counter-revolutionary intentions of the Kremlin, but on the relative feebleness, the narrow limits, in which the revolutionary flood was still confined. If we believe that the Kremlin is capable of breaking any and every revolutionary rising, it is not worth while making the victory of the world revolution the axis of one's work.

Is it possible for a serious revolutionary to place in doubt that the "Prague coup" of February 1948 was not the product of a "treacherous compromise" between the Kremlin and Wall Street, but was indeed a self-defensive reflex of the bureaucracy *against* imperialism? Is it possible to place in doubt that the seizure of power by Mao Tse-tung and the Chinese-Soviet alliance which resulted from it in no way signify that the Kremlin "is imposing the consolidation of capitalism in China" but on the contrary that, faced with imperialist threats, the bureaucracy has been obliged to ally itself with the Chinese revolution, which has become too powerful to be simply strangled or sold in the same way as the Spanish and Greek revolutions? To repeat mechanically about China or Korea the accusations levelled in the past against Stalinist policy in Spain or Greece, that is not to remain an "orthodox Trotskyist," it is to appear on the political scene as blind spinners of myths, and is to reinforce the hold of Stalinism upon the vanguard of the workers, which we can never win with the aid of obvious untruths.

It is in this sense that a "revision" of the analysis and tactics of our movement are imperiously necessary in the situation of the "cold war" and the accelerated preparation of the world counter-revolutionary war of imperialism

against the anti-imperialist forces of every kind. Without this "revision," it became impossible to fight Stalinism *effectively*, and we risked seeing truly pro-Stalinist tendencies developing in the organization. Without this revision our organization risked ossifying in false positions and cutting itself off from the revolutionary masses in action. The new analysis of the world situation carried out by the Third World Congress, we must repeat, changed in no way our judgment of the Soviet bureaucracy, its conservative and counter-revolutionary intentions, its desire to arrive at a lasting *modus vivendi* with imperialism. It only laid down that the power of the revolutionary upswing and the mortal danger which threatens imperialism make these desires ineffective and incapable of being realized, at least on the world scale (which does not exclude that the Stalinists in this or that isolated country, or at this or that moment, may unfortunately succeed in veritable treacheries).

The majority leadership of the SWP which today reproaches us for our "revisionism" was so conscious of the effective need to revise the analysis and tactics which events have out-dated that it adopted a resolution at its Congress of July 1952 notably stipulating:

"The 15th National Congress of the SWP considers correct the estimation made in the different theses and resolutions (of the Third World Congress); on the nature of the coming war, of the rhythm of the preparations for war, of the analysis of the contradictions of the Kremlin and the national Stalinist bureaucracies, of the characterization of the class nature and evolution of Yugoslavia and the countries of Eastern Europe, of the significance of the Chinese revolution, etc. *The tactic developed by the resolution flows as the logical conclusion of the political premises.*"

Writing to Renard, a leading member of the Bleibtreu tendency, Cannon wrote:

"We see no revisionism at all (in the documents of the Third World Congress and the 10th Plenum of the IEC). All that we find there is a clarification of the post-war evolution of Stalinism and a sketch of a new tactic to fight it more effectively. We consider that these documents are completely Trotskyist. They differ from the previous documents of our movement, not in principles but only in the confrontation and analysis of a new reality and in a tactical adjustment to this reality. It is the unanimous opinion of the leadership of the SWP that the authors of these documents have done a great service to the movement for which they merit the appreciation and support of comrades, not mistrust and denigration."

Sectarian resistances to a tactical change flowing from the objective situation, these have appeared on numerous occasions in the history of the revolutionary movement, and of our movement in particular. Polemicalizing at the beginning of 1940 against Shachtman, Trotsky ridicules the idea that the Soviet bureaucracy wishes everywhere and at all times to "consolidate capitalism."

"Shachtman clings doggedly to the fact that the program of Kuusinen is formally the program of the 'democratic bourgeoisie.' Does he mean by that that the Kremlin is more interested in the establishment of the democratic bourgeoisie in Finland than in introducing Finland within the framework of the USSR? Shachtman himself does not know what he means. In Spain which Moscow was not preparing to attach to the USSR, it was effectively

a question of proving the capacity of the Kremlin to safeguard the democratic bourgeoisie against the proletarian revolution. This objective flowed from the interests of the Kremlin in a particular international situation. Today the situation is different . . ."

His polemic against Shachtman, who claimed that any and every action by the Kremlin was always counter-revolutionary, has known a recent revival when Hansen characterized Stalinism as being "counter-revolutionary through and through."

"The Red Army entered Poland solely as a 'counter-revolutionary force' (claims Shachtman) with the object of suppressing the movement (of the masses). But why did the workers and peasants in Western Poland conquered by Hitler not organize a revolution? Why was it principally the revolutionaries, the 'democrats' and the Jews who had to flee from there, while in Eastern Poland it was principally the landed proprietors and the capitalists who cleared out?"

What was implied then in this polemic was Shachtman's inability to understand the double, contradictory character of the Soviet bureaucracy, which is not only counter-revolutionary in relation to the international proletariat but still in its great majority attached to the new eminently revolutionary mode of production in the USSR of today. It is from this contradictory nature of the bureaucracy that rises the possibility, the necessity for it to modify its policy "when the objective situation is different." Trotsky explained to Shachtman that his method was that of a "superficial and pretentious person who refuses to deepen the internal dialectical logic of the events." Cannon, in a more polite tone, addressed the same reproach to Renard in May 1952. We ourselves are obliged today to address the same reproach to Cannon.

It is not only our fundamental Trotskyist conception on the nature of the Soviet bureaucracy which is in the balance here. The effective revision of this conception by our opponents has dangerous political implications. We know how Shachtman developed in the space of a few months from his affirmation of the "uniquely and entirely counter-revolutionary" character of Stalinism to the abandonment of the defense of the USSR and to his position of the third camp. The majority leadership of the SWP swears that it represents "orthodox Trotskyism." But all these solemn declarations have not prevented it in the course of the recent months from supporting the infamous action of the "Eisenhower packages" in Berlin, designed to support the electoral campaign of Adenauer and to disorganize the revolutionary socialist front of the anti-Stalinist opposition in East Germany. These declarations have not prevented them from passing over completely in silence *the organization by American imperialism of the coup d'etat in Iran which overthrew Mossadegh, and of denouncing only "the Stalinist treachery" in this affair.* These are for the moment small signs, but signs full of significance. They acquire all their significance from the fact that they appear in the USA as it is today, dominated by a climate of anti-Communist hysteria. They obtain all their significance from the fact that they happen at the moment when this leadership is preparing to break with the international Trotskyist movement.

Cominternist Methods

The Open Letter accuses the leadership of the FI of using bureaucratic maneuvers and "Cominternist methods" in the Trotskyist movement, of their "preparing splits and expulsions." This accusation rests on the strange case of "duplicity" of our relations with the leadership of the SWP which we will examine later, and the split which took place last year in the French Section of the International. In this section there was a group of comrades representing at that moment 55% of the forces of the organization and who were opposed to the political line determined by the Third World Congress. The leadership of the International showed great patience towards it. It never questioned the right of the international majority to see the line applied in *all* sections, a right implied by the structure of our movement as a world party. It always claimed to want to apply the line of the international. The facts have shown however that it had no real desire to apply this line and that, in the words of Cannon, it "played with the decisions of the World Congress." These maneuvers were discussed at the Third World Congress, at the 10th, 11th and 12th Plenums of the IEC. When all efforts at conciliation and compromise were exhausted, the IEC decided, almost unanimously, to modify the composition of the leadership of the French Section, handing it over to comrades convinced of the correctness of the line of the International. To the Bleibtreu-Lambert tendency were offered all the rights of an international minority tendency. It preferred however not to recognize the decision of the IEC, not to carry it out, but to split the French Section and publicly attack the Fourth International. Even after intolerable acts of indiscipline, the International offered to this tendency reintegration in the movement. It was never a question of discriminating against it for its ideas or stopping it from defending its ideas *within the movement.* The Bleibtreu-Lambert group refused afresh the unity proposals of the IEC and the affair was closed. That is the record of the "bureaucratic crimes" of the International leadership.

But let us look now at these virtuous democrats who reproach us bitterly for "Cominternist methods." The last Plenum of the National Committee of the SWP expelled over 35% of the party members, including the principal working-class sections in Detroit, Flint, Youngstown and Buffalo. These comrades had not attacked the line of the Party or defended their opinions in public. The pretext for the exclusion was that they did not participate in a meeting. The real reason for their exclusion, as the Open Letter cynically explains, was that they "support and defend" the line of the International on the recent events which have happened in the USSR. In other words, these comrades have been excluded for their ideas, and only for their ideas! This is confirmed by the fact that even before the public meeting in New York which served as the pretext for exclusion, the leadership of the SWP refused to tell the IS and the American minority the agenda for the Plenum of the National Committee.

The few European allies of Cannon follow faithfully in their master's footsteps. The Bleibtreu group has excluded one of its oldest leaders, secretary of the party during the illegality under the Nazi occupation, for the "crime" of having participated, as an elected trade union

leader, in a delegation of reformist trade unions going to the USSR. This is called "breach of proletarian morality"! The same group reproaches the IS for not having ordered the immediate exclusion of the minority of our Ceylon section at the moment when it included 45% of the forces of the party. Burns, the ally of Cannon in England, has not hesitated for a minute to exclude all the members of the PB and the CC who remained faithful to the International, even though he was confronted with a petition of over 60% of the members opposing all organizational measures and demanding the calling of a national conference. These are the "organizational principles" of these strange defenders of the internal democracy in our movement.

The leadership of the International has always applied a rigorously principled method in relation to persons or tendencies. It will not change this method on the pretext that there is a crisis in the movement. We do not know "friends" or "enemies"; we only know tendencies which are politically right or wrong, which respect or violate democratic centralism. As our movement has not yet discussed the positions of the SWP minority on American problems, the IEC as a whole cannot express an opinion on the subject. They will deal with this task very shortly. In any case, it is now and already profoundly convinced that the accusations of "capitulation before Stalinism," "pessimism," "petty-bourgeois ideology," of "running away from work among the trade union masses" levelled by the Open Letter at these comrades, are as false and slanderous as the analogous accusations levelled at the International leadership. It takes this opportunity to salute the courage with which these comrades have tried to defend the policy of the International and the integrity of its leadership in very difficult conditions. It solidarizes itself with their struggle against slander and split and assures them of all its political and moral support. Never will our movement recognize brutal acts of exclusion. Never shall we dishonor our democratic tradition to "have peace" with whomsoever it may be!

The Origin of the Crisis

This and this alone lies at the origin of the present crisis in the relations between the majority leadership of the SWP and the international Trotskyist movement. There is a revealing passage in the Open Letter dealing with the "duplicity" of Pablo in showing one face to the leadership of the SWP, while at the same time secretly collaborating with the "revisionist Cochranite tendency." This accusation was expressed for the first time in a letter written on June 4, 1953 by Cannon to a friend in Europe, Tom, in which the IS is accused of having "organized" the struggle of the tendencies in the SWP. But 15 days before, speaking at a meeting of his tendency in New York, the same Cannon stated that he had no proof that the IS was giving political support to the American minority. . . .

The truth is that such support never existed anywhere but in the fears and suspicions of the majority leadership. The publication of a correspondence will show that these fears and suspicions had no foundation. The international leadership took in this matter as in every other a principled attitude. It declared that, as the political differences did not yet appear clearly to it, it would refrain from all

intervention, except counselling moderation of tone and the rejection of organizational threats. The unanimous English leadership, Burns included, further sent a letter in exactly the same sense to the SWP against on May 26. The American majority did its utmost up to the month of May to steer its factional struggle so as to appear as being, by its own account, the best interpreter and defender of the policy of the International.

The fact that the fears and suspicions of "duplicity," not confirmed by any fact, could have led the majority leadership of the SWP to unleash a violent factional struggle against the leadership of the international and to break publicly with the FI, would suffice in itself to unmask the unprincipled character of the attitude of this leadership. Cannon, replying to Renard in May 1952, said all that needs saying on this subject:

"I am sure that the international movement will not sanction or support a factional struggle based on suspicions of future intentions, which cannot be demonstrated, or even deduced, from propositions or positions now formulated in documents. No one can learn anything from such struggles and the party will certainly lose from them. If you, comrades of the majority, insist on a struggle against 'revisionism' which is not evident to other people, you will be able only to disorient a number of worker comrades in the party, to isolate other cadres from the international movement and lead them into an impasse."

What an excellent reply of Cannon in 1952 to Cannon in 1953!

But in reality, this apparent "misunderstanding" about the attitude of the international leadership in the internal struggle of the SWP has a broader and more substantial basis. The majority leadership of the SWP might doubt whether the IS would support it in all the enterprises which it contemplated against the minority. Cannon was preparing for months the bureaucratic expulsion of the American minority. He awaited the approval in advance of such an act; he did not get it. That is what today he considers as "duplicity."

The international leadership has never had the attitude or intention of approving any and every action by Cannon or any tendency in the SWP. It has taken up its position in each struggle in principled fashion. The struggle against Shachtman was a principled struggle, in which Trotsky and the international movement supported Cannon for obvious reasons of political agreement. The struggle against Goldman and Morrow was another principled struggle, in which the international found itself in agreement with Cannon, even though it expressed its concern at the brutal organizational measures which concluded this struggle. The case of the minority today was different. The International has never condemned its political positions as against those of the majority, to the extent that there were political differences clearly expressed. To expect in these conditions that the international leadership would leave the field clear to Cannon to settle the organizational aspect "in his own way" was to consider that the International is led by a bureaucratic clique and not by a political leadership. If Cannon ever had this illusion and this conception of the International, he was badly wrong.

But let us admit even for a moment that the American

majority is correct politically in its struggle against the minority. Let us admit that the IS is wrong in not approving completely and in advance any and every action by the leadership against the minority. If that were so, the majority leadership of the SWP, which very well knows the structure and the democratic morality of our movement, had ample opportunity of addressing itself to the International and defending its cause, even though the reactionary Voorhis law obliged the SWP to disaffiliate from the FI. Why has the leadership of the SWP not acted in this way, in accordance with the normal working rules of every revolutionary organization? Why did it prefer immediately to address the broad public and publicly betray the cause of International Trotskyism? This crowns in a certain way the unprincipled acts of the SWP majority, for it treads underfoot the supreme principle of Trotskyism; proletarian internationalism.

Marxists do not play with the idea of the revolutionary international. For them, the succession of the internationals is not a numerical succession but a succession of historic epochs with different historic tasks for the working class. In order that an international can achieve its progressive function, there must be events of colossal power. The FI is the world party of the socialist revolution in the epoch of the death agony of capitalism and Stalinism. Has it achieved its historic function? Has it "betrayed"? Is it not the worst irresponsibility to attack the leadership and its line publicly, that is to say, in fact to break with the world Trotskyist movement, without fighting within it for their ideas as long as such a "betrayal" has not been clearly established? Did not Trotsky desire to remain within the Third International after the betrayal of the British General Strike and the Chinese Revolution, after even the beginning of the terrible degeneration in the USSR, and was he not ready to observe strictly the discipline of the movement externally, on the sole condition of being permitted to defend his ideas within the movement? How can we explain the sudden and terrible irresponsibility of the SWP majority on the question of the International if not as a brutal violation of the principles of proletarian internationalism?

The fidelity to principles which we demand of others, we apply ourselves. Even after all that has happened, there is a place for the Cannonites in our movement, on the condition that they submit to the traditional rules of working. We do not want to exclude anyone who is in agreement with our general program, nor to oblige anyone to be silent. We challenge the Cannonites to come to explain themselves before the forum of the Trotskyists of the entire world. But the latter will no doubt say: "Begin by showing by acts that you are ready to submit to the rules of democratic centralism. He who demands the rights must strictly apply the duties."

What the Crisis has revealed

The whole of this unprincipled attitude shows that the majority of the leadership of the SWP has been deeply infected with degeneration. The degeneration in organizational methods is the result of political degeneration. The sickness, held in check for a certain period, broke out suddenly and developed rapidly. How can we explain it in a group which, for a long period, has incontestably

been the principal standard-bearer of our international movement?

The SWP experienced its period of rise between 1934 and 1946, in a period when the international working-class movement was retreating under the advance of fascism and war and when the American working-class movement underwent a period of slow radicalization, culminating in the struggle against the no-strike pledge in the course of the war and the post-war strike wave. The ebb of the international working-class movement was accompanied by a disorganization of the Trotskyist movement, with Trotsky killed and dozens of cadres struck down by the counter-revolution. The slow radicalization of the American working-class movement was accompanied by a numerical and ideological reinforcement of the SWP, which struck good roots in the mass movement and combined intelligent Trotskyist propaganda activities with activities of general working-class leadership under numerous forms. The fidelity of the SWP to the principles of Trotskyism and its activity in the mass movement made it an example and a rallying point for the serious revolutionaries of the whole world.

But in the course of the last years the situation changed completely on this subject too. A rising revolutionary tide, which has not ceased to grow, took the place of the international ebb of the international revolution. A period of ebb under the growing pressure of the counter-revolution took the place of the radicalization of the American working-class movement. A period of regroupment and of organizational progress and important theoretical progress following the progressive striking of roots of our organizations in the mass movement, took the place of the period of disorientation and disorganization of the international Trotskyist movement. A period of organizational stagnation and of retreat from the mass movement replaced the numerical and ideological reinforcement of the SWP, not through its fault but in consequence of the pressure of reaction in the trade unions.

In these conditions, the leadership of the SWP ought to have understood the very great dangers which this new situation presented to its organization. It ought to have understood that the climate of reaction and the stagnation of the party endangered part of the organization with demoralization. Signs have not been lacking that such a danger was real. They should have reacted on the one hand by drawing closer their political links with the international movement, taking inspiration greatly from the progress of the international revolution and the international Trotskyist movement, and on the other hand by examining with extreme attention all the new possibilities for getting themselves, on a modest scale, to be sure, into the real working-class movement in the USA of today.

Alas, part of the leadership of the SWP reacted in the opposite way. They thought that they could resist the pressure of reaction and the threat of demoralization by putting the accent on the past of the party, on the worth which it had won, on its tradition, on its faith and certitude of victory. These are valuable means to combat demoralization, when they rest upon a real progress in deeds. But in a period of stagnation and retreat, they risk ossifying the cadres of the party, turning them away from reality, hiding real dangers from them, making them find the source of difficulties in internal "sabotage" instead of recognizing their objective basis. This is exactly what has hap-

pened with the majority of the SWP. Like the "old Bolsheviks" of 1923, these "old Trotskyists" give way to the hostile pressure of the environment, because they seek safety not in Marxist analysis but in tradition.

"There has been more than one case in history," wrote Trotsky, "or more exactly it has never happened otherwise in history, that in the passing of the party from one period to another, elements who played a progressive role in the past, but who show themselves incapable of adapting themselves in time to new tasks, are blind before the danger and reveal, not their positive characteristics but almost exclusively their negative characteristics."

That is exactly what has happened now with the Cannon tendency. If in the past Trotsky or the international movement have been able to think that this or that action by Cannon was too brutal, this never played more than a secondary role in the political struggle, since Cannon defended principled positions. But today, when he is going not in opposition to imperialism but in opposition to the international revolution, all these traits, potentially present in the past, burst out and reveal themselves with extraordinary crudity. When you compare the calm, assured, principled style of "The Struggle for a Proletarian Party" with the hysterical slanders of the Open Letter, you see at once what an abyss separates the Cannon of former times whom we have all esteemed, from the Cannon of today who is on the way to becoming an enemy of the movement.

The "Committee of the Fourth International"

At the same time as it was secretly preparing its public political break with the International, the majority of the leadership of the SWP was secretly seeking allies not merely within the International but also around it. That is why immediately after the Open Letter there appeared a document announcing the creation of a "Committee for the Fourth International."

This document, like the Open Letter, witnesses that the majority leadership of the SWP had renounced in advance any effort to secure the victory of their positions in the preparatory discussion of the Fourth World Congress. Cannon has wanted to organize a faction secretly "on a military basis" not to participate in a discussion but to break with the maximum of explosion.

In this "Committee" the basis of formal agreement is constituted by the "principles of orthodox Trotskyism," a pedantic repetition of the first truths of the Communist Manifesto on Capitalism and Socialism, plus a summary stand, sectarian and mechanical, towards the question of Stalinism ("definitely a petty-bourgeois agency of imperialism") which denies all the achievements of the International in this domain and can only disarm our movement completely anew. In relation to the idea, the structure and the functioning of the International as a centralized world party, all these elements and groups of the "Committee" are distinguished by a common rebellion against such a conception of the International and oppose to it the idea of a federal union, a sort of Bureau of "contacts and ideological exchanges" leaving to each one in fact full autonomy and freedom of action.

Organizationally the basis of the "Committee" permits thus each to behave as he pleases in his own country on the most essential problems. Cannon and Burns declared

for the tactic laid down by the International for the Trotskyists of France; they previously condemned Bleibtreu for his opposition to this orientation which he presented as a "capitulation before Stalinism." Today they preserve silence on the tactic for France, but in their agreement with Bleibtreu against the FI they support in fact his "independent" orientation. Another example: On a question as important as the Chinese Revolution the declaration of the "Committee" is silent. For while the Open Letter presents it as being as degenerated as the Russian Revolution, the Bleibtreu group did not hesitate right up till today to present Mao Tse-tung as one of the champions of anti-Stalinist communism.

This "Committee" does not act as a faction which wants to win the International to an analysis, to perspectives and a coherent tactic opposed to those which the International has followed since the Third World Congress, but as an agglomeration which dodges the most essential problems in order to unite in an effort to dislocate the International as a centralized world party.

To conceal as well as possible the nature of this operation, to give a "theoretical" justification to those whom they desire to draw behind them in their rupture with the International, they wave the scarecrow of "Pabloism." They introduce nothing original in this domain, for they have contented themselves with taking up again the war-horse of the ex-faction of Johnson and Forrest on the eve of their rupture with the International, and which Cannon was the first to denounce by affirming that there is no such thing as "Pabloism."

But the less the associates of the "Committee" can speak in political terms, the more they feel themselves constrained to give a personal character to their attacks. Thus is explained the accumulation of the most scandalous and treacherous attacks against Comrade Pablo who has stood at the head of the battle to arm the International in the face of the problems of the existing situation.

The Fourth International will Triumph!

The leadership of the International is conscious of the fact that it has done its utmost to check Cannon and the majority leadership of the SWP on the road of political degeneration. It is ready today to do all that is still possible. But it is not ready to betray our political and organizational principles. Our movement was born and has developed only thanks to its highly principled character. In the face of the opportunistic and unprincipled maneuvers of the reformists and Stalinists, which pave the way for the worst betrayals in reality of the interests of the proletariat, our movement has only survived because it incarnated the purity and firmness of principles and internal regime. It will equally be so in the future.

The Open Letter sought to provoke the split-up and disintegration of the FI. It has succeeded only in proving the degeneration and decline of its authors. All the Trotskyist movement rises to defend the political and organizational tradition of Trotskyism. The undertaking of the splitters will fail lamentably. The blow which Cannon has given us is severe. But the success which the progress of the world revolution will bring us is infinitely more important. It is on this map that we set forth; it is on this map that the founders of our movement set forth.

After having passed through the test of Hitler and Stalin, the FI cannot be destroyed or seriously weakened. Striking roots in the real workers' movement of all countries, strong in its incomparable revolutionary program and with a capacity for political elaboration confirmed by facts of historic proportions, it will face the future serenely and confidently, convinced that the victory of the international revolution will coincide with its own victory.

The 14th Plenum of the IEC
(Adopted unanimously)
December 1953

This text has also been signed by the following members of the IEC and leading cadres so far consulted:

Collins (England), Edo and Wilhelm (Germany), Pierre Frank, Jacques Privas, Michel Mestre (France), Livio Maitan, Franco Villani (Italy), Emile and Pierre (Belgium), Ernesto (Spain), Sal and Theo (Holland), Ler and Saxe (Austria), Posadas and Arroyo (Argentina), Serrano (Bolivia), Robert (Vietnam), Ortiz and Costa (Uruguay), Manuêlo and Marcelo (Brazil), E. Germain, M. Pablo.

SECTION XI: A DEBATE OVER STALINISM

[Although they opposed the "open letter," the leaders of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party, the Ceylonese section, found themselves in agreement with many of the criticisms of Pablo's political views made by the International Committee. They submitted a number of criticisms to the discussion preceding the "Fourth World Congress." Ernest Germain replied sharply. The LSSP criticism is reprinted from *SWP Discussion Bulletin A-17, 1954*.

[By the time of the "Fourth World Congress," the Ceylonese amendments to "Rise and Decline of Stalinism" were

accepted. Germain reversed his position and supported the amendments. The amended resolution is available in the Education for Socialists bulletin, *Decline and Disintegration of World Stalinism*.

[An example of the orientation that flowed from Pablo's views on Stalinism was the declaration issued at the time of the Geneva Conference on Indochina. This declaration was the subject of sharp criticisms from the supporters of the International Committee.]

1. Resolution of the Central Committee of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party on the International Secretariat Resolution, "Rise and Decline of Stalinism"

(Passed unanimously on April 12, 1954)

The CC considered the IS Resolution "Rise and Decline of Stalinism." The CC also considered the allegation that this resolution embodies certain revisions of the basic positions of Trotskyism on Stalinism.

1. In its consideration of the IS resolution, the CC proceeds from an acceptance of the following basic positions:

a. In contrast with the long period before the War, the present is a period of the World Revolution in flow. This is the key to the understanding of the achievements of the revolution in Yugoslavia and China despite the Stalinist leaderships of the mass movements in these countries.

b. The relation of forces between the Soviet bureaucracy and the Soviet working class has altered radically in favor of the Soviet working class. In consequence of the industrialization of the USSR, the specific weight of the working class has enormously increased in relation both to the bureaucracy and to the peasantry. The cultural level of the workers has also risen.

Further, the capitalist encirclement of the USSR has been importantly broken by the emergence of the Eastern European states and, especially, People's China.

Above all, the World Revolution is again in flow. The situation is thus being created in which the working class leading the working masses can launch an offensive

against the bureaucracy aimed at the bureaucracy's overthrow and the restoration of Soviet democracy. The East German events are a pointer to this fact.

c. World Imperialism under American leadership no longer seeks a *modus vivendi* with the USSR but is openly engaged in preparing military intervention against the USSR. This intervention is for Imperialism the central task of its general war against the developing World Revolution. However, Imperialism's war preparations go forward in the context of a relationship of forces on a world scale which is developing fundamentally in favor of the World Revolution.

2. Although the IS Resolution too proceeds from substantially the same basic positions as set out above, nevertheless, the CC finds itself in disagreement with a number of points in the IS Resolution. In particular, the CC finds itself in fundamental disagreement with certain parts of the IS Resolution on the following questions:

1. The question of the political revolution in the USSR.
2. The question of the Soviet bureaucracy's international policy.
3. The question of the role of the mass Communist Parties.
3. In the view of the CC, the IS has opened the door

to a departure from the basic positions of Trotskyism regarding Stalinism in respect of the above questions. This has been done as follows:

Re Question 1 above: The IS Resolution has, in certain passages presented a line of development which leads to an abandonment of the concept of political revolution in the USSR.

Re Question 2 above: Certain passages in the IS Resolution amount in effect to the position that the Soviet bureaucracy has been compelled in practice to give up its treacherous policy of seeking to maintain the international equilibrium between itself and Imperialism and that, caught between the imperialist threat and the World Revolution, the Soviet bureaucracy aligns itself with the World Revolution.

Re Question 3 above: Certain passages in the IS Resolution appear to put forward the perspective that, through the gradual disintegration of Stalinist ideas in the mass Communist parties and through a progressive leftward turn in their policies, these parties are capable of projecting a revolutionary orientation under mass pressure without powerful revolutionary uprisings of the masses taking place. This leads to the position that the Stalinist leaderships of the mass Communist parties are capable of a revolutionary role.

Political Revolution in the USSR

Regarding (1) above, the CC draws attention to the following:

4. *Rise and Decline, section 18:* The post-Stalin "New Course" of the Soviet bureaucracy is here treated as the expression of a basic tendency, namely, the "liberalization" of the regime. This is clear from the very formulation of the question of the terror. The passage says:

"Historically the Malenkov era thus signalizes the *beginning of the decline of the Bonapartist dictatorship*. That regime can now maintain itself only by suppressing temporarily or definitively the most hideous aspects, that is to say, the most characteristic ones of the regime. It is not excluded that before falling, the Bonapartist dictatorship will suddenly once again have recourse to the bloodiest terror."

The third sentence in the above passage makes it clear that the first two sentences are meant to express a basic trend *within* the dictatorship and not a change in the relationship of strength between the dictatorship and the masses. "Recourse to the bloodiest terror" is merely "not excluded"; that is to say, it will be in contradiction with the basic trend. In this view, the second sentence is seen really as the *definition* of the trend; and the definition is that of the regime itself "suppressing—temporarily or definitively—the most hideous aspects, that is to say the most characteristic ones of the regime." But that is really a conception of the regime progressively suppressing its most characteristic aspects, that is of the regime in fact setting out on the "new course" of changing its very nature!

This is not merely an over-optimistic estimation of the "New Course." It is a mis-estimation of the very meaning of the "New Course." It contemplates not a "liberalization" (within inverted commas) but an actual liberalization; the beginning of a qualitative change in the regime which

gives to the term "decline" in the phrase "decline of the Bonapartist dictatorship" in the first sentence the meaning of a falling away from its very dictatorial nature rather than the sense of a fall in its strength in relation to the masses.

5. This impression is further strengthened by the following sentence which appears quite early in the Resolution "Rise and Decline": "The events which have taken place in the Soviet Union following Stalin's death do not constitute only the first stage of a process which must end in the socialist regeneration of the Soviet Union." That is to say, a process which must in time end in the socialist regeneration of the Soviet Union has already begun. The sentence as it stands thus strengthens the impression that the Resolution contemplates that a qualitative change in the regime has already begun.

6. We are fortified in our above interpretation of the IS resolution by a passage in Comrade Pablo's article, entitled "The Post Stalin 'New Course'" of July 1953, appearing in the magazine *Fourth International* of March-April 1953. The passage we refer to is the last section, entitled "The Dynamic of the New Turn" and reads as follows: "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.

"In reality events will oblige them as is being demonstrated in Eastern Germany, and partly in Czechoslovakia, to quicken and extend the concessions to keep the impatient masses in the other buffer-zone countries and in the USSR itself from taking the road of action. But once the concessions are broadened the march forward toward the real liquidation of the Stalinist regime threatens to become irresistible.

"What form will it then take? Will it be that of an acute crisis and of violent inter-bureaucratic struggles between the elements who will fight for the status quo, if not for turning back, and the more and more numerous elements drawn by the powerful pressure of the masses?"

The above passage, proceeding from an over-optimistic appraisal of the concessions made by the Soviet bureaucracy to the masses, raises a perspective of "the real liquidation of the Stalinist regime" taking place by an intra-bureaucratic struggle as distinct from our traditional concept of struggle between the masses and the bureaucracy. The process contemplated is one of "more and more numerous" elements within the bureaucracy itself in violent struggle against the elements within the bureaucracy "who will fight for the status quo if not for turning back." The role ascribed to the masses is that of a powerful pressure-agency upon the bureaucracy. This perspective leads to the abandonment of the Trotskyist concept of the political revolution, namely the overthrow of the bureaucracy by the masses in struggle for the restoration of socialist democracy.

Soviet Bureaucracy's International Policy

Regarding (2) above, the CC draws attention to the following:

7. *Rise and Decline section 9:* The IS correctly states that the "new situation (after 1947) restricts more and

more the capacity of counter-revolutionary maneuvers by the bureaucracy." But it seems to draw from this fact the incorrect inference that the aims and content of the Soviet bureaucracy's international policy have changed in the present period.

8. The aim of the Soviet bureaucracy's international policy previously is admittedly that of maintaining the international "equilibrium" between itself and World Imperialism. The content of this policy in the pre-war period was the effort to play on inter-imperialist contradictions in order to "neutralize" the international bourgeoisie, and trading of the world revolutionary movement for agreements with imperialism. The continuation of this policy in the post-war period amounted to an actual alliance with World Imperialism against the World Revolution, or in the IS phrase, to a "total attempt by the Soviet bureaucracy to maintain a policy of equilibrium." The disruption of this alliance, or the failure of this "total attempt" in the period after 1947 is assessed as follows: "Caught between the imperialist threat and the colonial revolution, the Soviet bureaucracy found itself obliged to ally itself with the second against the first . . . Every general attempt to use the colonial revolution as small change in the transactions with imperialism had to be abandoned."

It is to be noted that the alliance spoken of above is with "the colonial revolution" and not with the new People's Republic of China which emerged with the success of the Third Chinese Revolution. The meaning of the phrase is made clearer by the statement that "every general attempt" to trade the colonial revolution in the Soviet bureaucracy's transactions with imperialism has been "abandoned." Manifestly, therefore, the suggestion is that the Soviet bureaucracy has now made a general alliance with the colonial revolutionary movements as a whole and not simply with the state which has emerged with the success of the (colonial) revolution in China. It has "abandoned" its former policy of trading the World Revolution to Imperialism at least as far as the colonial revolution is concerned. The shift therefore is a shift in the aim and content of the Soviet bureaucracy's international policy and not merely a shift in the method by which it continues to follow its "policy of equilibrium."

9. It is in the light of the above assessment of the meaning of the new shift in the Soviet bureaucracy's international policy that the concluding sentences of section 9, in which the assessment appears, must be read. "The new situation restricts more and more the capacity of counter-revolutionary maneuvers by the bureaucracy. Attempts to utilize the inter-imperialist contradictions continue to subsist; so do attempts to gain the support of certain bourgeoisies in colonial and semi-colonial countries (India, Argentina, Indonesia) by muzzling on the sly the *anti-capitalist* struggle of the masses in these countries, by attempts to mobilize all the classes in these countries, including the 'national bourgeoisies' against imperialism, so do the attempts to arrive at a temporary and partial agreement with imperialism. But the *practical effects* of these attempts become more and more limited and ephemeral in proportion as, on the one side, the upsurge of the masses becomes more accentuated despite all attempts to curb them and, on the other, as the pressure and the march of Yankee Imperialism towards war is stepped up."

The perspective here is obviously the continuance (under compulsion of external events no doubt, but nevertheless the continuance) of alliance with the colonial revolution as the basis of the Soviet bureaucracy's international policy. The old policy of trading the colonial revolution stands basically abandoned; any continuance of such "attempts" in the present period is regarded really as an exception, as lapses from the "New Course" rather than as indicative of its true policy content.

10. The point becomes clearer from the Report of the IS Secretary to the 12th Plenum of the IEC of November 1952. Here, the reporter states (page 17): "On the one hand it should not be forgotten that the unquestionable desire of the bureaucracy for compromise is not enough now for the practical realization of compromise and class collaboration, which require the consent of the other party—in this case of the bourgeoisie. However, the bourgeoisie is rejecting compromise; the objective basis for compromise no longer exists; this fact imposes in fact on the bureaucracy, and the Communist parties under its influence a line which cannot be likened to that of the people's fronts and of class collaboration, such as we knew between 1934-1938 or between 1941-1947.

"Objective conditions are essentially different now, and, despite what other desires the bureaucracy might have, *in practice they bring about a different line.*" (Our italics).

What is this different line?

11. In the case of the colonial countries, as we have seen, it is that of alliance with the colonial revolution. But further passages in the IS Secretary's Report open the road to the concept of a "different line" even in the imperialist countries; that is, to the concept of the Soviet bureaucracy aligning itself with the revolution in the imperialist countries. Thus, in regard to the decisions of the 1952 Moscow Congress of the CPSU, the Report declares: "The leaderships of the Communist parties seem to consider that its principal directive which concerns them is not the alignment with their respective bourgeoisies against the United States but on the contrary the ideas contained in Stalin's closing speech, namely that the bourgeoisie has become definitively and totally 'reactionary' and 'anti-national'; that they should consider themselves as 'the new shock brigades' having as their task and perspective the seizure of power in their respective countries following the example of the Russian CP."

12. The perspective opened up in this way is one of the Soviet bureaucracy being compelled in practice to give up the treacherous policy of seeking to maintain the international equilibrium between itself and imperialism, and that, caught between the imperialist threat and the World Revolution, the Soviet bureaucracy aligns itself with the World Revolution.

Role of the Mass Communist Parties

Regarding (3) above, the CC draws attention to the following:

13. *Rise and Decline, section 45:* "In countries where the CP's are a majority in the working class, they can under the pressure 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. They will do this all the more so because the masses, which are still seeking, as they

will continue to seek for a whole period to come, to make use of those parties to satisfy their aspirations, have acquired a more critical attitude toward their leaderships than in the past and are no longer prepared to follow any turn of these parties, regardless of what it may involve. Under these conditions, the disintegration of Stalinism within these parties ought not to 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 progressive internal transformation, accompanied by a political differentiation within their midst. It is even possible that such a process of Stalinist disintegration may be accompanied in some Communist mass parties by a certain consolidation or an organizational strengthening, to the extent that, under pressure of circumstances, they modify their policies to conform closer to the interests of the masses. This perspective, the understanding that what is involved is not an organizational disintegration of the mass Communist parties, but rather a disintegration, molecular in its nature for an entire period, of the Stalinist ideas inside these parties as well as of the bureaucratic relations which extend from the Kremlin down to the ranks of these parties—such an understanding is essential for determining the forms of intervention by our movement in this process in order to make it evolve in a direction favorable to revolutionary Marxism."

This passage appears to put forward the perspective that, through the gradual disintegration of Stalinist ideas in the mass Communist parties and through a progressive leftward turn in their policies, these parties are capable of projecting a revolutionary orientation under mass pressure, even without powerful revolutionary uprisings of the masses taking place.

14. The Third World Congress "Orientation and Perspectives" declared that such Communist parties can "*under certain favorable conditions go beyond the aims set for them by the Soviet bureaucracy and project a revolutionary orientation.*" These favorable conditions were also described. "In the event of powerful revolutionary uprisings of the masses . . . it is not excluded that certain CPs with the bulk of their forces can be pushed out of the strict orbit of the Soviet bureaucracy and can project a revolutionary

orientation."

Is it proposed to drop this qualification with regard to the conditions in which mass Communist parties can project a revolutionary orientation? The following lends strength to such a supposition:

a. The position taken in the resolution with regard to the international policy of the Soviet bureaucracy itself, dealt with under (2) above.

b. Comrade Pablo's Report to the 12th Plenum of the IEC, quoted under (2) above (section II), in which he states as follows: "The leaderships of the Communist parties seem to consider that its principal directive which concerns them is not the alignment with their respective bourgeoisies against the United States, but on the contrary . . . that they should consider themselves as 'the new shock brigades' having as their task and perspective the seizure of power in their respective countries following the example of the Russian CP."

If this statement were correct, it would mean that the class collaborationist perspective of the CP's of seeking an alliance with the national bourgeoisie against American Imperialism had changed to a basically revolutionary perspective of seizure of power against the bourgeoisie!

Conclusion

15. The three points discussed above have a logical inter-connection. When they are taken together there emerges the single governing concept that, in this period of the World Revolution's flow in which moreover, a durable compromise with Imperialism is ruled out for the Soviet bureaucracy, this bureaucracy and with it the Stalinist leaderships of the mass Communist parties, get pushed onto the revolutionary road under the pressure of the masses. This concept not only leads to a fundamental revision of the positions of Trotskyism in regard to Stalinism but also denies to the Trotskyist movement all justification for its continued independent existence. Accordingly the CC urges that the IS Resolution, "Rise and Decline of Stalinism" be re-drafted in respect of the three points mentioned above in such a manner as to remove any basis for a departure from the Trotskyist positions thereon.

2. "Answer to the Resolution of the Central Committee of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party on 'Rise and Decline of Stalinism'" by Ernest Germain

The CC of the LSSP states that, while proceeding substantially from the same basic propositions as those embodied in the IS draft resolution "Rise and Decline of Stalinism," it has nevertheless some "fundamental disagreements" with that draft resolution. From these "fundamental disagreements" the CC of the LSSP infers that "the IS has opened the door to a departure from the basic propositions of Trotskyism regarding Stalinism" in respect to the specific points raised. Let us examine these points one by one and see if such a conclusion is justified.

1. Political Revolution in the USSR

The CC of the LSSP alleges that the "IS resolution has, in certain passages, presented a line of development which leads to an abandonment of the concept of political revolution in the USSR."

It arrives at that serious accusation by *interpretation* of two passages of the draft resolution "Rise and Decline of Stalinism."

But it does not draw the attention to the fact that in

several passages the draft resolution *explicitly* states its conviction that only a political revolution, an uprising of the masses, can bring about the socialist regeneration of the USSR. It does not draw the attention in particular to section 21 of the resolution, which clearly says in its last paragraph:

"At the same time our sections ought to resolutely combat any tendency toward apology or justification for the present political regime in the Soviet Union, a tendency which will manifest itself in petty-bourgeois circles inclined to make their peace with the Malenkov power. Even though 'liberalizing' itself, the dictatorship nevertheless remains a dictatorship. The proletariat remains politically expropriated in the Soviet Union. The new penal code, a genuine *habeus corpus*, will defend the bureaucratic privileges just as police arbitrariness has defended them up to now. The task of smashing the dictatorship and the privileges of the bureaucracy, the task of a new political revolution in the Soviet Union remains more burning than ever. The significance of the entire recent development is that the conditions which prepare and facilitate this revolution are ripening."

The comrades of the CC of the LSSP, before drawing hasty conclusions from a subjective interpretation of some sentences, should have confronted them at least with one passage of the draft resolution which dwells extensively on the very point the CC accuses the IS of "abandoning." In view of the fact that this passage states in a crystal-clear manner the perspective of a political revolution in the USSR, perspective for which the Soviet bolshevik-Leninists are called upon to regroup themselves and fight (section 21), only two conclusions are possible from such confrontation:

Either the authors of the resolution have wilfully introduced this whole passage in order to "mask" their real opinions which are "revealed" only in the sentences quoted by the CC, or the authors of the resolution have expressed their real opinions on the subject in the passage just quoted, and in that case, the sentences quoted by the CC should be interpreted in the light of that established opinion. We believe it to be the normal procedure to study any resolution in the first place by analyzing what that resolution states on a subject. Only in the case when some subject connected with the general theme of the document is not dwelled upon explicitly is one justified to analyze "hidden meanings."

Any different procedure replaces in fact *discussion of ideas* by *discussions of intentions*, which is not only sterile and fruitless but also dangerous from the point of view of normal comradely relationship in one organization.

Furthermore, the sentences quoted by the CC do not give any credit to the thesis that the IS has presented a line which "leads to an abandonment of the concept of political revolution in the USSR," while stressing that very same concept explicitly elsewhere in the resolution.

By quoting section 18, the CC has strangely enough stopped before the two final sentences which indicate, beyond all doubt, in what sense the authors view the "decline of the bonapartist dictatorship." We quote again this whole passage while underlining these two final sentences:

"Historically, the Malenkov era thus signalizes the *beginning of the decline of the Bonapartist dictatorship*. That regime can now maintain itself only by suppressing, tem-

porarily or definitively, the most hideous aspects, this is to say, the most characteristic ones of the regime. It is not excluded that, before falling, the Bonapartist dictatorship will suddenly once again have recourse to the bloodiest terror. *The bureaucracy which knows its power and privileges to be threatened, will try in any case to utilize all the resources at its disposal, in order to defend itself against the rise of the Soviet masses. But history has proved that autocracies, once they are condemned to disappear, can save themselves neither by 'liberalizing' themselves, nor by hardening, nor by alternating both these methods.*"

By taking this passage as a whole, it is impossible to draw the conclusion which the CC of the LSSP seems to draw from it, i.e., that according to the opinions of the authors of the draft resolution the regime changes its very nature. On the contrary, this passage stresses precisely the point that the autocracy, the dictatorship, far from changing its nature, changes only the *methods of its self-defense*. There is nothing in this analysis which does not conform to the traditional Marxist, Trotskyist analysis of the decline of *any* political dictatorship in modern history.

Actually, the discussion in the Trotskyist movement does not evolve around the perspective of political revolution in the USSR, which, to our knowledge, no member of the IS or IEC has abandoned. The discussion is evolving around the *interpretation of events*. Some comrades *deny* that there has been some change of methods under Malenkov; they see today only the continuation of the same bloody terror which reigned in the USSR in the late thirties and the early forties. We, on the contrary, see a definite change of *methods as a means of self-defense of the bureaucracy against the rising revolutionary tide of the masses*. Given the changed relationship of forces between the masses and the bureaucracy, it would be incomprehensible to think that the bureaucracy can maintain its rule by the same kind of "bloody terror" it used when the masses were prostrated and without perspectives. One may or may not agree with this *interpretation of events*. But it is sterile to substitute to the discussion of events in the USSR a discussion of the intentions of the IS.

May we point out furthermore that no political movement can in the long run maintain itself by *denying facts*? Some comrades in our movement, by stressing over and over again that the very essence of Stalinism is "bloody purges" and saying that mentioning the fact that such purges are today milder than they were in the past, means "capitulating before Stalinism," pave the way for real tendencies of capitulation to Stalinism! For when the undeniable fact will enter their heads, that "terror" is at present without comparison with what happened between 1935 and 1941 and at the end of the war, comrades without a clear understanding will then draw the conclusion . . . that the bureaucracy has changed its nature! As always, sectarian rigidity only expresses the fear of succumbing to one's own temptations, as Trotsky said it so eloquently.

For us, as for Trotsky, the essence of the bureaucratic dictatorship does not lie in "terror," but in a definite social and political relationship: the stratification of means of production plus the political expropriation of the proletariat by a privileged caste. As long as these social and political conditions prevail, there is no question of "so-

cialist regeneration of the USSR." This is the only Marxist basis to fight real tendencies of capitulation towards Stalinism. This enables us to understand why such a bureaucratic dictatorship, which used bloody terror so long as the relationship of forces allowed it to stabilize itself temporarily on such a basis, is forced today to look for other methods for achieving a similar stabilization, while being ready to switch over once again to bloody terror when the final onslaught of the masses will threaten it directly.

The comrades of the CC of the LSSP take further exception to the following sentence in the preamble of our draft resolution: "The events which have taken place in the Soviet Union following Stalin's death do not constitute only the first stage of a process which must end in the socialist regeneration of the Soviet Union." From the whole context of the resolution it is clear that the authors of the IS resolution meant by that passage: "The events which have taken place in the Soviet Union following Stalin's death do not constitute only the first stage of a process which, by revealing the growing pressure of the masses on the bureaucracy and thereby end in the socialist regeneration of the Soviet Union." It is our firm conviction that this process has already begun. One may or may not agree with this. We have the impression that the CC of the LSSP *does* agree with this, for it writes:

"The situation is thus being created in which the working class leading the working masses can launch an offensive against the bureaucracy aimed at the bureaucracy's overthrow and the restoration of Soviet democracy."

In any case, it is such a process the preamble of our resolution summarizes and not a process of "self-reform" of the bureaucracy, a process of which we explicitly deny the possibility in section 18 of our resolution.

Needless to say, we are quite willing to modify this or that sentence in order to eliminate all possible ambiguities. If the comrades of the CC of the LSSP have concrete proposals for modification of this or the other sentence, we shall accept them if they are in agreement with the general line of the document. But we should like to draw the attention of the comrades of the CC to the fact that, once one gets to thinking in terms of *suspicion of intentions*, any accepted amendment will instantly be interpreted as a "maneuver to hide one's real ideas." We only hope that the comrades of the CC will not follow those who introduced this poison into the political discussion.

As for the passage of Comrade Pablo's article, quoted as "evidence" by the LSSP's CC, we only see there two ideas expressed: (a) The bureaucracy tries to make concessions to the masses in order to hold them back from taking the road of action. But once these concessions are broadened, the march forward of the masses on the road of the real liquidation of the Stalinist regime will become irresistible. (b) This may provoke violent inter-bureaucratic struggles between different wings of the bureaucracy.

There is nothing in these two ideas which is not content with orthodox Trotskyism. On the contrary, Trotsky has always pointed out, as well in "The Fourth International and the USSR," as in "Revolution Betrayed," and in many other documents, that a revolutionary upsurge of the masses would split the Soviet bureaucracy into several conflicting tendencies. The East German events of June 1953 have confirmed this prognosis up to the hilt. Only those who consider the bureaucracy as a class, and not

a caste without any social roots of its own, can reduce this perspective to the phenomenon of a few individuals lining up on the side of the masses. Such a thesis is in fact a revision of Trotskyism. Again, it would be better to discuss this *real* point of difference presently discussed in the Trotskyist movement, than to look for hidden meanings of Comrade Pablo's text. (Comrade Pablo's article in the same bulletin.)

May we add that there is nothing, in Pablo's article, as in our draft resolution, which leaves the slightest ground for the interpretation that the mass struggle is only an "auxiliary" factor to inner-bureaucratic struggles? On the contrary, we look upon the political awakening of the masses, upon their growing pressure against the bureaucracy, as *the motive force* for everything which happened in the USSR since Stalin's death. We formulate the clear perspective that this process will eventually lead to a mass uprising and violent overthrow of the dictatorship on the pattern of the Eastern German events. A not unimportant by-product of that process, which can be vital in the determination of the moment of the mass uprising and its occasion—as we saw it happening in Berlin—will be the inner-bureaucratic struggle provoked by the very awakening of the masses. It is only by understanding this dialectical relationship between the struggles of the masses against the bureaucracy and the inner-bureaucratic conflicts that we have a correct, Trotskyist appraisal of the events in the USSR.

The accusation of revisionism should be directed at those who *abstract* inner-bureaucratic struggles from the general relationship of forces between social layers, and declare at one and the same time that there is the beginning of a new upsurge of the Soviet proletariat, but that the inner-bureaucratic conflict is merely a result of a struggle for a new "dictator," heir to "Stalin's mantle". . . .

2. The Soviet Bureaucracy's International Policy

The CC of the LSSP accuses the IS of being of opinion that "the aims and content of the Soviet bureaucracy's international policy have changed in the present period."

It draws this conclusion by separating an interpretation of the final sentences of section 10, *which give a perspective of future intentions*, from a quotation of the beginning of that section *which is an analysis of past results of a given policy*. By such an artificial construction, once again an interpretation of IS intentions is substituted to an interpretation of facts. It is difficult to learn anything from such a course of discussion.

Let us look at the beginning of section 9. All sentences from the beginning of that section till the central sentence "Every overall attempt to utilize the colonial revolution as small change in the transactions with imperialism had to be abandoned" are written in the past tense. This is a general summary of the *actions* of the Soviet bureaucracy between 1948 and today. The comrades of the CC of the LSSP do not attempt to prove that this analysis is wrong. Indeed, it would be difficult to find any proof for such an allegation! If one understands the words "overall attempt" in their real historical significance, i.e., the line the Kremlin used in 1935-39 and again in 1943-47, it strikes the eye that nothing similar has been attempted in the period following the victorious offensive

of Mao. There has been no "general sell-out" of the revolution in China, Korea, Indochina, Malaya and even Burma and Indonesia, i.e. all countries where mass revolutionary struggles of important scope have broken out since 1947, comparable to the general sell-out which took place in Spain, France, Belgium and some colonial countries in the late thirties, and again in France, Italy, Greece, Belgium, Indochina and Indonesia in the years 1943-47. We do not mean by that that the general policy either of the Kremlin or of the native Stalinist parties in these colonial countries has been generally correct since 1947. Far from it. As in the past, one can recognize easily the successive series of ultra-left adventurist and rightist opportunistic turns in the policy of the CPs and, related to it, the different diplomatic objectives which the Kremlin tried to reach through the twists and turns of its "directives." If this would not have been the case, indeed, these parties would have stopped to be Stalinist parties, or even "centrist" parties of any kind. Our draft resolution doesn't imply anything of that kind. It only stresses the point that the revolutionary upsurge on the one hand, and the overall counter-revolutionary goals of the world imperialist united front on the other hand have limited more and more the *overall practical results* of the Kremlin's maneuvers.

In other words: *not the aims* of the Kremlin, its objectives and purposes have changed, but its counter-revolutionary *possibilities*. They have changed for the simple reason that the relationship of forces between the classes leave less and less scope to such possibilities.

It is perfectly true that what is stated in section 9 for the future intentions of the Kremlin ("attempts to utilize the inter-imperialist contradictions," "attempts to win the support of certain bourgeoisies in the colonial and semi-colonial countries," "attempts to arrive at a temporary and partial agreement with imperialism") should be considered a fundamental and not a secondary exceptional aspect of the Kremlin's foreign policy for the whole period beginning with 1948. In section 46 it is even added that we do not at all exclude the possibilities of open counter-revolutionary actions of the Kremlin against isolated revolutionary uprisings in capitalist countries, even during the coming world war. All this remains a fundamental aspect of the Kremlin's *objectives*. There should be added to section 9 a passage explaining to what extent the Kremlin actually succeeded in implementing this orientation: the limitation of arms deliveries to the North Korean armies, the opportunist turnabouts of the CPs of India and Indonesia, etc.

But at the same time it remains true that the objective results of that policy are today *different* from what they were in the past, and that this reacts in turn upon the very scope of the maneuvers the Kremlin still attempts to put through. Of course, the decisive element in the situation remains the scope of the mass upsurge itself. Where it is still limited geographically and socially, e.g. in India, Indonesia and Ceylon, the scope of these maneuvers can be much broader than where it has become general as in China, Korea and Indochina. But one must be blind to think that the intervention of the Kremlin has had the same objective results in the Korean and Vietnamese civil wars as it had in the Spanish and Greek civil wars ("general sell-out"). That is precisely meant by

those self-styled "orthodox Trotskyists" who take exception to our pointing out the changes in the scope of the Kremlin's maneuvers. These self-styled orthodox are busy shouting about a "sell-out" in Indochina; they were proclaiming yesterday in editorials that the Berlin conference would be a new Yalta! Such irresponsible positions should be vigorously fought, and it must be understood that they are having for result: (1) to drive critical members of the CP back into the ranks of Stalinism, and (2) to develop a real danger of pro-Stalinism in our own ranks.

Is there any perspective that the Soviet bureaucracy could suddenly get the possibility of giving a greater scope to its treacherous *objectives* in the colonial countries? We must declare frankly that we don't see any such possibility in the future. The only basis on which the Kremlin could really arrive at any agreement with imperialism of the type of the Laval-Stalin or Hitler-Stalin pact, or of Teheran, Yalta and Potsdam would be its ability to deliver precisely the colonial revolutions to Washington in the same way as it delivered in the past the Spanish, French, Italian, Greek revolutions, etc. We think that such a possibility is practically excluded in the coming years, not because the Kremlin has become more "revolutionary," but because it has lost the degree of control over these revolutions which would make possible such a sell-out. The Kremlin being unable to "deliver the goods," the imperialists on their turn won't offer any acceptable conditions to the Soviet bureaucracy. The Kremlin people are not "against revolution" by principle but for self-defense. But for the same reason they are also for the defense of the Soviet Union, of course by their own methods. Under these circumstances, the Sino-Soviet alliance, and everything which this alliance implies, is going to be the general framework of the Kremlin Asian policy in the coming years. As long as there is no fundamental change in the relationship of forces concerning the Asian revolution, in the first place as long as the Chinese revolution does not retreat, there does not remain any objective basis for a "sell-out" in Asia. To understand this fact does not mean at all to open the road for a reappraisal of the Soviet bureaucracy. It only means to open the road for understanding the fact that the strength of the colonial revolution is destroying the basis of Stalinism, and that for this very reason the revolutionary upsurge is going to make headway inside the Soviet Union itself. Not to understand this fact means only to replace politics by fantasy, and to lose contact with the real revolutionary anti-Stalinist forces which are today growing in the world. It implies, furthermore, endowing the Soviet bureaucracy with an autonomous strength which is contrary to the really orthodox Trotskyist analysis of that bureaucracy.

3. *The Role of the Mass Communist Parties*

The CC of the LSSP alleges that our draft resolution implies the possibility of a Stalinist party projecting a revolutionary orientation without powerful mass uprisings, and that this possibility in turn implies "that the Stalinist leadership of the mass communist parties are capable of a revolutionary role."

The comrades of the CC come to that conclusion on the basis of a part of section 45 of the draft resolution "Rise and Decline of Stalinism." This part, they say prudently,

"appears to put forward the perspective that, through gradual disintegration of Stalinist ideas . . . and through a leftward turn in their policies, these parties are capable of projecting a revolutionary orientation under mass pressure, even without powerful revolutionary uprisings of the masses taking place."

Now, in the very next section, section 46, this idea which to the comrades of the CC *appears* to be implied in section 45 is *explicitly rejected!*

In section 46 it is clearly stated that no abandonment of the fundamentally zigzag line of the mass CPs is to be expected "as long as the pressure of the masses has not reached its culminating point" (and we hope that the comrades of the CC will admit that we understand by "culminating point" actual revolution!). It is further clearly stated that only "revolutionary mass movements" (not peacefully operating Stalinist parties) will free themselves more and more from the Kremlin control. And it is finally and explicitly stated:

"This process of disintegration of Stalinism by no means signifies that among the mass Communist parties there will take place a gradual transformation of these organizations into revolutionary Marxist parties. Crises and grand transformations will be necessary and inevitable for revolutionary Marxist parties under the banner of the Fourth International to emerge from this."

Isn't there a contradiction between this quotation and the sentences of section 45 quoted in the LSSP resolution, may ask some comrades? The next sentence of section 46 answers this objection in advance:

"But these transformations which will mark the complete end of Stalinism will come as the culminating points of a process which at present begins by stages in the course of which the Communist parties, compelled to seek to strengthen their ties with the masses, begin to shake off in often imperceptible ways the rigid ties of Stalinist obedience."

In other words: the appearance of mass revolutionary parties in countries where the working class is led by mass communist parties can only take place through a process which includes break-ups, splits, in these parties. In order to prepare these stages, we have decided to operate on a line of entry into these parties in most of these countries. But these breaks will not fall from the sky, full-fledged, under the single influence of "revolution." No serious revolutionist can hold such a simplified view. These break-ups are prepared in many stages, the first of which consists in the introduction of critical ideas into the heads of vanguard militants and cadres of these parties. During this whole preparatory stage, these critically minded militants will not leave these parties one by one—this is the disastrously *wrong* perspective the Bleibtreu group is working upon—but they will stay inside these parties and even tend to draw new layers of revolutionary workers into them. At the same time, part of the leading cadre of these parties will at least feel the growing criticism and demand for revolutionary strategy from below, and try to adapt themselves to it, be it in a completely empirical way. They will understand in a sharper way than in the past the *contradiction* between the general orientation of the Kremlin and the revolutionary desires of the masses. The more this mass pressure increases, the more the vanguard elements become critical, and the more the Stalinist leadership of these parties will

be torn between these two conflicting forces of attraction upon it. And the more this process evolves following such a dialectical relationship between the Kremlin, the local Stalinist leaders and the masses, the more the objective conditions ripen inside these parties for a series of crises through which will be born the revolutionary mass parties under the banner of the IVth International.

In their eagerness to look for incriminating evidence of the IS bad intentions, the comrades of the CC have even overlooked the fact that the draft resolution under discussion introduces a *restrictive clause with regard to the theses adopted at the 3rd W.C.* Then we all defended the idea that under certain favorable conditions, Stalinist mass parties as such could project a revolutionary orientation *in the event of powerful revolutionary uprisings of the masses.* In the documents for the Fourth World Congress—"Rise and Decline of Stalinism" and "our integration . . ."—we state specifically that, concerning the evolution of mass Communist parties in economically developed countries, the projection of a revolutionary orientation from these parties, though possible in exceptional objective circumstances (powerful revolutionary movements of the masses) should not be understood as including also the ineluctability of the *victory* of the revolution, the *seizure* of power by such parties, as happened in Yugoslavia and China.

In these documents we orientate our comrades on the idea that before another mass CP will lead any revolution to victory in capitalist developed countries, it is much more likely that it will be broken up and transformed completely through a series of internal crises. But at the same time we must understand that the *beginning* of this process is precisely the penetration of non-Stalinist ideas into these parties. It is indeed an old principle of dialectics that every revolution is prepared by a long process of evolutionary molecular changes. There is nothing "revisionist" in this, on the contrary!

Some Conclusions

It thereby appears that the comrades of the CC of the LSSP, by reading "behind the lines" instead of taking the ideas actually expressed in the draft resolution in their *general context*, have directed a series of mistaken and unfounded accusations against the authors of the resolution, and attributed to them ideas which they do not hold, they never held, and against which the discussion seems a loss of time and energy. At the same time they have not discussed the real points of divergence in the movement: the appraisal of the events in the Soviet Union since Stalin's death in the light of (a) the traditional conception of the USSR and the Soviet bureaucracy, (b) the present relationship of forces between the classes on a world scale and in Russia, point on which the CC states its agreement with the authors of the resolution. We are interested to know if the comrades of the CC draw from this analysis the conclusion, defended by most of the opponents of the IS in the movement, that there is an actual danger of capitalist restoration in the USSR, that Malenkov represents a pro-capitalist tendency inside the bureaucracy, that the bureaucracy as a caste is in favor of restoration of private property, and some other funny ideas thrown into the discussion. At the same time we wish to point out to the comrades of the CC of the LSSP

who discover "revisionism" in the IS writings, by isolating some sentences here and there, that the same authors of the draft resolution under discussion who allegedly believe that the Stalinist bureaucracy will be pushed forward on the revolutionary road, were the only ones in the whole international labor movement to *predict mass uprisings against the Stalinist bureaucracy* as early as August 1952 and, consistently, from Stalin's death till May 1st 1953, i.e. before there was any question of German events! We recall in particular the May 1st 1953 Manifesto of the IS on this subject. Isn't it strange that these "capitulators" were the only people not to be taken by surprise by the magnificent workers' uprising in Eastern Germany, whereas the so-called defenders of "orthodox Trotskyism" were able to discover in the events before and after Stalin's death, only bloody purges, economic crises and internecine strife of bureaucrats, i.e. the exact repetition of the events of the thirties, when the mass movement in the USSR was at its lowest point! Surely, comrades

of the CC, "orthodox Trotskyism" does not stand for political sterility and monotonous repetitions! We know from which school of politics these phenomena spring, and what a relentless struggle Trotsky carried all his life against them. It is not on such a basis that a revolutionary International can be built. We only hope that the CC of the LSSP will make a complete reappraisal of the draft resolution, on the basis of the ideas expressed in that resolution, and judging from the real and not the fake divergences which have developed in our movement. On the basis of such a reappraisal and a clear expression of political opinion on the controversial questions, I think that it will always be possible to redraft some passages in the draft resolution which comrades would like to clarify.

E. Germain
(for the IS Bureau)
April 1954

3. For an International Workers Conference Parallel to the Geneva Conference

The International Secretariat of the Fourth International addresses an urgent appeal to all political and union workers' organizations of all countries, socialist and communist, asking them to give full attention to the present international situation which is particularly grave and contains the very real danger of a rapid evolution toward a Third World War.

A most massive and direct intervention by American imperialism in Vietnam, aided by the other imperialisms, threatens to develop into a war against China which would quickly develop into a general war. The general conditions are entirely different from those that previously existed in the Korean war, the possibility of a localized conflict is less probable than ever. Imperialism is now seriously rearmed. It is on the other hand threatened by an economic crisis which it will avoid only by a new step-up of expenditures for armaments, keeping everything on the edge of war. The first result of this renewal of aggression has been the break out of the New York Stock Exchange from its stagnation of the last months.

It is an illusion to believe that Vietminh, China or the USSR will permit consolidation in Vietnam of a regime and base for imperialist aggression in a relation of forces more unfavorable than ever for imperialism.

Dulles went to Europe for the purpose of overcoming the last hesitations of the London and Paris governments and to obtain at the Geneva Conference, not peace which the people ardently desire, but a more direct and massive intervention of the imperialist coalition in Asia.

This is a criminal project which must be halted at all costs.

Action must be taken against this and with all possible vigor.

The question of peace or war, of a war that would be the most abominable in the history of the human race,

is in reality in the hands of the major workers' organizations. Surmounting all sentiments of indecision, cowardice, routinism, mistrust and hostility resulting in division of the workers, they must take the initiative in convoking at the time of the Geneva Conference an "International Workers Conference," in Paris for example, open to all political and union organizations, communist and socialist, of all countries — a conference that will demand:

AN IMMEDIATE ARMISTICE IN VIETNAM.
FREE GENERAL ELECTIONS IN VIETNAM TO DECIDE ON THE STATUTES AND THE GOVERNMENT.

RECOGNITION OF PEOPLES CHINA AND ITS ADMISSION TO THE UN.

PROHIBITION OF ATOMIC WEAPONS.
WORKERS CONTROL OF THE ATOMIC INDUSTRIES IN EACH COUNTRY.

This conference, cementing an international workers united front against war, should further decide to create a permanent bureau of the international workers united front which should look for all means of proletarian action against the threat of war on the part of imperialism.

Its convocation at the same time as the Geneva Conference would in itself be an act that would paralyze the fomenters of war and would arouse the hopes and an immense energy among the working masses of the entire world.

The hour is grave, time presses. The large workers organizations must quickly assume their responsibilities. They must quickly act in unison.

The International Secretariat
April 9, 1954

SECTION XII: THE PABLO FACTION DEBATES THE QUESTION OF UNITY

[In addition to criticizing Pablo's position on Stalinism, the Lanka Sama Samaja Party leaders also began to challenge Pablo's attitude toward the International Committee. They demanded the immediate lifting of all suspensions and the postponement of the "Fourth World Congress" to allow for a full discussion. Under the pressure of these forces, the International Secretariat issued an appeal that offered "participation" in the "Fourth World

Congress" in exchange for unconditional acceptance of Pablo's concept of "democratic centralism." This maneuver led to conflicts among the firmest supporters of Pablo's political line—notably the group around John Lawrence in Britain, and the Cochran-Clarke-Bartell grouping (now titling itself the Socialist Union of America).

[These materials also appear in *SWP Discussion Bulletin A-18, 1954.*]

1. International Secretariat Reply to the Central Committee of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party

March 23, 1954

Dear Comrades,

We are in receipt of the letter of Comrade Tilak accompanied by the copy of a letter which Cannon sent you.

The IS at the meeting of March 14—that is, before receiving these two letters and the proposal they contained of a postponement of the World Congress—had decided to address all members of the IEC and to ask them to launch an invitation to all the groups which have split from the International to participate in the 4th World Congress. We are sending to Comrade Tilak and Colvin, members of the IEC, the proposal of the IS.

On our part, we do not see any reason to go back now on this procedure nor above all to decide to postpone the World Congress. First of all, in our capacity as the IS, we are formally bound by the decisions of the 13th and 14th Plenums of the IEC. The letter of Cannon is quite explicit in the real aims that he seeks; to flatter again your organization in order to win it over to his faction, while all the time he goes on with "organization of the revolt" in the sections with his Committee of the Fourth International. If he wishes to postpone the Congress, it is not at all in order later to make possible "a single Congress," regarding which on his own admission he has hardly any faith, but solely in order in the meantime to further strengthen his faction, to change the relationship of forces in his favour and to sow confusion and indecision amidst our own ranks. All this is said in a very clear, and we might say even cynical, manner.

We do not believe that the International should help these maneuvers in any manner whatsoever.

The tone and content of Cannon's letter are for us a further proof of the unbelievable Machiavellism of the man and of his desperate effort to break up the International by spreading slander, confusion and suspicion and by exploiting all weaknesses in our movement. The way in which he exploits and presents the case of your minority—which you well know—as well as his revolting references to the "existence of a secret faction of Pablo" inside your organization, must make perfectly clear to you his techniques in the unprincipled factional struggle to which he has lent himself.

Other more important reasons make impossible, in our opinion, the postponement of the WC at the present moment. The majority of our sections have already made

very advanced preparations to secure their representation at the WC, and cannot cancel them without material losses and upsetting of their plans of work. For example, the delegates of our Latin American sections have had to purchase their places on the steamers in advance, and some of them will shortly be on the way.

But in our opinion by far the most important reason is the following: The crisis in the International has posed a series of political and organizational problems vital for the future of our movement and only an assembly which is as representative as possible of the International can provide a solution to these problems. To permit the prolongation of the present situation, with such a crisis in the International, a weakened leadership, and in the context of an international situation that does not cease to be disquieting, that would be the greatest irresponsibility on our part. To Cannon, this is not of importance, considering that he is opposed to the structure as a world party of our movement. Cannon speaks of an IS of usurpers and of its irremovable secretaries. He of course does this slanderously and demagogically, knowing perfectly well the monstrosity of such a falsehood. But for our part we declare that it is impossible of us to assume our functions as members of the IS and IEC any longer, in the absence of the holding of the WC fixed for June.

It is necessary that all our sections fully shoulder this responsibility and decide supremely in an international assembly both on the future policy and leadership of the International. This is now their strictest duty. They must do this as soon as possible in the interests of our movement. Whether this assembly of June should be called the 4th World Congress, or an international conference in view of the concrete proposals of the Cannonites, and it be decided that another Conference or Congress should be held later, this is a matter which this June Assembly itself with full knowledge of the facts, can decide. But it is primary that such an international assembly representative of our movement meet in the first place.

For all these reasons we insist again on the appeal we have so often made to assist without fail in the meeting of June. You will submit your proposals there and assume your full responsibilities along with the other representatives of the sections.

With our fraternal greetings,
The IS

2. Lanka Sama Samaja Party Repeats Request

Colombo
April 12, 1954

The IS

Dear Comrades,

The CC of the LSSP at its meeting of April 7th considered your letter of March 24th and has instructed me to write to you as follows:

We regret that our proposal for the postponement of the World Congress is not acceptable to the IS.

Whatever may be the motives of Comrade Cannon, we think that the postponement of the World Congress will afford an opportunity to set going processes which can lead to a re-unification of the movement.

While appreciating the difficulties of the IS in the present situation, we do not see that a postponement will make the situation impossible for members of the IS, especially as the circulars of the IS itself point out that the large

majority of the sections have declared that they recognize the authority of the IS and IEC.

We recognize the difficulties and financial losses which will be entailed by a postponement; but we regard it to be a much more important consideration that no opportunity should be missed for seeking the re-unification of the movement.

We have therefore to request you to place our proposal for a postponement of the World Congress before the IEC. We have also to state that if the IEC finds itself unable to accept this proposal, we give notice that we shall move this proposal at the World Congress.

We would also request that our letter of March 13th, your reply of March 24th, and this letter be circulated to all sections as soon as possible.

Yours fraternally,
Leslie Goonewardene
Secretary

3. Lanka Sama Samaja Party Proposals for Reunification

Colombo
April 12, 1954

The Secretary, IS

Dear Comrade,

I have to inform you that the CC of the LSSP at its meeting of April 7th passed the following resolution unanimously:

"We propose to the IS and the IEC, and if rejected, to the World Congress, the following terms for the participation of the suspended organizations and the French majority in the 4th World Congress:

1. The removal of the suspensions on an undertaking being given by the suspended organizations to participate in the World Congress. This will mean the recognition of two sections in New Zealand, Great Britain, and so on.

2. Admission of the French majority to the World Con-

gress with full rights of participation (including vote), if they seek such participation.

3. The appointment by the IEC of a Commission which includes representatives of the suspended organizations coming in under (1) above. This commission will decide on the representation to be accorded to the organizations participating in the Congress, such representation being on the basis of the principles adopted in respect of representation at the 3rd World Congress."

In accordance with the above, I have to request that the above proposals be placed before the IS and the IEC, and, if they are rejected, I have to state that we shall be moving them at the World Congress.

I have also to request that these proposals be circulated to all sections immediately.

Yours fraternally,
Leslie Goonewardene
Secretary

4. Appeal of the International Executive Committee Comrades:

The IEC addresses this appeal to all those, without exception, who were members of the International at the time of the Third Congress and who by their own volition have placed themselves outside the organizational framework of the International, centralized world Party.

The Fourth World Congress of the International, called by unanimous vote of the 13th Plenum of the IEC—including the votes of Burns, Peng, Jacques and with the approval of the SWP—will soon be held. In the meantime, the "Open Letter" published in *The Militant* in No-

vember 1953, and the setting up of the "Committee of the Fourth International," have produced a state of split within our international movement.

It is not our intention in the appeal we are addressing to you today to express again our opinions on the actions and ideas of those who are responsible for this state of affairs. Without altering in the slightest our estimate of these actions and ideas, *we were and we always are for the unity of the movement, independently of this or that political divergence, in the organizational framework of the International and its regime of democratic centralism*

as a centralized world party, defined as such by its founding statutes as well as the statutes unanimously adopted by the Second World Congress and sanctioned by its entire existence since then.

We stated at the time of the first split actions that all political tendencies which respected the organizational framework of the International could participate and have full expression in the pre-Congress discussion as well as at the Congress itself.

The 14th Plenum of the IEC in December 1953 adopted decisions along these lines. The sanctions taken at that Plenum against those IEC members and leaders of sections who signed the "Open Letter" which called for split, or tried to rally their sections to split, *were measures of suspension up to the World Congress. No one has been expelled from the International by these measures, nor prevented from participating in the pre-Congress discussion or at the Congress itself.* Those who attempt to give these measures—which were completely normal for any organization against individuals who openly call for its split and dismemberment—and other interpretation, do so for the express purpose of rendering the split definitive.

The IEC has always been invested with the confidence of the vast majority of the International, as an organism normally elected and representative of this majority. At the Fourth World Congress this same majority will at least be represented. To claim the contrary is to entirely ignore the reality of our movement, and *to be determined at all costs—even while talking about the International, its unity, etc.—to sanction the split of a minority and, with this minority as a base, to attack the International from the outside in order to provoke new splits.*

We believe this path can never lead to the rebuilding of the unity of our movement, nor can it raise the prestige of the movement before proletarian public opinion. It can only perpetuate the split.

We believe that this is not the profound desire animating you. We believe that in your overwhelming majority you are as anxious as we to reestablish the unity of the International on the basis of the one *fundamental rule of a proletarian organization, the regime of democratic centralism applied on an international scale.*

The World Congress, representative assembly of our international movement, is the sole organism which has the power to resolve, by its majority, the political disputes and the questions of the functioning and leadership of the International.

Submit any disputes you may have in any field, to this Congress.

You no longer have confidence in the present leadership of the International, or its organization of this Congress? Offer concrete proposals as to how you envisage your participation in this Congress; state the conditions of the future functioning and leadership of the International which, if adopted or largely satisfied by the Congress, would

in your opinion make possible the reestablishment of the unity of the International. Submit these proposals to a commission of the IEC, which would function prior to the beginning of the Congress sessions, and composed of such comrades as, for example, Tilak (Ceylon), Colvin de Silva (Ceylon), Edward (Germany), Livio (Italy), Germain, Posadas (Argentina), Bos (Holland), Dumas (France), Serrano (Bolivia).

The purpose of this commission is to assure your participation—*genuine, not formal*—in the Congress, in order to achieve the reunification of our international movement, with the Congress having sovereign decision, by majority vote, on all the political and organizational questions submitted to it. We state that for our part we see no political reason why the different tendencies that have formed during this crisis cannot coexist in the International if they respect its discipline, and that in this spirit we submit in advance to every decision of the representative assemblies of the International and its leading organisms that will be elected at that time.

Only a much more prolonged experience within the International of whatever tendencies have manifested themselves in the present struggle, could prove that they are incompatible with the program and the principles of the International.

This commission will start functioning prior to the sessions of the Congress. It will await any proposals you may have, from May 15 to the end of May. Your leaderships have been informed of the date of opening of the Congress.

If the aim of your struggle is not to ratify at all costs the split with the vast majority of the Trotskyist movement who did not then and there accept your faction leadership and its political ideas, but who wish to discuss and decide within the organizational framework of the International as a centralized world party—if that is not your aim, you must take steps for your organizations to make contact with this commission and discuss with it constructive proposals for the reunification of our international movement, the holding of the Congress, proportional representation for each tendency, both in the Congress and in the new leadership that it will elect, etc.

SEIZE THIS OCCASION TO PREVENT THE CONTINUANCE AND ENLARGEMENT OF A DISASTROUS SPLIT which can only damage the opportunities for Trotskyism that have never been so favorable. Do not let yourselves be swept away by elements who want to perpetuate the split and break up the International as a world party.

CONTACT THE COMMISSION, PRESENT YOUR CONCRETE PROPOSALS TO IT, PARTICIPATE GENUINELY IN THE WORLD CONGRESS!

The International Executive Committee

April 15, 1954

5. *Letter From John Lawrence to Michel Pablo, Secretary of the International Secretariat*

London
April 26, 1954

To the IS Secretary:

Dear comrade,

I have received your letter to all IEC members in which you motivate your proposed appeal to the splitters to come to the World Congress.

As you know, I am completely opposed to your method in this question. I do not think that our task is "the reconstruction of the unity of our movement." The splitters have done what they have done because they are sectarians—a dying cult with absolutely no future. We should leave them to die while we concentrate on the really urgent task of educating a solid cadre of Bolsheviks capable of understanding and facing up to the present reality and our place in it.

Let us square up to the fact that there *is a split*. It was not perpetrated by us or encouraged by us, and there is no way of healing it unless we are prepared to capitulate to their disastrous political conceptions. To restore these splitters to the ranks could only bring confusion and internal disruption into the FI at a timewhen clarity above all things is absolutely necessary. Numbers at this stage are not decisive. The loss of some hundreds of what you call "backward people" in the States and fifty or so hopeless confusionists in Britain is not really a bad thing. In any case, far worse than this loss is to continue this undignified trading of curses across the Atlantic in the hope that in some miraculous way this will bring "unity." Let us abandon this unseemly diversion of our energies and instead prepare seriously a World Congress of *Bolsheviks*.

Comradely greetings,
M. Collins

6. *Letter From Colvin R. de Silva and Leslie Goonewardene (Lanka Sama Samaja Party) to the International Secretariat*

April 13, 1954

The IS

Dear Comrades,

We have received your letter enclosing a draft appeal to be signed by members of the IEC. We have also received the dissent by Comrade Collins. We regret that we are unable to set our signatures to the Appeal for the following reasons:

1. The Ceylon section has already adopted a set of proposals to be placed before the Movement as a basis for securing a single World Congress. We endorse these proposals ourselves. The proposals in the IS draft are different from the Ceylon section's proposals.

2. The draft appeal as it stands can be construed as a factional document. See, for example, the following passage:

"We state in advance that we see no political reason why

the different tendencies which have appeared in this crisis cannot co-exist in the International, providing they respect its discipline, *and we state that we will submit in such a spirit to all decisions of the representative assemblies of the International and its newly elected leading bodies.*"

It is completely out of place for the IEC to make any such declaration as we have underlined in the above passage.

Further, the Appeal appears to be made to the rank and file of the suspended sections over the heads of and against their leaders. We do not think that this is the correct approach for the immediate task in hand which we consider to be the reunification of the Movement through a single World Congress representing all tendencies in our Movement.

Yours fraternally,

Colvin R. de Silva (IEC member)
Leslie Goonewardene (alternate)

7. *Declaration of the National Committee of the Socialist Union of America*

We have watched with increasing concern the unstable behavior of the IS from the time Cannon launched his drive to split the SWP and wreck the International. If we refrained heretofore from making our views known publicly it was because we did not want to add to the

difficulties of the situation and in the hope that the IS would come to appreciate the realities of our movement as it had appreciated the realities of the world around us. We speak now because we have become convinced that the world Trotskyist movement is in danger.

The latest maneuver of the IS contained in the projected IEC unity proposal can lead to capitulation to the retrograde, sectarian elements, or to complete demoralization and disorientation. The maneuver must be categorically rejected and the IS must reorient its course fundamentally.

On the eve of the World Congress the IS proposes that the Cannonites be permitted to ignore the presently constituted leadership of the International and to set their own terms for participation in the forthcoming World Congress through negotiations with a committee whose personnel in effect will be selected by the Cannonites. Some will probably be bewildered to hear such a proposal from those who have been shouting about "the centralized world party," "the statutes," etc. But, in reality, this is the culmination of a false course started a year ago, and is, in the immediate sense a reply to the unofficial negotiations between Cannon and Tilak of the Ceylonese LSSP. Cannon, who is willing to discuss unity proposals with Tilak because he believes there is political agreement between them against the "revisionists," lays down the following terms (*SWP Bulletin*, March 1954): to remove the present leadership of the International, to rescind its political line and orientation as "revisionist" and "pro-Stalinist," to set aside all organizational measures taken to protect the movement against the split (in reality to reinstate Bleibtreu and Burns to the position of leadership in their own countries), to postpone the Congress until such time as he can be assured of a majority to impose his own line and leadership. In a word, it is a demand for unconditional surrender, politically and organizationally.

Yet, despite the fact that the overwhelming majority of the world movement has rallied behind the International, the IS is apparently in the throes of wavering and indecision. It is now formally proposing to take a first big step in yielding to Cannon's ultimatum. It rationalizes its retreat by reference to a desire to influence the "backward elements" still following Cannon. As a strictly tactical matter, retreat and surrender are the poorest means to win over anybody. But the IS proposal is wrong and dangerous for even weightier reasons: it sets the retreat in motion. The next logical step must be the resignation of the present leadership, or that part which Cannon finds most noxious to himself, and the postponement of the Congress until all these moves have been executed and have taken their full effect. There is no turning back from this path of organizational compromise and surrender—regardless of subjective desires to the contrary—once conciliation and unity with the sectarians is considered the supreme need of the movement. It will then be but a short distance to the creation of ideological chaos, to the abandonment of the program the present leadership was elected to defend, to full-scale political capitulation to the Stalinophobes and sectarians. Even in the event that Cannon once again brusquely rejects an offer he will consider a half-measure, and decides to wait until he can dictate even more extreme terms, the overall effect of the IS maneuver, so-called, is not to give us a greater hearing with the Cannonite ranks, but of growing uncertainty, disintegration and demoralization within the International movement.

The source of what can become a disintegration is at the top. While the sections rallied at the first sign of dan-

ger with admirable solidarity and understanding, the IS from the beginning has been engaged in desperate back-door maneuvers, in sowing fear and demoralization in the ranks. The Tilak-Cannon correspondence did not drop from the sky. It followed on the heels of similar proposals made by Germain to Breitman. The very next day after Cannon had perpetrated his split in America and England and had issues his appeal for a split in the International, Germain was offering terms for a horse-trading compromise—at the expense of the groups loyal to the International in America, England and France. This disloyal and arbitrary action was taken without the approval even of the IEC, let alone of the sections most deeply involved in the matter. It became known for the first time to most of the world when the correspondence was published in a Cannonite bulletin. A protest by the English group to the IS against both the procedure and the proposals was blandly dismissed. In substance, the present statement is a continuation of the same procedure. Without opening a discussion on the problems created by the Cannon-Tilak correspondence, (with which the IS was fully familiar), without even a reference to that correspondence in its covering letter, without calling a meeting of the IEC to consider the new situation if it thought one actually existed, the IS by a 3-1 vote presents the world movement with the reversal of the course decided upon by the December IEC meeting. Under the circumstances, the letter being sent to the IEC members takes the form not of a collective discussion of a new tactic in the struggle, but of a vote of confidence for contemplated deals with the Cannonites. This lamentable procedure and self-defeating course, this flouting of the elementary precepts of solidarity toward co-thinkers defending a common political line against an enemy political tendency, stems from a false position on the role of an International leadership in the present period.

Throughout the course of the present struggle, the International leadership has misconstrued its function in the world movement. Its present proposals exposing the movement to destruction as an effective Marxist tendency is only the culmination of a whole series of false steps which arise from this misconception, and which have now led it into a blind alley. The basic error consists in its attempt to rest on precepts of organizational authority rather than on being the rallying center for an ideological regroupment. It failed to understand that its prestige and authority derived essentially from the political reorientation it effected at the Third World Congress. Instead of recognizing the long hard struggle that lies ahead before the political line will find realization in life, the IS plunged into the farcical game of competing with Cannon in empty boasting.

The present conditions of our movement—where the Trotskyists constitute small organizations seeking a foothold in the mass movement, abysmally poor in finances, material resources and personnel, where International leaders often have to be chosen on the basis of practical availability—these conditions dictate the form, character and authority of the International center and leadership. The International center and leadership has to be viewed primarily as an ideological center and authority. This simple fact the IS could not grasp from the first. Instead of assuming the political leadership in the fight against the sectarian tendency and battling it out throughout the

International on the political front—as even a Trotsky did in 1940 and in all previous major struggles—they attempted to rest on formal organizational authority. This gained them nothing with the sectarians and their followers, but did provide grist to the Cannonite faction mill and lent credence to the charge that people were attempting to arrogate to themselves authority to which they were not entitled.

The line of resting on organizational authority could not be maintained in practice, as we have seen. As a result its actual policy has undergone the wildest fluctuations: from attempts to conciliate with the sectarians when it should have been involved in political struggle with them, to demands for their recognition of its absolute authority as a leadership, and now to a readiness for organizational capitulation when the movement is prepared for political struggle. This fatal course, which began by muffling political line for false organizational considerations of "world leadership" will end, unless halted in time, by undermining the political cohesion of the movement and its confidence in its programmatic orientation.

Therefore, it is with a sense of the strongest urgency that we call upon the IEC to reverse the course and to reorient the entire struggle along correct lines. The first requisite is that all present maneuvers with the Cannon-

ites be dropped forthwith. The present task is the consolidation of the world cadre that was selected in struggle and defense of the Third World Congress around a program. Only when that is accomplished, when the program is fully developed, and the cadre is hardened and consolidated around it, can there be any fruitful consideration of approaches to the Cannonites. Organizational maneuvers, premature from point of time, and not serving a political program, will not result in political unification with our opponents, but in organizational injury and even divisions among ourselves. That is precisely where the present line of the IS can lead to, and that is why it must be reversed.

The Fourth World Congress has to become the rallying center for the political consolidation of the world cadres. This is its historic task. The Cannonites have split with the world movement, nationally and on a world scale. They have rejected the Congress in advance—refusing to accept its political premises, its basis of representation, or its decisions should they prove to be in a minority. The Congress, in its preparations and actions, must accept this as a fact and proceed with the real work before it. It must turn its back on the sectarian past of the International and turn its eyes toward the living workers' movements.

April 10, 1954

8. *"Our Conception of the International and the Struggle Within It," by Michel Pablo*

The position taken by the leading comrades of the Socialist Union, with regard to the appeal decided upon by the IEC inviting the leadership of the splitters to participate in the world congress, poses basically the question of our conception of the International and of the struggle going on within it. It was Cannon who was the first to express these opinions differing strongly from ours and it is on this terrain that he first of all prepared and launched the struggle against the International.

His speech to the New York SWP majority on May 18, 1953, his letter to Tom of June 4, 1953, his answer to Kane published in the Militant, as well as his entire last letter to the Ceylonese comrades, illustrates sufficiently his conceptions on this subject. His acts only confirm and emphasize this more. For Cannon the International does not exist as a centralized world organization whose functioning is regulated by statutes and rules, which has its congresses and its leading bodies and its discipline just as a national organization, as a section.

What exists are sections, several sections, among whom the SWP itself stands first and foremost and between these sections on the international plane there are ideological exchanges and cooperation. When differences break out and tendencies form within the International, Cannon has little concern with regulating them within the framework of the International and its democratic centralist functioning. His major preoccupation in such a case is to transform the tendencies into factions, that is, into groupings having their own discipline above the International and the national organizations, considering the whole struggle to be led from the point of view of the

interests and the position of the SWP leadership.

He sees only "friends" or "enemies" within the International and he throws himself into the factional struggle with all the "Irish" ardor which is characteristic of him and with which he flatters himself. (See his picture in the Militant with sleeves rolled up for the "fight" in his "historic" attitude at the time of the struggle against Shachtman).

From then on the organizational framework of the International, its rules, its organisms, its discipline cease to exist. What counts is to achieve by all means, political and extra-political (above all the latter) a change in the relationship of forces to the advantage of the Cannon faction, since as a worthy son of the United States of 1954 which he probably considers himself, he believes that all struggles are for "power" and can be conducted only by force. This conception, which is in reality monstrous within the framework of a principled proletarian organization such as the International, Cannon can in all modesty consider as his specific contribution to the enrichment of the Leninist theory of the party. He hasn't hesitated on a number of occasions—when his "Irish" spirit was at the highest point of excitation—to confide in some (among others myself during the meeting with him in 1946-47) this modest conviction rooted deeply within himself that Trotsky, for example, was "soft" on the organizational plane, that he had never assimilated what Cannon believed to be Lenin's conception of the party, and that he, Cannon, knew more in this field than Trotsky.

Once he started the struggle for "power" and for a favor-

able relationship of forces, Cannon naturally sees himself obliged to dress up his factional conception of the International with high "ideological," "principled," "fundamental" motives. The manner in which he proceeded in his struggle against the minority in his organization and following that against the International, changing constantly the principal political motive of his attacks, is in this respect sufficiently clear.

Cannon is above all a clever and eloquent propagandist of the general ideas of communism and Trotskyism. He is less at ease when it comes to translating the generalities of Marxism and Trotskyism into every-day reality on the international arena.

When he was alive Trotsky furnished the correct analysis of the international situation, of the situation in the different countries, of the different aspects of the situation in the United States itself, and of tactics. Cannon tried to assimilate and defend Trotsky's ideas as best he could. On the rare occasions when he wanted to contradict Trotsky, such as on the question of the labor party in the United States and the question of the attitude to be followed in relation to the American Stalinists in 1940, did not make a particularly fortunate demonstration of his political perspicacity. Cannon probably knows himself better than anybody else knows him.

He compensates for his inferiority on other planes by the idea that he is a great specialist on the organizational question, on the building of the party, on factional struggles, and also a guardian of "principles," of tradition, of "orthodoxy."

In reality the greatest "specialists" on organizational questions in the history of the workers' movement were those who were at the same time the most political, the most capable of grasping the dialectical and eminently political and flexible nature of the relations between the leadership and the ranks of the party, of the class, and of the class struggle at every stage: Marx, Lenin, Trotsky.

The others, the "specialists" of "Bolshevism," come in reality either from the school of Stalinism or from elements who are theoretically and politically less capable, but who are on the other hand endowed with a domineering, egocentric temperament. Without the control which can be imposed upon them by broad democratic organizations, they degenerate almost always into insupportable petty bureaucrats.

The present Cannon phenomenon, his conceptions, his acts, his attitude, is the product of a number of personal and objective factors. That Cannon has always had similar conceptions of the International and the struggles within it is beyond a doubt. But for an entire period he pushed them into the background. When Trotsky was alive, it was his powerful influence that stamped a high ideological level upon the struggles in which Cannon and his party participated; for example, the struggle against Shachtman.

In the years since the last war, Cannon's conviction that he was in a way shaping the International, which never looked for a quarrel with him, flattered his self-esteem and led him to adopt a responsible attitude that was particularly profitable for the general progress of the International.

His present attitude can only be explained by the consciousness he meanwhile acquired, especially since the Third World Congress, of the fact that the International

was reaching maturity, that it was in every sense a reality and that this occurred at a time when the national situation in the United States weighed with enormous reactionary weight on the entire workers' movement of the country. Under such conditions all the weak sides of a person, all his moral and intellectual limitations began to gain the upper hand and make him the banner bearer of a tendency whose ideas and actions are indisputably alien and hostile to the nature of the International and its present revolutionary policy.

We cannot follow Cannon and the Cannonites on this road. Our conceptions on these very matters are profoundly, principledly, fundamentally different.

For us the International must be and is a well defined reality: a centralized world organization regulated by statutes and rules and with a discipline, exactly (or by and large) like the national organizations.

It is not a tendency or even less a faction of elements grouping themselves on the basis of a conjunctural political agreement. It embraces in one world organization all those who accept its general program, which is a resume of the general theses of revolutionary Marxism in our epoch, that is, the general theses concerning the appreciation of the present stage of capitalism, the USSR (and now also the other anti-capitalist states), of the two other principal currents of the workers' movement, Social Democracy and Stalinism, and the strategy and program of the world proletarian revolution in our epoch.

Since these theses on these questions are necessarily of a general character, and since reality and life are constantly enriched by new problems and phenomena, it is inevitable that tendencies should arise within this world organization having among themselves divergent views on one or another question. As for us, we are for the co-existence of all these tendencies within the International if they respect the rule of majority decisions and external discipline following such decisions.

We leave to more protracted experience proof as to what tendencies are in practice incompatible with membership in the International. Those who claim, upon appearance of any difference over tactics, or the estimate of a situation, or the present developments in the USSR and Stalinism, that one or another *trait* of a tendency already represents a political crystallization incompatible with membership in the International commit the frequent error of vulgar Marxism which simplifies situations and problems by simply telescoping several intermediate stages of nuances of an entire process.

I fear that the leadership of the Socialist Union now shares ideas close to those of Cannon and the Cannonites on the question of the International. How else explain their violent opposition to the appeal of the IEC and their thinly veiled allusions, so unpleasant and so revolting, that are included particularly in the resolution of the Union in respect to the IS, its members and its politics? How explain otherwise such phrases as "the IS from the beginning has been engaged in desperate back-door maneuvers, in sowing fear and demoralization in the ranks," "horse-trading compromise" offered by Comrade Germain, is "disloyal and arbitrary action," "the fatal course of the IS by muffling political line for false organizational considerations of 'world leadership,'" "the sectarian past of the International," etc. Could one not most legitimately interpret all this as the expression of a con-

tempt for the organizational framework of the International, equal to that of Cannon and the Cannonites, on the part of these comrades who wish to make the leadership of the International the leadership of a faction organized on the basis of a conjunctural political agreement at the time of a struggle in the International?

And how interpret the practical attitude of these comrades toward the IS* other than as a kind of punishment for the IS, because of its "soft," "conciliatory" and even "capitulatory" attitude, by limiting their collaboration and aid to a strict minimum, by sulking, by spreading all sorts of outrageous and unacceptable corridor gossip?

The tragic-comic note in this present crisis the International is going through is that from the outset, at the very moment when Cannon, enveloped by the atmosphere of spying and suspicion which presently prevails in the United States, saw without any proof "plots" and sinister "intrigues" being woven around his person and his faction by the diabolical Pablo and his "clique,"—at that very moment the comrades of the minority begin to suspect these same people of "capitulation" to Cannon, to accuse and deprecate them as leaders chosen "on the basis of practical availability!"

It is not superfluous to repeat that concerning me personally—independently of my reservations at the outset of the struggle in the SWP about Cannon's accusations against the minority, and my revulsion against the extremely factional form which Cannon gave to the struggle: and independently even of the *critical* sympathy I felt for several political points of view of the minority—I did not start this struggle in the SWP (it had its own causes) nor was I in any way for overthrowing the Cannon leadership in the SWP, nor was I for the denigration of his authority within the SWP ranks and the International.

I even went so far in this direction that I wrote to Comrade Livingstone, for example, the following:

"To change (the Cannon leadership) is neither possible nor desirable under the present conditions. To break up and discredit his leadership risks breaking up the entire organization which is under the heavy pressure of the present situation in the United States and its own isolation. It would moreover be an error to forget or to minimize the huge positive accomplishments of that leadership (and of Jim in particular) independently of one or another weakness." (March 28, 1953)

When a truce was reached at the May 1953 Plenum I was among the first to consider it sincere and workable, to salute the "responsible" attitude manifested at that Plenum by Cannon, to propose in the IS (under the sarcastic smiles of Burns who was already aware of the cynical and revolting letter from Cannon to Tom) the text of a letter from the IS praising that attitude and insisting to the minority that they loyally respect the agreement. Even afterward, when I became aware of the letter to Tom, I hastened to *telegraph* Livingstone that the minority should not make public use of that revolting letter in the party, but should be patient and wait.

For all these acts and for all this conduct I found my-

*Which had its origin (although Cannon thought of it as "plots" and "intrigues" of the IS) a number of months ago at the time of the struggle in the SWP and has since been aggravated.

self—I personally and all the other comrades of the IS Bureau—rewarded since May 1953 not only with the factional fury of Cannon but also with the growing discontent of the "hards" within the tendency in agreement with the International.

The resolution of the leadership of the Socialist Union, in several of its terms and phrases so encouraging and so flattering about our present work here, is the expression of the opinion that these comrades had of that attitude.

But we have not arrayed ourselves against the organizational conceptions and acts of Cannon in order to fall at the same time under the tutelage of another variety of organizational sectarianism.

That must be perfectly clear.

Never, with us in the leadership of the International, will there be a leadership that is in reality that of a faction and not of a world organization *necessarily including several tendencies* at a given moment that could co-exist on the basis of the rules of democratic centralism applied on an International scale.

This being well understood the comrades who think otherwise are naturally obliged to concern themselves with endowing the IS and IEC as the "rallying center for an ideological regroupment" of people more disposed to line up in a faction. It should not be so difficult to choose such "International leaders" strictly "on the basis of practical availability."

As for the idea that we suffer from some kind of a "world leadership" complex, these comrades should rest easy. Unanimously named to our posts up to now by the Congresses of the International, we have sought to defend, as was our duty, the rights and competence of our leading organisms without which the concept of the International as a centralized world organization would no longer exist. Whether or not we are members of these leading organisms of the International, we will in the future defend with the same firmness this functioning of the International.

On the other hand, the reproach that the comrades of the Socialist Union address to us of having passed from would-be organizational intransigence to organizational capitulation before the unreasonable demands that Cannon would perhaps formulate in case of his participation in the next World Congress, etc., is again manifestly based on an erroneous interpretation on the part of these comrades of the democratic centralist functioning of the International. Between congresses of the International it is the IEC and the IS who lead within the limits of power explicitly defined by the statutes of the International. But the supreme decision on truly important political and organizational matters belongs in our movement only to the World Congress.

Faced with the revolting splitting action of the Cannonites, we, as the IEC and IS, have taken every action in defense of the International permitted by the statutes of the International. But since the crisis broke out in the midst of the discussion preparatory to the Fourth World Congress, it is absolutely normal that the whole affair should be brought before the Congress itself. No one, neither the IS nor the IEC, has the right to definitively decide an affair of such magnitude. On the other hand, Cannon and his initiates claim—demagogically and hypocritically, of course—that they confront a "clique

of usurpers" and other similar revolting stupidities.

Let them come to explain and justify all that before the Congress, that is to say, before the most representative and responsible assembly that can exist within an organized workers' movement. Should we fear that they will win a majority there? I affirm, at least in my name and in all responsibility, that if such is the decision of the majority of the International movement through normal consultation, I shall adopt the attitude of a loyal minority.

Would such an attitude signify organizational fetishism to the detriment of the political line, an "ideological capitulation"?

Such a conception could arise only among comrades for whom—to repeat—the organizational framework of the International does not exist and who do not admit beforehand any possibility of considering themselves a minority in the International movement, comrades who in reality reason on this question in the same manner as Cannon.

We are less inclined than ever to consider the political differences that have developed during this struggle—independently of the manner in which they have arisen—as secondary. They are very important and it is possible that, if they should continue and become crystallized, they would in reality make impossible co-existence within the same International organization. But a more prolonged experience is in any case necessary before arriving at such a conclusion.

To act otherwise and to declare forthwith that the differences are "principled," "fundamental," incompatible with membership within a single organization, is to proceed in the arbitrary manner of Cannon who, at the beginning of the struggle, without sufficient practical and theoretical proofs, extrapolated on the future developments, thus preparing and justifying a split.

From everything I know of Lenin and Trotsky, above all of the latter, his general attitude at the time of the formation of the Left Opposition and later of the International and at the time of the struggle against Shachtman, nothing would justify such a sectarian, bureaucratic and even infantile organizational conception.

That is Cannon's conception; it is not and cannot be ours.

As for the argument that we have neglected the ideological struggle, properly so-called, against Cannon and the Cannonites, it is at least odd on the part of comrades who, since they have "ruled" their own affairs in their country, have thereafter made no contribution at all to the ideological struggle that is still unfolding in the International. We have the impression, perhaps erroneously, that in this struggle it is still the IS which is making the greatest contribution within the limits, of course, of its capacities. The question of the International, of its nature, of its functioning, is one of the central *political* stakes in the current struggle. It has been posed from the beginning by the acts and the ideas of Cannon on this matter. It is also posed by the conceptions and attitude of comrades in the International.

The Congress will have to discuss and resolve this question. If it should appear that certain comrades and organizations admit only conditionally the principle of

the International as a centralized world party, it seems to me that it would be more sincere on their part to request, for example, a statute for organizations sympathetic to the Fourth International which would permit them to act largely in their own manner, leaving it to others to maintain at the same time a firm international organization governed by its present rules and statutes.

To weaken the present structure and functioning of the International would in my view represent the annulment of the greatest progress made by our movement in recent years and would be the greatest defeat we could suffer on the eve of decisive class battles.

The building of an International is the most difficult task of the workers' movement, against which stand all the weak and backward aspects of the movement, nationally divided and under the pressure of prejudices and alien ideas hostile to its historic mission.

But on the other hand, the existence of an International is the best weapon of all to preserve the movement in each country from consequent deviation from the revolutionary Marxist line. For a movement like ours, still weak, subject to increasing social pressures from all sides, and facing the perspective of decisive struggles which reinforce still more these pressures, to loosen in any manner the common bonds that unite us in the International, to weaken these bonds, would prove to be literally fatal. We must resist such an eventuality with all our strength. I am personally certain that will continue to be the determination of the great majority of the International.

April 25, 1954

P.S. I don't want to linger over the frankly displeasing allusions of the resolution from the comrades of the Socialist Union on the subject of the IEC appeal, which is called "a reply to the unofficial negotiations between Cannon and Tilak," etc., and of the pressure that these negotiations have exercised on us. The dates of the letters published in this same Internal Bulletin show that the decision on the appeal made by the IS on March 14, 1954, after a great deal of prior consultation among our members, has no relation with the Cannon-Tilak negotiations.

As for the procedure adopted by the IS for the approval of the appeal, this was the only practical means at our disposal. All the European members of the IEC, with the exception of Comrade Collins, were long since agreeable to such a procedure. As for the extra-European members, there was no practical possibility for them to meet with the others in Europe.

Is it necessary to remind the comrades of the Socialist Union of the present conditions under which the IS works?

Is it also necessary to point out to them that, despite these conditions, the impossible has been achieved in maintaining its functioning and preparing the World Congress?

The allusion of the comrades to an arbitrary changing by the IS of the decisions of the 14th Plenum is no less unfounded. We have already stressed that in other documents: these decisions have excluded no one from the International and the definitive decisions are postponed until the World Congress itself from which no one has been excluded by that plenum.

SECTION XIII: PABLO'S AMERICAN "TROTSKYISTS" BREAK WITH TROTSKYISM

[Pablo's supporters in the United States broke explicitly with Trotskyism even before the "Fourth World Congress" sponsored by the Pablo faction. The following article is reprinted from Volume 1, No. 3 of *The Educator* (May 1954), the internal educational organ of the Socialist Union of America.

[At the "Fourth World Congress" itself in June 1954, George Clarke (representing the Socialist Union of Ameri-

ca), Murray Dowson (of the Canadian Pabloist grouping), Michele Mestre (a leader of the pro-Pablo minority of the French PCI), and John Lawrence (the leading supporter in Britain) walked out in protest against Pablo's compromises with the Ceylonese leaders. Mestre and Lawrence immediately joined the Communist parties in their respective countries.]

Our Orientation

(Draft Resolution Adopted by National Board, April 27, 1954)

The discussion in the SWP ended abruptly with our expulsion in November 1953 before a number of important political questions had been clarified. Lacking confidence in his own ideas, and in the outcome of the debate, Cannon's method was one of solving a political problem by organizational means.

We, on our part, had made a good start in explaining the meaning and the consequences of the new world reality as embodied in the whole complex of contributions of the Third World Congress. We provided a scientific analysis for the first time in many years of the political reality in the United States. We began setting down with precision the place of the SWP within that reality. We elaborated a realistic approach to the Stalinists. We ripped apart the make-believe world in which the Cannonites were dwelling; we challenged the fruitless round of "campaign activities" with which they kept themselves and their supporters stupefied, and we began to devise a tactical platform of work suitable to our position within the general political framework in the country.

But two main contributions—the interpretation of the international reality, and the analysis and practical platform of national activity—still left a gap. It was still necessary to reevaluate the whole broad perspective, both national and international, of our movement. This was not an arbitrary or artificial problem capriciously posed, or sucked out of some individual's thumb. It derived logically and necessarily both from the situation of our cadres in relation to the world reality and the progress of the discussion up to that point.

It was futile at first to become embroiled in a discussion with the Cannonites on our role in the world when there was no agreement on the analysis of what the world was like today or what it would become in the ensuing years. Obviously it would be one thing if a major deal between the Kremlin and imperialism was in the offing, another if we faced a showdown on the broad basis of the present alignment of forces. It would be one thing if we recognized the consequences of the sweeping changes of post-war development (Eastern Europe, Yugoslavia, China, the developments in British Labor, etc.), another if we considered them temporary stages on the road back to the prewar situation. We had no common ground from which to begin the most important side of the discussion that had been projected but not developed by the Third World Congress.

It will help place the problem in its proper setting if we recapitulate a few of the high points of the previous discussion; a discussion, let it be noted, brought on by the crisis of world Trotskyism after the second world war.

The international discussion began, properly speaking, with our debate in the SWP in 1949 over Eastern Europe. Cannon understood at once, far more clearly than others, that the debate raised the question point blank of the role of the Fourth International. "If you say," Cannon declared, "that capitalism can be destroyed by an agency other than world Trotskyism, then what remains of our role? We would at best be reduced to democratic critics of the Stalinists." And since Cannon could see neither profit nor future in that kind of a movement, he solved the problem by denying reality, shutting his eyes to what was actually going on, and contriving a make-believe world for himself and his supporters. In this world everything remained as Trotsky had left it at his death. In Eastern Europe they had capitalism. The Stalinists were betraying right and left precisely as they had done in Spain. We were the only revolutionary opposition. And when the workers got more radical, they would lift us on their shoulders. It was a pretty picture, and a formally logical one, too. The only thing wrong with it was that it did not correspond to the facts, either in the United States, or any other major country of the world.

As the ensuing discussion and the further objective developments blew this construction out of the water, Cannon and his supporters took refuge in an eclectic patchquilt kind of perspective. They admitted that capitalism had been shattered in Eastern Europe by the Stalinists from the top. They admitted that quasi-Stalinist parties successfully led revolutions in China and Yugoslavia. But in the rest of the world, above all in the United States, everything remained as before, and we could continue along the old accustomed lines.

Sensing that their whole perspective was in danger of being blown to bits, they instinctively felt the necessity of building around themselves a "Chinese Wall" to insulate themselves against the disturbing thoughts and embarrassing developments seeping in from the outside world. This explains the rise of the Messianic ideology in the SWP, the theory that the leadership has been ordained to lead the revolution if it only sticks together come what may, if it never questions the faith, if it never turns right or left to gaze at other Gods, lest this lead to destruction.

Because, surely it cannot be, they reasoned, that all this sacrifice and virtue will go unrewarded by History. The Cannonites thus "solved" the question of the perspective of world Trotskyism by semi-religious invocation and dedication, and the mysticism and cult of an ordained leadership. That is one answer to the problem, for whatever it is worth.

How have we on our part solved this burning question? It is unnecessary here to repeat the world analysis that has been written down in many documents. Let us simply sum up some of the conclusions of the present reality: We see a world where our perspective of Stalinism being destroyed in the course of World War II has been proven wrong. We see a world where Stalinism is dominant over the eastern half of Europe, where the Communist parties are the leadership of the colonial revolution in Asia, where they constitute the strongest organizations of the working class in Italy and France. In the rest of the Western world, Social Democracy has been resuscitated, and in the United States, where labor has not yet advanced to an independent political existence, the reformist labor bureaucracy remains dominant. One of the recent International documents states that the Fourth International enters the next stage of upsurge in a far superior position to that of 1939, but that is just rhetoric. The truth of the matter is that the Trotskyist organizations are not stronger today at all than at the Founding Conference in 1938, even if we disregard the matter of the present split. The Trotskyist movements in their twenty-five years of existence have been unable to grow into mass organizations for a variety of reasons which have been exhaustively analyzed and explained. The two lone exceptions to this, by their specialized character, even further underline this fact.

The Cannonites still retain the outlived perspective, however, that the small nuclei will tomorrow become the mass revolutionary parties challenging all contenders and destroying them in battle. But a more realistic perspective based on the actual world trends is sketched out in the recent International resolution on "Our Integration in the Real Mass Movement." (We reprint elsewhere certain concrete amendments and criticisms of the document. Here we confine ourselves to the main purpose of this document.)

Basing itself on our previous analysis of the world situation, the resolution finds that we are living in a profoundly revolutionary period where the relationship of forces is developing favorably for the revolution, and that consequently the existing mass Communist and Social Democratic parties are subjected to unprecedented pressure. This situation, as experience has demonstrated in England, France and Italy, does not lead to splits and new formations, but remains locked within the confines of the organizations, undoubtedly because the masses feel the hot breath of the approaching world conflict, and do not believe anything can be achieved by trying to build new organizations at this juncture of history. Hence, our resolve to orient towards and to integrate ourselves with these existing mass movements for a long period of time, to act as the Marxist catalyst, to comprise the conscious left wing within the mass movement. For only with such an approach can Marxists play a role in the historic unfoldment of the struggle, for only in such integration is there a genuine perspective for our small revolutionary cadre. Outside of such integration one can only declaim

and posture in a vacuum for a brief space of time until events finally disperse the cadre.

This leads us to the next question: How do we envisage the development of the next revolutionary struggle, and who will lead them? Naturally, the question can only be answered in very general terms. But even a general answer is required because it determines in large measure our course. If we take our analysis seriously, we must have the conviction that the mass struggles of the coming decade will rise to supreme revolutionary heights, and that in the course of those fierce clashes, there is bound to develop a higher political consciousness, and a consequent regroupment of forces within the working classes. All experiences attest that in such periods the left wing grows at the expense of the right, and that at certain climactic points, the mass forces will be available for the creation of new revolutionary parties, either by a process of splits and fusions, or by the Marxist wings conquering the old organizations. If at such times the Marxist cadre is well organized and clearly understands the historical tasks at hand, if it has established itself over a period of time as an integral part of the existing movements having intimate relations with different layers of militants, if it has gained their respect in a series of struggles, the cadre can rise to the necessities of the historic moment, and with masses behind it, shape the course of events.

We are well aware that this is an algebraic projection, and that it cuts through such gargantuan problems as the third world war, the possible occupation of the heart of Europe by the Red Army and its allied troops, the possible bureaucratic-military transformation of several West European countries on the East European pattern, revolts against Stalinism on the order of the June 17 rising of East Germany, attacks of imperialism to impose a counter-revolutionary order, all taking place in the midst of unprecedented devastation and ruin of war. But nevertheless, the formula is an entirely valid one, especially in Europe, and at a later stage in the United States, because the aspiration of the masses, and the attainment of the next historic advance toward Socialism cannot be realized by the old parties and leaderships, even if one or two Communist parties in the West take a revolutionary path under the impact of mass pressure. The next historic advance will profoundly revolutionize not only all existing institutions, but the organizations and masses carrying through these transformations. Differentiations of considerable scope will alter the relationship of forces in favor of the Marxists. The experiences of China and Yugoslavia only pre-empt more rar-reaching developments to come. But the course of history is already revealing that if capitalism was first destroyed at its weakest points, in Russia, then in China, and is crumbling in the colonial world, it will have to be from the West that the revolution will rise to a superior level of consciousness, mass participation, democratic control and operation. The weakness and the backwardness of capitalism in the East pushed the revolutionary forces there to the fore for several decades. It will be the higher culture, tradition and the greater specific gravity of the working classes in the Western countries which will provide the conditions for the rise of higher type Marxist mass parties, and will lift the revolution to a higher level.

We are obviously discussing a very tortuous, compli-

cated, and involved process which will take place very unevenly over a period of time, and with great variations from one country to the next. In what sense then can we speak of the future of the Fourth International, since the resolution declares, "Naturally, the world victory of the revolution will not be the exclusive work of the present national nuclei of the Fourth International but of their close fusion with broader revolutionary forces. From this fusion there will arise new revolutionary mass parties of tomorrow, as well as a new form of the world party of the International." The answer that the resolution supplies to the above question is as follows: "To the degree that the world revolutionary upsurge continues to spread and moves toward the world victory of the proletarian revolution and of Socialism, the program and organization of the International will be validated. The world victory of the proletarian revolution and of Socialism cannot be conceived as the arithmetical sum of partial victories obtained through centrist programs and formations. It will be the victory of full revolutionary Marxism."

The longer one ponders over the meaning of this quotation, the more convinced he becomes that this is more irrelevancy than answer, as the question that needs illumination first of all, and above all, is the next historic period rather than the period of the world victory of the revolution and of Socialism. And the discussion has reached the point—and even more decisive the position of our cadres is at the point—where more has to be said about the next historic period and our role in it.

From the rise of Hitler to the World War, there did not exist a strong enough current upon which a new revolutionary formation, competing and supplanting the old workers organizations, could be based. The Trotskyist groups found neither the open field that favored the rise of the Second International nor a development equivalent to the October Revolution which started the mass trend toward communism. After World War II, contrary to our prewar prognoses, Stalinism was not eliminated, but rose to new heights of influence. Because the situation was, and remains, revolutionary in the world—and because therefore, the workers no longer clung to the old parties merely for protection against reaction—there has been a clear test of the ability of Trotskyism to create an independent movement on a program broadly confirmed by the new revolutionary developments. The fact that no one can realistically envisage a breakup in the old workers movements prior to the next revolutionary developments is the clear sign that the old Trotskyist perspective has become outmoded. As before the war, the vanguard seeks to realize its revolutionary aspirations within the old parties, leaving no room for a new revolutionary mass organization. Thus the Trotskyist movement, despite the brilliance of its leader, the considerable abilities and energies of its national cadres, and the many experiments with entries and fusions, was doomed to remain isolated. The test was made for a whole historic era, both in periods of reaction and revolution, and is therefore a decisive one.

But while Trotskyism, due to historic circumstances, remained outside the main currents of the labor movement, it built up in a quarter-century of its existence a truly formidable literature, doctrine and tradition. This tradition, we have said, gives Trotskyism the status of Twentieth Century Marxism. However true this claim may

be from an abstract theoretical point of view, it has not entered the consciousness of broad masses as did similar claims made by the Social Democracy prior to World War I, or by Lenin and the Comintern afterward. The tradition of Stalinism led to the mass revival of the Communist Party in France after the war, and the tradition of Social Democracy to its revival in Germany, but the tradition of Trotskyism could do no more than maintain it as an ideological tendency.

Every important movement has its own specific tradition, and every important leader places his indelible stamp upon an organization, not only through the formal resolutions and theses, but by his methods of work, his approach to big questions, his hundred and one evaluations, and in ways even more elusive and difficult to describe. Marx projected himself upon the First International. Lenin put his stamp on Bolshevism. And without any per adventure of a doubt, Trotsky did the same in fulsome measure in the case of the Fourth International. Now it is a fact that our whole tradition—so magnificent in many ways—is of no interest to the existing labor movements. Because the tradition has been created largely outside of the labor movements, it is foreign to them. They do not see or believe that any of it is pertinent to the solution of their problems. We therefore have to face up to this aspect of the reality just as we did to other parts of it, and have to draw the necessary lessons.

The very formulations of the International Resolution must lead us to the conclusion that the revolutionary parties of tomorrow will not be Trotskyist, in the sense of necessarily accepting the tradition of our movement, our estimation of Trotsky's place in the revolutionary hierarchy, or all of Trotsky's specific evaluations and slogans. We in the United States had precisely this experience where Trotskyists fused with the small Muste organization to form the Workers Party in 1935. The fusion occurred only after we had overcome considerable resistance in the Muste ranks to accepting the special characteristics of Trotskyism by assuring them that we had no special sectarian axes to grind. How much more operative will this be when the left wing develops through its own specific experiences and the merging of different currents and groups inside the big centrist or reformist mass movements.

Our analysis and our tactical orientation would remain like a knife without a blade if we do not follow through with the necessary conclusion. And this conclusion is that *in the present historical conditions, our cadres have to take the whole body of Marxist theory and struggle, including Trotsky's contributions to it, and translate them into the language of our lifetime, and into the language of the existing movements of the various countries in which we are situated.*

The worst error is to think this mainly a job of clearer language, or for our cadres to start masquerading as simple homespun mechanics who have none too secure a mastery of grammar or syntax. What is involved if we are to integrate ourselves in the mass movement and to begin functioning effectively as its Marxist wing, is that we have to rid ourselves of all faction spirit and too narrow understanding of the Marxist's role in the centrist and reformist milieus of our time.

Our purpose is to bring our ideas into the mass movement, and to gradually raise the consciousness of the

ranks to the historic tasks. But the last thing in the world we should attempt is to inculcate the ranks with the necessity of adopting our specific tradition, and impressing upon them the truth of all the evaluations and proposals broached by Trotsky from 1923 on. The thought that in the coming period of our activity we have to go out of our way to mention the name and work of Leon Trotsky, and the name and the existence of the Fourth International, shows how far all of us have become infused with narrow group thinking, and organizational fetishism, how far we have traveled from the outlook of Frederick Engels, who warned the Socialists in America not to publish the *Communist Manifesto*, as it was based on old-world experiences, and that the American labor movement, developing under different conditions, would not understand it, and would not know what Marx and Engels were talking about. Why isn't it possible for us to take this simple thought of Engels and apply it to ourselves and our work? If Engels didn't think this was putting a question mark over his revolutionary integrity, why should we?

We said before that only by integrating ourselves within the existing movements could our cadres survive and fulfill their mission. We will now add to that proposition this corollary: *Only by dropping all sectarian notions of imposing our specific tradition upon the mass movements which developed in different circumstances and under different influences, can our approach register successes and guarantee the future of our precious cadres.* What is involved, it is clear, is not any modification of programmatic essence, but a sharp reversal of organizational concepts and perspectives on the nature of the development of the mass revolutionary parties of tomorrow.

There remains to say a word whether this course does not contain dangers that the cadre will get lost in the mass movement and therefore become liquidated as a specific revolutionary current. Of course, the danger exists, just as there is danger every time a revolutionist takes a job as an official in a union, and begins to live in an opportunist environment. Some succumb to material blandishments. But if the cadre is cohesive, and firm in its revolutionary convictions and aims, the losses are few and the gains are many. Events will justify the necessity for a Marxist policy and prove its effectiveness in action. The dangers will be counteracted by the struggle itself. We have an additional guarantee, insofar as there are any guarantees in these things, in the clarity of our views, the devotion of our ranks who have been tested over a long period of time, in our ideological solidarity, and in the unifying element of an international center. If we try to impose additional guarantees by adopting narrow group viewpoints, and sporting narrow group ideologies in the mass movement, we will vitiate the whole concept, and defeat our common purposes.

Although in the United States the situation is unique as the working class is still not organized into its own political party, the orientation here discussed operates with full force. One has to dwell in the never-never land of a Cannon to seriously promulgate the theory that the American working class, which has not yet attained labor party consciousness, will pass, with the next struggle, to the banner of Cannonite revolutionism, or what amounts to approximately the same thing, will in rapid-fire fashion,

plunge in and out of a labor party to join up with Cannon and his lieutenants to storm the barricades. We have correctly stated before that the American workers will move massively through their organizations, and not jump over the heads of their organizations. That implies that they will move in deliberate stages, not when the forward columns are ready, but only when sizable phalanxes of the class are prepared to move.

Basing ourselves on this analysis, we have oriented towards the organized labor movement, especially the mass production unions of the CIO, as the battleground of the big future class developments, and the repository of the forces that will advance the working class to its next political stage with the formation of a labor party. That does not mean that we are absolutely certain that a labor party will be formed. What the perspective does base itself on with certainty is that the inevitable political regroupment will pass through existing channels of the organized labor movement and have a political character capable of uniting masses at a minimum level. The broad character of this movement will provide room for the various existing political tendencies, Stalinists, Social Democrats, centrists and Marxists to operate within it. That is why, whatever the vicissitudes of the struggle may bring, whatever forms it may assume, whatever channels it may take, the strategy of basing ourselves on the organized labor movement, and particularly its mass production sectors, and directing our main attention to it, is the correct one and will provide us with the necessary sustenance to carry on, and in due course, to establish ourselves in conjunction with allies as the left wing of a growing political movement.

Of course, as we tried to explain to the SWP, between the present and the next developments exists a more or less protracted period of time, and a political tendency cannot deduce its day-to-day tactics solely, directly and immediately from the grandiose strategy, but must seek out and find every possibility for advancement of its program and its influence, be it on the most limited basis, and from sources that by themselves will not necessarily be the main forces of the big labor advance. That is why in many localities, where trade union avenues are not open to us for one reason or another, we must seek out other milieus, whether of the Stalinist variety, or student circles, or various liberal or minority groups.

We approach all these strata, however, in the spirit of Marx's *Communist Manifesto* which proclaimed that the revolutionists had no interests separate and apart from the working class, that we are not a special sect, cult, or church, which seeks to draw people out of the broad currents into its backwater, but rather as American Marxists, we seek to join with others in advancing the existing struggles to a higher stage and on a broader front. We are convinced that out of these struggles and experiences, even before big mass forces take to the field, Left currents will arise with which we shall be able to cooperate and fuse; that the American Marxist tendency, as a stronger formation than at present, will thus be able to discharge its role as a left wing in the big movement—as part and parcel of the struggle to create the mass revolutionary party in the United States. That is our perspective.