

INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION BULLETIN

No. 6 in 1971

November 1971

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to the United Secretariat of the
Fourth International)

40 cents

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY

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*LET'S KEEP TO THE ISSUES,
LET'S AVOID DIVERSIONS!*

by Livio Maitan

It is not my intention to reply point by point to the very long document that Comrade Hansen has thrown into the international discussion, since I do not consider it useful for the debate over Latin America to be dispersed in a number of directions, and since the spokesman of the minority has decided to bring in militants and persons who have nothing to do either in form or substance with the conceptions of the Fourth International and its majority. I will limit myself, consequently, to taking up as briefly as possible certain problems with the aim of demonstrating once again the absurdity of the accusation directed against the majority of having abandoned that Leninist conception of party construction which, according to the claims of Comrade Hansen, are presumably the monopoly of the minority, and of clarifying still further our orientation for Latin America at the current stage.

Lenin, Trotsky, and the Real Conceptions of the Majority

1. I want to recall, first of all, that the quotations in my document of October 1970 [September 30, 1970] were not included with the pretention of teaching the comrades something new or of being complete. My aim was to indicate that our orientations were not at all in contradiction with the conceptions and criteria of revolutionary Marxism in this question. This seemed to me to be useful inasmuch as the minority appeared to want to bring into question our "orthodoxy."

The long quotation which Comrade Hansen has taken from *Stalin* is in no way embarrassing to us. In fact, my document summed up as follows the conclusions that flowed from certain of Lenin's essential texts:

"From this we can conclude that Lenin in fact considered armed insurrection, which would be the culmination of a mass mobilization, as the decisive phase of the revolutionary struggle for power. But he did not limit all armed struggle to the insurrection. He foresaw the possibility of a prolonged civil war, even in the industrialized countries of Europe, and he considered guerrilla warfare a necessary method in a given context, more precisely when a revolutionary or prerevolutionary situation was produced or persisted but when a 'big' full-scale battle was ruled out because of a temporary relationship of forces." [P. 12 of the English translation.] If we now turn to the passage by Trotsky, taken from *Stalin*, which Comrade H. reminds us of, we read: "Whoever acknowledges revolution, acknowledges civil war. Finally, 'guerrilla warfare is an inescapable form of struggle . . . whenever more or less extensive intervals occur between major engagements in a civil war.' [Lenin.] From the point of view of the general principles of the class struggle, all of that was quite irrefutable. Disagreements came with the evaluation of concrete historical circumstances. When two major battles of the civil war are separated from each other by two or three months, that interval will inevitably be filled in with guerrilla blows against the enemy. But when the 'intermission' is stretched

out over years, guerrilla war ceases to be a preparation for a new battle and becomes instead a mere convulsion after defeat."

It is clear that Trotsky did not at all reject Lenin's basic conception on guerrilla war, but he stressed that this conception is inapplicable when the movement is in full ebb and a period opens of consolidation of the bourgeois power. The question of deciding as to whether Lenin was mistaken or not at the time of his concrete analysis is secondary in relation to the subject of our debate and we do not see how the quotation which Comrade Hansen has added to ours invalidates the cogency of our conception (I shall return to this point again).

As for the document adopted by the Reunification Congress on the basis of a resolution of the Political Committee of the SWP, I would have had every interest in citing it in fact and I thank Comrade Hansen for having done me the service of recalling it himself. In fact this document does not concern itself with deciding the terminological question as to whether "guerrilla warfare conducted by landless peasant and semiproletarian forces, under a leadership that becomes committed to carrying the revolution through to a conclusion" ought to be characterized as a tactic or a strategy, it does not separate guerrilla warfare and party construction (it says very correctly: this lesson "must be consciously incorporated into the strategy of building revolutionary Marxist parties in colonial countries"), by this very fact opposing both the conceptions aimed at replacing the party by guerrilla warfare and the fetishistic and propagandistic conceptions of constructing the party. It is, moreover, significant that the passage on the "decisive role" that such guerrilla warfare can play is included in a document the aim of which was to specify the theoretical and political basis of the reunification. If one adds that what was said on the subject of guerrilla warfare by the reporter for the majority at the Eighth Congress, which immediately preceded the Reunification Congress, did not meet with any objection on the part of the comrades belonging to the International Committee, it is understandable why we did not expect that the orientation outlined in 1967-68 would provoke tensions with the forces emanating from the Committee.¹ Our conviction was all the more legitimate inasmuch as during the multiple consultations that I had had with the Latin American sections before drawing up the draft resolution for the Ninth Congress, general agreement was reached, including with the overwhelming majority of the comrades who before 1963 had followed the orientations of the SWP and of the International Committee (Hugo Blanco himself at the beginning expressed his general agreement).

2. I have already written on other occasions that we should avoid centering the debate around the problem of whether guerrilla warfare is a tactic or a strategy. The answer depends on the meaning we attach to the words "tactic" and "strategy."

In *Lessons of October*, Trotsky writes, "By tactics, in

politics, we understand, using the analogy of military science, the art of conducting isolated operations. By strategy, we understand the art of conquest, *i.e.*, the seizure of power." In this sense, guerrilla warfare is obviously not a strategy, but neither is party building—the party being the instrument which allows us to attain the strategic goal, the seizure of power. (*The difference, in any case, is that the party—the organized vanguard, linked to the masses—is essential in all situations, while guerrilla warfare is required only within a specific context and under specific conditions.*)

If we look at an important document of the Third Congress of the Communist International, *Thesis on Tactics*, we see that it begins as follows:

"The new international association of workers is established to organize joint action by the proletariat of the different countries which pursue the one goal: the overthrow of capitalism, the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and of an international Soviet republic which will completely abolish all classes and realize socialism, the first stage of communist society." This definition of aims recorded in the Statutes of the Communist International clearly delimits all the tactical questions which are to be solved. They are the tactical questions of our fight for the proletarian dictatorship." In this sense as well, guerrilla warfare is obviously a tactic, but civil war and insurrection also fall under this heading.

If in conclusion we turn to military writings, the "classical" von Clausewitz gives us the following definition: "tactics guide us in using our forces in battle; strategy guides us in using battles to achieve our war aims." (Book II, Chapter I)

Going beyond all these more or less pertinent quotations, we might say in form of a summary definition that *the overturn of the capitalist regime via the revolutionary conquest of power is the goal; the party is the essential tool; and armed struggle—of which guerrilla warfare is one of the variants—is the necessary method.* That having been said, only a pedant would try to prevent us from utilizing either strategy or tactics as terms in speaking of party building just as we use either strategy or tactics as terms in speaking of armed struggle, depending on whether we are dealing with general orientations or with particular items. It is not accidental, moreover, that Che Guevara in his book *La guerra de guerrillas* [*Guerrilla Warfare*] devoted one chapter to the strategy and another to the tactics of guerrilla warfare.

Let us try to see, then, if we agree on matters of substance, leaving aside terminological quibbles.

3. Let us return to the quotation from Trotsky already mentioned. As we have seen, Lenin as well as Trotsky reckoned that guerrilla warfare is "an inescapable form of struggle . . . whenever more or less extensive intervals occur between major engagements in a civil war." It is possible that in the period immediately following the first Russian revolution Trotsky's analysis was more correct. But it is also possible that Lenin had a clearer idea from this epoch onward on the perspective that the intervals "between major engagements," favorable for guerrilla warfare, might extend over a longer period than Trotsky allowed for: hence his hypothesis of a "long civil war." But, abstracting from themes which from here on

in will be of more historical than political interest, the essential thing is that during the last decades and notably since World War II, the crisis of imperialism on an international scale and the mounting gangrene within the capitalist system make possible even protracted periods of profound instability in which, even if the revolutionary forces do not succeed in overturning the enemy nor in carrying off a mass insurrection, they can maintain considerable leeway for revolutionary action and can continue to wage armed struggle in the form of guerrilla warfare. It can be argued that the Chinese experience is complex and would require a more detailed analysis; in any event, it cannot be denied that precisely a situation of this sort permitted the appearance of guerrilla warfare for many years in Algeria and Vietnam,² nor can it be denied that it today accounts for the persistence and widening of the guerrilla struggle in, for example, Thailand. Moreover, in our document of October 1970 we wrote: "More generally, on the other hand, this worldwide expansion of guerrilla warfare is only a reflection of the revolutionary character of the historical period in which we are living. But, if we want to explain all this and comprehend the potential tendencies for the future, we must understand above all that this spread of guerrilla warfare throughout the world—even in genuinely adventurist forms—is, in the last analysis, the result of the contradictions in this period, of the relations between the forces present." (P. 17) And I explained more adequately in the following section what I was trying to say.

But more importantly, our conclusions on the orientation to be adopted for Latin America flowed from the analysis that a prerevolutionary situation existed on a continental scale and that even the "exceptional" situations (Uruguay and Mexico) were either disappearing or on the road to disappearing. We started from this decisive premise, as well as from the observation that the class struggle had in several countries already reached the level of armed struggle.

At the same time, the majority clarified two essential points—and it is absurd on Comrade Hansen's part to pretend to misunderstand or to suspect us of trying to camouflage something. The first point was that guerrilla warfare is only a phase and a method of armed struggle, that it should develop into a revolutionary war in the proper sense of the term, and, in final phase, independently of ebbs and flows, into a mass insurrection. (If we emphasized guerrilla warfare in 1968 and at the world congress, this was because we were setting up priorities for a particular stage and because we believed that it was especially in this area that our movement needed to clarify its conceptions.) The second point was that even during the phases when guerrilla warfare is the principal focus, as a method of struggle both for dealing blows to the adversary and for escaping from repression, the revolutionary organizations should deal with the problem of their activity among the masses, with a view both to taking advantage of the persistently explosive social potential and to progressively broadening the base for armed struggle. For us it was and remains undeniable that these goals can only be achieved *through the intervention of the party*, the only force capable of developing and putting into practice a coherent political strategy.

Finally, our perspective was not generalized to cover

all countries at the same time. We knew then and we know now that there are countries where, for objective and for subjective reasons, or both together, neither guerrilla war nor armed struggle are on the order of the day now or in the near future. It is no secret to anyone that in our discussions before and during the congress, we had in mind chiefly Bolivia and Argentina.

Does all of this imply that we neglected or obscured the need for party building? It is simply ridiculous to think so. All of this implies, on the contrary, the understanding that without a clear and concrete perspective on the problems of armed struggle—including guerrilla warfare—and without taking practical steps in this direction as soon as the minimum conditions are satisfied, it is impossible to go beyond the stage of small parties or of primarily propagandistic organizations and build in the living struggle, at the level where ever larger vanguards are to be found, the Leninist party, capable of conquering political hegemony among the masses.

Bolivia and Argentina: Orientation and Action

4. It is useful once again to consider Bolivia and Argentina.

Starting at the close of 1967 our Bolivian comrades outlined an orientation based on a critical balance sheet of Che's guerrilla campaign. They stressed above all the need in any renewal of armed struggle to establish ties with the peasants, a completely realistic step in a country with a long revolutionary tradition, such as Bolivia. They pointed out at the same time that specific forms of armed struggle could be adopted following the first phase in the politically crucial mining districts. Finally, they envisioned the possibility of launching spectacular operations in the cities aimed at demoralizing the enemy and thereby creating the most favorable psychological conditions for expanding the struggle and guaranteeing support for the guerrilla nuclei. We have explained again and again how we were hit severely by repression a few weeks after the world congress. Moreover, we call attention here once more to the fact that it was impossible to implement the projected united front with the ELN. International forces may have influenced the situation; but the decisive factor, according to the best reports, was the adventurist and sectarian orientation upheld by the ELN, an orientation which met its most tragic defeat with the crushing of the Teoponte guerrilla front. Any attempt to blame this defeat on our conceptions would be a flagrant falsehood.

Since the situation in Bolivia shifted with the rise to power of Ovando, and of Torres a year later, the POR, while clearly condemning any impressionistic assessments and any opportunist adaptations, grasped immediately the need to take advantage of the new openings; the resolution of the POR national conference of November 1969, reproduced widely in the press of the International, gives eloquent proof of this. It shows, incidentally, the degree to which the fears expressed by Hugo Blanco in a letter of October 1970 were without foundation.³ Our comrades continued, naturally, to emphasize the need to prepare for armed struggle, rejecting any purely rhetorical posture or spontaneist conception, and insisting on the specific character of the military tasks in a situation where, to use Lenin's expression, the military question tends

more and more to become "the essential political question." It is over this issue, indeed, that Leninists distinguish themselves from centrists of every stripe in a revolutionary or prerevolutionary situation (in the present case, Lechin and Lora). No one, on the other hand, can honestly accuse the POR militants of bottling themselves up in a "militarist" blind tunnel, lacking any cohesive political orientation. Their contribution of renewing and restructuring the trade unions in the mining districts and in the capital city, their work among the peasant strata, the gains made even in the university sector where they were traditionally weak, and their exploitation of the openings offered by the People's Assembly, all bear this out. (See the article from *Combate* of May 1-15, reprinted in *Intercontinental Press*, June 21, 1971.)

Here is a single quotation which leaves no doubt as to their position:

"We have already said that the path to socialism requires seizing power and that to seize power you need a people's army, armed detachments of the masses. Everyone knows that the side that is armed will take power. Not to understand this is to ignore the dynamics of revolution and class struggle. The bourgeoisie will not hand over power peacefully. It has to be wrested away from them through armed violence. But to defeat the bourgeois army, the working class and the revolutionaries have to create their own army.

"Let us not fool ourselves. The countless massacres have taught us the lesson. After this experience, the POR calls on all workers this May 1 to organize into armed platoons, into proletarian and peasant regiments. In every factory, in every mine, in every peasant community, in the universities, we must organize the armed detachments that will make up the nucleus of the People's Revolutionary Army. Only in this way, in the next crisis being plotted by the fascists, can we smash them decisively, while at the same time attacking the outposts of the capitalist regime. Only in this way can the revolution triumph, opening the way to the construction of socialism.

"Armed and organized mobilization of the masses—this is the path to victory over fascism and nationalist reformism."

The Argentine comrades had to go through severe internal conflicts and often painful ordeals before they sharpened up their orientation and began translating it into practice. I won't repeat what I have already written on this in other documents already published in the international discussion.

The entire International should be elated over the fact that in the period from the end of last year up to the beginning of June 1971—following its own rebuilding and the difficulties faced by other groups—the ERP, founded by the PRT, emerged as the most dynamic of the organizations waging armed struggle in Argentina, capable of unleashing a wide range of actions at an intense pace, with certain effectiveness. Could these be actions which don't fit the criteria of revolutionary Marxism, of Leninism?

Take the expropriations. From the quotation from Trotsky that Comrade Hansen seems to consider the most favorable to his position, it flows that neither Lenin nor Trotsky condemned such actions as a matter of principle. Quite the contrary. In this field, too, they fought against the ideas and the utterances of the Mensheviks. The concern expressed by Trotsky refers to a period of reaction, demoralization, and loss of morale among the

militants, to a situation where "people at large began to confound revolutionists with ordinary bandits." The situation in Argentina today is completely different, and far from viewing the expropriators as bandits, the broad masses sympathize openly with them and even collaborate directly in cases where collaboration is possible and necessary (as in the case of the distribution of consumer goods preceded by, or at least followed by, direct political work). The organizations taking responsibility for such projects gain, in fact, tremendous prestige. Concerning the kidnapping of manufacturer-consul Sylvester, there is a revealing detail on the comrades' style of operation: they turned over to the press the tape on which they had recorded their accusations against the exploiter and the statements he made in his own defense. This material was used by the press. Those who operate in this fashion are clearly concerned above all with generating favorable responses from broad layers of the population. Moreover, the Rosario operation and, more tellingly, the operation carried out at Fiat in Cordoba during the workers' struggle there, demonstrate that our comrades are attempting to link up with the mass movements, integrating their actions into the dynamics of these movements. They have thus been key figures in developments which will certainly draw the attention of other Latin American revolutionaries. *Le Monde's* correspondent wrote: "The revolutionaries of the ERP showed greater maturity than did the other clandestine organizations operating in Argentina." It would be unfortunate if this insight developed by a bourgeois commentator escaped the notice of some members of the Fourth International.

The definition of the ERP as an "organization of the masses for civil war" is significant in itself. But our comrades' views come out more sharply when one reads one of the communiqués issued during the Rosario operation and the lead article from a recent number of their journal.

"The endeavor signaled by this action," says the communiqué, among other things, "is part of the workers' struggles in the form of the Revolutionary Army of the People, put forward by the people and completely at the service of the people. We seek to assist in the organization and revolutionary mobilization of the workers. No victory, not even the slightest, is possible without the active participation of the masses. The people's forces should radiate throughout all arenas of struggle, with the ERP, along with the other armed organizations, as their central axis. New forms of struggle and organization must rise up over the heads of the treacherous existing leaders. There must be ERP commandos inside the factories, clandestine trade-union groups linked to the ERP, and all possible forms of preparation for the people's struggle.

"Comrades! Hunger, misery, and exploitation have sharpened the conditions of struggle. Proconsul Lanusse has declared war on us—let us reply with people's war. Every man and woman of the people, every patriot, has his or her combat post in the Revolutionary Army of the People.

"There will be no chance of achieving justice, jobs, and liberty until the organized, armed, and solidly united people defeat the enemy: Yankee imperialism, the capitalists, and their puppet police and armed forces. Argentini-ans, to arms, until we turn every citizen into a soldier, and every neighborhood, factory, and univer- sity into a fortress."

"Summing up our analysis," states an article in *El Combatiante* (May 17, 1971), "there are at present three forms of deviation capable of shackling or distorting the development of the mass revolutionary movement: syndicalism, militarism, and spontaneism. All three share a common trait: they are typically petty-bourgeois. They reflect the vacillation, the weakness, and the lack of political daring of a class condemned by history to waver forever between the two great actors in the class struggle: the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

"Militarism, or putschism, reflects petty-bourgeois paternalism, their confidence in their self-sufficiency, and their underestimation of the leading role of the working class in the revolutionary process. It features a tendency to set aside or depreciate the role of the masses in the revolutionary process. They equate revolutionary war with confrontations carried out by armed groups against enemy forces, not understanding that another essential part of that war are the fights waged by the unarmed masses, using the many resources which the people's ingenuity places in their hands. They don't understand that the revolutionary war follows a clear line of development. At first, the struggles of the armed vanguard and unarmed masses proceed along parallel roads, but as the process unfolds both roads intersect one another at many points. Toward the end of the war there remains a single road, wide and solid: the armed people, standing as one man against the class enemy.

"The militarist misconception produces erroneous notions regarding the actual mechanics of waging military action. It overestimates the importance of the ultrasecret, carefully prepared apparatus, and underestimates the importance of the masses, who are the best cover and the best apparatus that revolutionaries have at their disposal. They lack a mass orientation for armed attacks, apart from short-term mobilizations contributing directly to building the apparatus, by securing money, documents, and so on. It is scarcely necessary to say that the war waged by the Vietnamese people is showing which is the correct conception and which the mistaken conception in this matter. . . .

"Reformism errs in the opposite direction, and its most frequent error is syndicalism. This consists of belittling the role of armed struggle, either denying it or postponing it until an uncertain future date. It consists of assigning the role of the party to the trade unions. . . .

"The revolutionary party needs no intermediary to lead the masses with its propaganda, political agitation, and organizing activity. The party does not forsake any of the needs of the masses. It works, lives, studies, and struggles with them, striving for all of their needs. The party takes part in all the organs which the masses put forth to gain their immediate demands, including the trade-unions, and it fights to give political orientation and direction to their organizations.

"But the party can afford least of all to fail to meet the greatest need of the masses—which is precisely their need for a vanguard proletarian party which leads and orients them in the struggle for a Workers and People's Government, in the struggle for socialism. A party which renounces itself doesn't deserve to exist.

"The political reformism of the syndicalists has its counterpart in their sectarian and ultraleftist trade-union adventurism. Just as they assign the party's tasks to the trade unions, so they prevent the latter from carrying out their own proper functions. Trade unions and other for-

mations are by nature broad and open. They should seek to organize and lead the broadest masses, carrying them into class combat and raising their immediate demands.

"It is precisely the party's revolutionary orientation which allows it to raise these struggles to a political level, transforming them into true class struggles. At the same time, this revolutionary orientation lets the trade unions utilize the most flexible tactics in gaining their objectives, without giving in to the extreme positions of the bureaucratic layers. The 'revolutionary syndicalists' or 'syndicalist revolutionaries' thus put two roadblocks in front of the mass movement: they belittle the role of the party, seeking to transfer it to the trade unions, and at the same time they prevent the unions from carrying out their specific tasks.

"The third petty-bourgeois tendency within the revolutionary movement is spontaneism. This consists of denying the revolutionary party's historical role by glibly rehashing the argument about the mistakes of the Communist Party. According to this outlook the bureaucratization of the Bolshevik Party, the Third International, and all the Communist parties of the world does not constitute a specific historical phenomenon growing out of concrete conditions in the Soviet Union and Europe in a definite historical period; rather, it is seen as an inescapable part of the development of any party. Hence the organization of the party leads by its nature to bureaucratization, is a sectarian step, and leads to rejection by the masses.

"Such is the conception which basically signifies the petty bourgeoisie's capitulation to the spontaneous action of the masses, and its abandonment of the painstaking task of building a proletarian party, of integrating scientific socialism with the workers' movement."

The Argentinian comrades don't want anyone to exaggerate the importance of the actions they have carried out thus far. As for ourselves, we are convinced that this is only the very first phase of a long battle, and that setbacks and mistakes are always possible, to a certain degree even inevitable. We do not need to call this to the PRT's attention; the comrades are completely aware of the need for constant critical evaluation of the activity and orientation. For them, moreover, it is not simply a "debate," but a *struggle already underway*, in which they risk paying dearly for any future mistake in theory or practical application. The least they can ask for is that no one in the International pass judgment on them without knowing exactly what they are doing and thinking, that no one stick labels ("militarists," "foquistas," "terrorists," etc.) on them that in no way contribute to clarity and merely result in poisoning the discussion.

A Mistake in Methodology

5. Comrade Hansen fills up his document with a series of quotes that don't, quite frankly, concern us at all. Furthermore, he has to agree himself that the views of Brazilian VPR member Ladislav Dowbor are not shared by Livio Maitan. This doesn't deter Comrade Hansen from utilizing a *New York Times Magazine* interview with Dowbor against me, nor does it keep him from forgetting, or being unaware, that the positions of the VPR are brought out much better in other sources that reflect the lively debate presently taking place in the Brazilian vanguard. At any rate, comrades who are following the international debate will readily notice that the majority's line differs radically from the orientation put forth in the quoted in-

terview. The Brazilian comrades associated with the Fourth International take one of their political and theoretical tasks to be precisely that of critically analyzing the writings of the VPR and of Dowbor. Nor do we have any need to insist on the equally clear difference between our positions and the position taken by Tupamaro members in the source to which Comrade Hansen refers. In passing, the minority spokesman's reference is unfair not only to us, but also to the Tupamaros. In fact, the Tupamaros have taken a whole series of political and even programmatic positions which it is absurd to overlook, and which reflect the advances this movement has made in its political understanding. You can no longer dispose of the Tupamaros with cursory arguments that don't take into account their prestige and mass influence or, as all observers will concede, the way they have deeply shaken their country's establishment.⁴

I shall leave aside the remarks on the points on which Bejar himself was supposedly more correct than the majority by referring the reader to the majority document.⁵ Above all else, the reference to Ciro Bustos sheds light on the hodgepodge method practiced by Comrade Hansen. Comrade Hansen must know perfectly well that the two paragraphs he quotes from Bustos are not only *diametrically opposed* to the views of the majority (apart from the possible quibble over strategy and tactics we have already discussed), but they also oversimplify and substantially misrepresent Guevara's own outlook. On what basis, then, can he conclude that the stand of Bustos "enables us to see in two paragraphs where the basic position of the majority on this question ends up logically"? Perhaps his logic is very special. Perhaps he decided to amuse himself with intellectual sleight-of-hand, or indeed with genuine sophistry. Everything the majority has written counts for nothing; what it does is insignificant; the orientation and activities of our Bolivian and Argentinian comrades are not taken seriously. Would you care to have the key to the true interpretation that will enable you to understand and unmask Livio Maitan & Co.? Then read Ciro Bustos and all will become clear to you! And this is a contribution to "defense of the Leninist strategy of party building!"⁶

6. We are on even-solider ground in viewing the quotes that do not even deal with Latin America as an attempt at an amalgam and a diversion. To my knowledge, no one in the International shares the ideas of the Black Panthers or the Weathermen. But Comrade Hansen's way of putting the question interests us insofar as it reflects the concerns of the minority comrades, and it enables us, hence, to grasp the true content of the debate underway in our movement.

There are indeed those who think that, if certain methods of struggle are valid in Latin America, they should be utilized from here onward in other countries also, including the United States and Canada. Some minority comrades seem to believe that such a position follows logically, and that if we advocate guerrilla warfare in Argentina and Bolivia, we should advocate it for the United States as well. The majority of the International does not share such a concept. We see it as totally erroneous from a methodological standpoint. The Marxist and Leninist method does not consist of defining forms of struggle valid for all countries and all periods. It must instead determine forms of struggle and goals as the function of a specific situation that must be analyzed at the outset. Those who think the actions being carried

out today in Argentina or Brazil would have the same impact in the United States or Canada, are completely overlooking the enormous real differences in economic and social conditions and the consciousness of the working class and the masses in general. They fail to see that the problems of revolutionary strategy and armed struggle cannot be viewed as abstract, universal categories. The comrades who, fearing that the "logic" of our orientation for Latin America leads to adoption of the concepts of the Weathermen for the United States, reject the line of the International and Latin-American majority, are committing from a methodological standpoint the same error as the Weathermen—albeit in inverted form. Their position borders on the claim that orientations valid for the United States in this period should more or less be applied to countries with a radically different situation, to a radically different level of the class struggle. Both views fail to apply the dialectical method, which entails understanding that the combined development of the mass revolutionary movement and of our organizations doesn't in any sense eliminate uneven development, and doesn't do away with the specific conditions that must be grasped in order to formulate an orientation corresponding to real needs and possibilities. On a political level, in the present situation, such a mistake on the part of the minority comrades could lead them, independently of their subjective intent, to play a conservative role in the International that would inevitably exacerbate the serious tensions and dangers which we should *all* strive to ward off.

Again in connection with the method of discussion, it is in principle legitimate to tie together different questions and to try to grasp, beyond the expressed positions, their potential tendencies. This is why we don't shy away from any debate. If the minority believes it necessary to discuss entryism, the line of the English comrades, the weaknesses of the Italian section, and even the *Red Mole's* cartoons, the discussion should be carried out. Moreover, it is legitimate to raise the problem of determining to what degree the orientations outlined for Latin America can help us sharpen our orientation in other parts of the world with analogous structural situations and political tendencies. There is in particular the case of certain important countries that the Fourth International could not overlook without placing in doubt its revolutionary vanguard character on a world scale.

But we feel that no clarification will be achieved, and no progress will be made by our movement, if we discuss all questions simultaneously, on the basis of documents that mix everything together, tackling each problem in a cursory fashion. What is worse, this method seems to lead in Comrade Hansen's last document to putting people on trial for their motives, to an attempt—typically factional—to discover everywhere reservations or omissions loaded with significance. A single example: Comrade Hansen denounces as proof of our departure from the Leninist concept of party building the fact the Comrades Germain and Knoeller do not define the role of the party in a chapter of their document. Comrade Hansen is well aware of the contributions, even recent ones, made by Comrade Germain on the question of the party; he knows the contribution these two comrades are making directly to building certain sections in Europe. He ought to know to what extent the European sections adhering to the majority are engaging in close combat with all spontaneist and Maoist tendencies to win

hegemony within the broader vanguard. But that obviously has less bearing than the "oversight" of Comrades Germain and Knoeller in a chapter of their document!

Yet again: according to Comrade Hansen, the basis for the majority at the last congress was formed by young recruits to the European sections and by a sector of the Trotskyist movement in Latin America (let's say the majority sector). All right, can anyone state seriously that party building has been forgotten in Western Europe over the past couple of years? What conceptions could have allowed us to make the substantial progress we have recorded in France, and not only in France? Can it be said, on the other hand, that the Bolivian comrades are "overlooking" or obscuring the primordial need to build the party and reinforce it constantly? Everyone who is familiar with their theory and practice knows that the only reply can be a categorical negative.

In any event, it is on this terrain that we must debate and decide, and not on the basis of declarations by Bustos or supporters of the Weathermen!

Democratic Centralism and Minority Rights

7. I apologize to my readers for digressing at this point in regard to some polemical assertions that concern me most directly.

The International knows that the Italian section went through a serious crisis in 1968 and 1969. The International leadership—in the presence of representatives of the minority—was kept constantly informed on some developments in this crisis. In the widest international gatherings—including the European conference of December 1969—the Italian comrades drew up a self-critical balance sheet. This balance sheet was discussed at the section's congress of March 1970, at which the minority was present; one chapter of the resolution summarized it clearly. The Italian section, moreover, has not only always had absolutely democratic debates, but it is also the only section where after 1953 a minority favoring the line of the International Committee could express itself freely, to the point of being represented on the Central Committee. The comrades of the minority are invited from here onward to participate and to express their points of view—even in relation to the tactical orientation of the Italian comrades, if they so desire—at our next congress, as well as at the congress that will decide the section's position in the international debate and elect delegates to the world congress. (We have always felt, moreover, that a congress and not a Central Committee has the ultimate authority in this area.)

Since Comrade Hansen too generously considers me "the ideological leader" of the majority tendency, thereby attributing to me a role that goes beyond my personal position, I must concern myself with my record. I shall therefore remind him that my positions on Egypt—to which I won't return here for the methodological reasons I have already explained—had a quite different significance from the one he attributes to them, and they were bound up, moreover, with some methodological gains made by the International prior to the 1953 split. Those comrades who are interested can read over the contemporary debate. But what interests Comrade Hansen is not reopening that debate or grasping its true content. His aim is to show via a supplementary example, referred to repeatedly in passing, how dangerous the "ideological leader" of the majority is! If he wanted to make

an honest evaluation of our performances—and of course of our mistakes!—he should at least make reference to other aspects of our activity—as much in the area of preparation as in that of active intervention. Perhaps the result would be to bring out a less hideous image of certain members of the international leadership, whom some minority comrades try to portray as adventurers, as trainers of terrorists, or as crypto-Maoists who are moving away from the Leninist concept of party building!

8. If the discussion unfolding in the International can be carried out with a correct method, it can lead to an important clarification and contribute to the theoretical and political development of our movement, a considerable portion of whose members have joined since the last world congress. At the same time we can make a test of what Leninist democratic centralism consists of: demanding unity in action does not prevent the fullest debate, and internal democracy does not compromise the effectiveness of intervention in the class struggle. Despite its organizational weaknesses, the Fourth International is in a position to carry on a discussion with the broadest participation of comrades from the different countries. The debate can be organized in such a way that the delegations from the sections and the representatives of the different international tendencies can express their point of view directly, to the leaderships, to the central committees, and to the national congresses. Such a procedure would contribute enormously to the process of homogenization that the substantial renewal of our movement in recent years makes absolutely necessary.

Comrade Hansen has raised the problem of minority rights. This is a real problem, as is the problem of future minorities in sections where the majority supports the international minority. Its solution will be relatively easy if everyone respects the statutory norms, if everyone is guided by the necessary sense of responsibility, if every-

one has a clear understanding of the vital importance of keeping the International's cadre intact in a period when we have already made unprecedented progress and when enormous possibilities are opening up even in the near future.

We have always intransigently defended international democratic centralism. This has always implied on our part not only understanding the irreplaceable role of the most democratic debate and confrontation of tendencies, but also understanding that the International cannot be led exactly like a section. (Many comrades don't make this distinction clearly, but experience at the international leadership level would enable them to grasp it rapidly.) I would add that, as the minority comrades should know, we haven't asked any section to apply the line of the world congress as a matter of discipline. We have stated explicitly, on the contrary, that if a majority of a section is opposed to the international majority this creates political problems that no one would dream of resolving through administrative measures. It would in fact be absurd to ask that a line be applied—especially a line with multiple implications such as that adopted for Latin America by the world congress—by a majority that doesn't share it or hasn't assimilated it. Moreover, in all the history of the International, there is only one case in which this criterion was not respected. Comrade Hansen knows quite well that the two members of the international leadership whom he attacks were completely opposed to this decision.⁷ It is true that, from a purely statutory point of view, the expulsion of the capitulationist leaders of the Ceylonese majority in 1964 could also be challenged. But I don't suppose that anyone would seek to put in question the well-founded politics and principle of such an indispensable prophylactic measure.⁸

June 23, 1971

FOOTNOTES

1. The reporter—to be precise, Livio Maitan—had said among other things that Peru should be included in this category of countries where "the guerrilla struggle will be able to play a determining role." Here is another detail susceptible of creating difficulties for Comrade Hansen, so preoccupied with establishing the chronology of my evolution!

2. We allude here to the phases that preceded the generalized war and the U. S. intervention.

3. In the same letter Hugo makes a big mistake in assuming that I was unaware of the Peruvian economic changes. Several articles I wrote show exactly the opposite.

4. It does not in any sense flow from what we are saying that we share the Tupamaros' political views, particularly their position on the *Frente Amplio*, which is laden with opportunist dangers.

5. Comrade Hansen forgets, indeed, the criticisms we ourselves made of Bejar. He forgets as well that the congress resolution reaffirming the need for the revolutionary party used Peru as an example and recalled the relevance of Hugo Blanco's experiences.

6. If we wished to follow Comrade Hansen's "methodological" example, we could quote passages from resolutions or articles on Latin America and guerrilla warfare taken from pro-Soviet or pro-Chinese Communist Party publications, and discover similarities with the minority's line of reasoning. Would we prove in that fashion that the "logic" of the minority position is that of the followers of Moscow or Peking?

7. I am obviously alluding to the suspension of the French majority at the beginning of 1952. Within the Secretariat, Comrade Germain and I myself were in the minority on this question, which was pushed through by a slight

majority, the composition of which Comrade Hansen need not be reminded.

8. In regard to La Verdad and Moreno, and what I said in my reply to the SWP Political Committee. I shall limit myself to stressing a passage from Comrade Hansen's document which reads: "The last world congress used a numerical, not a political criterion, to decide

which tendency in Argentina represented the majority." Certainly, if it were a question of deciding who is in the majority in the case of a split, I would not want any other criterion to be adopted. If it were a question of a section being disaffiliated or being recognized, then obviously the political criterion would be primary. These are the elementary norms we have always applied and they were not discovered on the occasion of the "Argentine question."

OUR ORIENTATION TO THE NDP— AS A STRATEGY— AND ITS TACTICAL APPLICATION

by Ross Dowson, approved by the Political Committee
of the LSA/LSO for the 1970 Convention

The revolution that is coming—that will place the working women and men of this country in full command over its vast resources, that will link it to the worldwide struggles of the working class, and lay down the foundations of the new socialist order of peace and freedom—requires a party as its organizer and director.

That party must be built along the lines of a revolutionary vanguard. Not an elitist formation of self-appointed saviours, but a party of working women and men completely dedicated to the struggle of the workers, a party of leaders of the class—a combat party armed with a revolutionary program.

No other type of party will do. History has already recorded that without such a party the revolution in an advanced capitalist country such as Canada is an idle dream.

But to proclaim the need for such a party—to repeat it endlessly as some do—and to actually move effectively in the direction of building such a party are two totally different things.

Those forces that have already grasped the essential outlines of this idea are confronted with a working class movement which has already taken on a structured form.

These forms have a tremendous resilience because, however inadequate, they now serve the class interests—even when they no longer do so they remain a force because of the class' historic memory of when they did.

Ever since the end of World War II the most widespread and profound political experience of the class has been the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation and its continuator, the New Democratic Party.

For some years now the Canadian workers have been organized as a class in trade unions. The war years saw the workers in basic industry unionized and today the ranks of organized labor stand over 2 million strong.

From combating individual capitalists or alliances of capitalists over immediate economic issues such as hours, wages, and conditions, the workers have been compelled to move out onto the political arena as an independent class force against the capitalists organized as a class and through their political parties in control of the state apparatus.

The CCF, from the period 1943-48 on and now the NDP from the day of its founding in 1961, is the political party of the English-Canadian working class. It is the form that the labor party has taken in English-speaking Canada.

In Quebec, the CCF-NDP has not developed strong organic links with the trade union movement or gained a mass base among working class militants. It would appear for the whole next period at least that the nationalist upsurge has passed it by.

However, even here, to this day, the CCF-NDP has been the only political structure to pose across Quebec, however embryonically, the question of independent working class political action.

The NDP is a reformist party—not a revolutionary party. While in its ranks there are forces that will come to the revolution, this party will never make the revolution nor can it be reformed to serve this purpose. It is encrusted with a leadership and a program permeated with the concepts of class peace and class collaboration, although, at the critical juncture of its formation in 1961 and for a short period after, it was what Leon Trotsky described in 1938 to us Americans as "not a party but an amorphous political mass movement" with a revolutionary dynamic. It is nationalist, identifying the fate of the Canadian working class with the fate of the central bourgeois state—and not internationalist. Its leadership has made parliamentarianism not a tactic in the struggle but the supreme principle through which change alone can come.

This party has been characterized at various times as the primary expression of the politics of the working class, as expressing the present level of consciousness of the workers, or as being in advance of the level of consciousness of the working class as a whole.

In this period of extreme national and international crises, when class antagonisms recurringly take on the most explosive character—how can one estimate with any degree of accuracy, even over a very limited period of time, where the working class is at, at what stage is its consciousness, and how firm is its adherence to various structures and to various forms of struggle.

To be sure, there are hundreds of thousands of working class men and women who do not think in terms of politics at all or continue to support one or another party of the capitalist class. They have yet to take the simplest act of a working class political character by voting NDP. There are tens of thousands of workers who have over the past years formed a firm commitment to the NDP and its leadership and will not be easily shaken from it, and to be sure there are many workers both inside and outside of the NDP who are to the left of it, who have already some understanding of the inadequacy of its program and an even clearer idea of the opportunist and class collaborationist character of its leadership. But insofar as the revolutionary socialists have been able to confront them, there are few in number who are yet prepared to move out and beyond the NDP.

Thus the NDP represents both an opening to and a barrier against; stands both on the way and athwart the way to the building of the revolutionary vanguard. For the class as a whole over the entire past period it represents a progressive and important step forward in their political development and it will continue to do so for some period.

The NDP cannot be ignored and it cannot be bypassed. It is the touchstone of class politics. All working class politics revolve around it and an incorrect position on it is fatal. It is not yet its association and support for the criminal record of the Soviet bureaucracy that is the albatross around the neck of the Communist Party of Canada so much as its known record of opposition to the CCF and the NDP, to independent working class political action. The CP's opposition to the NDP has not remained in their class collaborationist theories expressed in convention but has been exposed to workers by its consistent running of blocks of candidates against the NDP and in particular against the most left candidates.

The position of the Canadian Trotskyists vis-a-vis the CCF from the time that it could be said to have become the Canadian labor party is expressed organizationally in the formation of the Revolutionary Workers Party in 1946—an attempt to pull the necessary cadre together for a future entry; the dissolution of its public face and the entry of our forces as a disciplined democratic centralist revolutionary socialist formation into the CCF in 1952; the formation of the Toronto Socialist Educational League in 1955 (and later the Vancouver Socialist Information Centre) at a time when the CCF was static and there were new possibilities of cadre building through regroupment of diverse socialist forces; and the formation of the League for Socialist Action in 1961 to intervene in the birth processes of the New Democratic Party.

The orientation to the CCF-NDP has been the fundamental orientation of Canadian Trotskyism since World War II. In general our position in relation to the CCF-NDP labor party formation has been one of unconditional support and, but for the period of entry from 1952 to 1956, intensive fraction work with a non-split perspective.

We say unconditional in the sense that our defense of the USSR is unconditional—that we lay down no terms or conditions to the Soviet regime to warrant our defense of the USSR itself. We defend the USSR as a workers state—should a series of transformations take place as to *qualitatively* alter its class character we would cease to defend it. But suppose the NDP violates some of the

most basic interests of the working class. The Labour Party of Great Britain through Wilson completely underwrote the U. S. genocidal war against the people of Vietnam and imposed a wage freeze on the British unions. This caused some to reject electoral support of the Labour Party and even to cease to characterize it as the labor party—the mass political expression of the British working class—but to define it as a bourgeois party.

It is not at all excluded that the NDP could move to such positions. We would not support such positions. But at what point would we say that we no longer support the party—at what point is it no longer the labor party? Only when it ceases to represent in the eyes of the class the alternative to the parties of the bourgeoisie. In our opinion the betrayals of the British Labor Party leadership have not had such an impact as to result in a qualitative change in the party's relation to the class.

On another occasion we commented this way: the NDP not only betrays the basic principles of socialism, which it does not even claim to ascribe to, but even from time to time the most elementary interests of the workers. But it has not betrayed the level of consciousness of any substantial and viable layer of the working class.

Our CCF-NDP orientation and its effective application has been the hardest fought position in the history of the movement, established against trends of centrist conciliationism and liquidationism into the NDP, sectarian opposition to, and in more recent years, spontaneist and adventurist hostility to it, leading to defection from the revolutionary vanguard itself.

This rejection of the labor party flows from the same basic illusion touched on by *The New Rise of the World Revolution* adopted by the Third World Congress since Reunification. It explained: "The sudden development of the new youth vanguard into a mass movement has caused the resurgence of the worship of spontaneity. This is another new obstacle to a breakthrough by revolutionary Marxists." Earlier the document referred to an incorrect interpretation of united action as follows: "The success of such actions is indispensable to victory in specific episodes in the class struggle. But our historic task is not just to achieve episodic victories; it is to lead the working class to victory by overthrowing the international capitalist system and capitalism in each individual country. If we limited ourselves solely to united actions, we would run the risk of a general defeat in the wake of episodic and ephemeral successes. This would more and more sap the potential for further successes, because what is most necessary to achieve such successes is a correct theoretical and practical grasp of reality, which is unattainable without the incomparable instrument of a revolutionary party.

"Such conceptions," the document continues, "are based implicitly or explicitly on the illusion that thousands of students or young workers fighting shoulder to shoulder against the Vietnam war, for a 'confrontation' with the bourgeois university or even capitalist society as a whole, have already reached the same ideological level as the revolutionary Marxists and that therefore a revolutionary Marxist party and International are no longer necessary."

This spontaneist tendency arising with the worldwide youth radicalization has rejected the NDP out of the same logic. Because the youth radicalization has as yet developed apart from the NDP, because its massive united actions do not look to the NDP for leadership, they conclude that the NDP has been definitely bypassed, not

merely by the thousands of students and young worker participants in mass demonstrations, but by the class as a whole.

This tendency which Engler-Sloccock gave expression to in our movement, saw our fundamental orientation, the identification of the LSA/LSO with the NDP, as a barrier to our effective identification with and full involvement in the new wave of radically developing youth. They saw our identification with the NDP as giving us a conservative image and as an impediment that had to be got rid of, while we see it as increasing our political effectiveness. We see such slogans as "Win the NDP to Socialism," through which we express our NDP orientation, as giving depth and direction to the radicalization, as a means to direct the youth militants to a comprehension of what class it must link its struggle to—the working class—in order to render it more effective, as a means to raise and educate youth militants in class politics. Our spontaneists saw the struggle continuing to move outside of the NDP, and the revolutionary wave completely bypassing the NDP.

Interestingly enough, this view did not find them more vigorously proclaiming the "pure" Trotskyist program and seeking on every occasion to more dramatically present the independent banner of the LSA/LSO or the Fourth International, but on the contrary adapting to spontaneist elements, taking a completely opportunist course, and rejecting the revolutionary vanguard party first in the concrete, insofar as it existed in the LSA/LSO, and then in theory.

Sloccock cautioned us about not imposing an artificial and abstract mass perspective on the spontaneous development of the majority of antiwar militants, and advised us that our attitudes to such new formations as tenant organizations, COPE (Vancouver electoral popular front) should not be determined by our NDP orientation, but each case must be decided on its own merits (page B, Bulletin 1). It was just two years ago, with great erudition and endless analogies, he predicted that the radicalization of the working class will not be reflected into the NDP through the constituency organizations, but through the trade union movement. Work in the constituencies and through artificially erected "Socialist caucuses" is of little value, he declared.

Needless to say the new radicalization has by no means bypassed the NDP but has been reflected within it, not only in constituency organizations and union locals but in the federal convention and even the parliamentary caucus.

While the NDP leadership has taken no real initiatives to involve the party in the anti-Vietnam war movement and for a whole period savagely attacked those who did, its top leaders now grace the platforms of the mass rallies, head the demonstrations, and through their actions identify the NDP with them, and carry the NDP into the antiwar movement. While the Canadian Party of Labor (Maoists) came to the VMC-sponsored march on Ottawa this spring all geared to boo and heckle the major speaker, the notorious right-wing NDP leader David Lewis—they had to keep their silence. Lewis forthrightly attacked U. S. aggression against the Vietnamese revolution as imperialist, condemned the Canadian government for its abject material and political complicity and demanded the cessation of arms sales and the withdrawal of U. S. troops from Vietnam now.

What about women's liberation—the most ongoing

struggle involving new layers of radicals with the most explosive potential? When the abortion caravan hit Ottawa it found immediate support from the NDP parliamentary caucus. MP Grace McInnis firmly identified the NDP with the caravan by addressing the rally that welcomed its arrival. Liberationists chained themselves to the parliamentary gallery and so interrupted the session with their demands for immediate action that the government was forced to adjourn this sacred institution of bourgeois democracy. Some of the party leaders dissociated themselves from this action but others appeared amongst the Liberationists in a gesture of support. The Morgenthaler case around which the fight for Free Abortions Now is developing has firm support from the NDP.

The NDP leadership have proven sufficiently flexible in meeting the challenge of the new wave of radicalization to preserve the image of the party as a party of the left.

It is difficult to prove the effect of much of our work at any given moment and sometimes for a whole period on the course of events. Often, when it would seem that it had little or none whatsoever, later developments prove quite the opposite. For an extended period, we concentrated considerable effort in the NDP across Canada, in B. C., Alberta, Ontario, etc., to build socialist caucuses. Sloccock characterized them as being "artificially erected" and "of little political value." But scarcely were the words written than there appeared in the NDP right across the country the so-called Waffle—a broad left-wing formation composed largely of radical anti-imperialist youth with 1/3 of the votes at last year's federal convention and which has since become a stable left-wing force across the country.

Spontaneists and confrontationists see the NDP as taking steam out of and tending to divert the militancy of the struggle into parliamentary and reformist channels. But isn't this really just another expression of their lack of understanding of or unwillingness to face up to the fundamental problems of making the revolution? The revolution cannot come out of the confrontation-escalation politics of the spontaneists no matter how dramatically or how brilliantly their actions are planned. The youth radicalism has to link up with the working class with their vast numbers strategically immeshed in the working gears of society. In the United States it is difficult for student radicals to see the working class as a class, let alone as a potentially radical force—hence there has been considerable dissipation of their forces in ultraleftist adventurism.

In the United States where there is no labor party this by no means indicates a lack of reformist illusions—quite the contrary. They are not on the plane of whether socialism can be won by parliamentary means, but on a much lower plane—whether one or another capitalist party can be an instrument for social change. By that token alone, they tend to be parliamentarist. Whereas the NDP is a minority, often hamstrung by electoral trickery and parliamentary procedures, actions identifying with it often take on an antiparliamentary character and pose revolutionary challenges.

In Canada the revolutionary potential of the working class is much easier to grasp. Not only are the workers organized in unions but their unions are much more socially oriented; they are heavily involved in the NDP with its broad social outlook. In fact, the unions are the dominant force in the NDP. The NDP constantly poses

the need for working class power. Since it is a minority party and must continually seek to widen its support, it is necessary for it to move out in protest demonstrations and rallies to continually sharpen the discontent of the workers and organize them along political, even if reformist, lines.

And history records more than one occasion when the struggle has transcended from one for reforms to revolution.

Insofar as we Trotskyists recognize the NDP as a progressive step forward for the working class, in that sense, indirectly, it can be said we help to establish it. But the fact is that the NDP is there, is a tremendous reality and it plays that role completely outside of our support and even our existence. And revolutionists who do not have an orientation to it cannot get anywhere.

This has been clearly brought home recently by the demise of the Saskatchewan-based Committee for a Socialist Movement—a broad catchall organization at its peak of some 200 revolutionaries outside the NDP. In the short year and a half of its existence it has known nothing but crises over its direction. What blew it up were differences that developed around its orientation to the New Democratic Party and its left-wing Waffle caucus. The first split was when some 20 key leaders largely in Regina pulled out to work exclusively in the NDP and Waffle. The next split was the leadership of the Saskatoon group who opposed attacks on the Waffle appearing in the CSM paper. They viewed the NDP as a labor party and were for working within it for a socialist program—although they consider it necessary to go beyond the NDP and Waffle. They have joined the Young Socialists. What remained split again, the first group, named by its advisor and our erstwhile comrades Engler and Rands "The Middle Way," seeks a way outside the NDP and the policy outlined by Trotskyists. The second talks of armed struggle and rejects the NDP on completely sectarian grounds. Both are by now quite probably scattered to the winds.

In no way does our orientation to the NDP distort or inhibit the full responsible functioning of the LSA/LSO as the nucleus of the revolutionary vanguard. Not only does it link it up to the most significant expression of the class conscious development of the Canadian working class, permitting it to go through the experiences of the class with the class, testing our ideas, allowing us to take every advantage of every developing possibility but it makes our movement and our aim, the Canadian socialist revolution, take on a much more comprehensible character.

Our orientation to the NDP has nothing but good results for us. We described it this way in our 1963 convention resolution:

"The LSA's orientation to the NDP makes it much more attractive a force than it would otherwise be. Our orientation places our whole program in a realistic framework. Regardless of all its shortcomings, in its overall significance the NDP projects the need for working-class power. The fairly extensive layer of workers who in advance of their class, have already a generally correct assessment of reformism find a small revolutionary socialist group unattractive—even though they may concede that it is theoretically correct—for it can offer little immediate possibilities of struggle. Their understanding therefore becomes largely passive, without perspective. Our orientation to the NDP, our projection as a socialist caucus,

with the aim of winning the NDP to a socialist policy makes us much more attractive and more capable of winning such forces to our side. The merits of our orientation from this viewpoint, which stand completely outside of what forces we may or may not actually have in the NDP at any given moment, must not be overlooked. Our NDP orientation places our forces, small and involved as they are in what is largely education work of an even academic character, in their proper perspective. It projects in broad lines the direction and possibilities of the struggle in the whole next period, thus heightening immensely our attractiveness."

That orientation to the CCF-NDP which has been our strategical line since the end of World War II, has been mistakenly characterized by some as entrism. In reality, while within the framework of the orientation the Canadian Trotskyists have implemented a wide range of tactics, only on two occasions has the Canadian movement carried out entry.

What is the entry tactic? Entrism, in general, means the revolutionary vanguard dissolving itself as an open independent organization under its own banner into another non-Trotskyist organization for a period. While it is normal that Trotskyists should have their own open movement propagating their full program, under certain circumstances (in order of course to add forces to the revolutionary vanguard) it is a justifiable tactic to take down the independent banner to permit a full entry into another organization.

In Canada a group that had earlier split away from our movement to form the League for a Revolutionary Workers Party, associated with a U. S. group around a B. J. Field, added this to their bag of differences with our movement claiming that, contrary to us, the public independent party had to be sustained at all times and under all circumstances as a matter of principle.

There are of course many dangers facing Trotskyists who have entered another centrist or reformist movement. The internal cohesion of Trotskyists who enter, must, if anything, be even greater than it is as an independent public force. In essence Trotskyists become a hardened cadre caucus fighting to win new recruits to the full program of Trotskyism in order later to reestablish themselves as the independent public vanguard organization.

Our first experience in applying this tactic was the entry into the CCF during 1936 which was sharply and decisively ended in 1938. It was of the classic type devised by Leon Trotsky, sometimes called the French turn, and most successfully applied by the U. S. Trotskyists. In the mid-thirties a leftward-moving current developed in the Socialist Party of the U. S. The American Trotskyists dissolved their public face, gave up their own public press (soon to be replaced by another press), fused with the main forces in this current and then after a sharp struggle reconstituted their independent movement on a considerably expanded basis, at the same time dealing a political opponent a blow from which it never recovered.

The other entry was carried out by the Canadian Trotskyists over a period of three and a half years commencing in 1952 at approximately the same time as the International Executive Committee of the FI headed by Michel Pablo projected a concept of entry *sui generis* (of a unique type) on an international scale and of an extended duration. This entrism, which was practiced by almost all

the European sections of the movement either into Stalinist or social democratic labor parties, was only terminated after almost two decades by the new wave of radicalism that broke over the movement in the late sixties and was the subject of a resolution prepared by the majority of the United Secretariat that appeared in *International Bulletin* No. 7, May 1969.

The second entry conducted by the Canadian Trotskyists had little or nothing in common with entry *sui generis*, certainly as Pablo, through his Canadian supporters, came to interpret it. The Canadian entry was terminated after a relatively short span of three and a half years after an incisive split carried out by a minority. Commencing the entry apparently in agreement with the majority as to its nature, this minority came to give a totally different interpretation of it which they claimed was Pablo's. Pablo subsequently recognized them as the Canadian section prior to their complete liquidation into the reformist milieu and disappearance from the political scene.

The second entry was ended with the expulsion of the main Trotskyist forces in the East from the CCF, the formation of the Socialist Educational League and the publication of *Workers Vanguard*. Ever since then, the Canadian Trotskyists have maintained an open Trotskyist organization with public organs—today four—and have carried a wide range of independent activities—all within the framework of our CCF-NDP orientation—unconditional support of the NDP with an extensive fraction within it.

In the resolution dealing with our work in the NDP, which was adopted by our 1966 convention, we described the implementation of our orientation as follows: "It means that the NDP remains the focus of all our politics—but not the center of our activities"—that center was the new wave of youth radicalization.

How to establish the hegemony of the revolutionary socialists over the left? An initial tactic devised to achieve this was the united front. Lenin devised this tactic following the failure of the Communist International to win important sectors of the workers within social democracy to the banner of the Communist parties. The united front was designed to effect unity in action of Communist Party and Social Democratic Party workers on issues of common concern. The parties would march together while retaining their separate identity. Through such a device the greatest possible striking power would be brought into play against a common enemy. At the same time it was anticipated that the Communist Parties would effectively demonstrate the superiority of their ideas and their party, win the best workers from the social democracy, and thus establish their hegemony over the entire left. The tactic of the united front remains one of the most precious tools in the arsenal of revolutionary politics.

The tactic of entry was first carried out by our French comrades in 1934. It was predicated on the fact that our own forces were weak and isolated, and that an important and viable left wing in the social democracy was developing in our direction. They joined the social democratic party as a body, in order to work within it as a fraction to come in contact with its left wing, to influence it, and to fuse with it, and thereby broaden the basis for the subsequent construction of a new revolutionary party—a Trotskyist party—in France.

The first entry carried out by the Canadian Trotskyists was in 1937 into the CCF which we characterized even as late as 1946 as "predominantly an agrarian social

democratic party with its primary base in the prairie radicalism of the western farmers . . . its membership in the major industrial cities of the East primarily middle class with a small sprinkling of highly skilled workers." The forces of Canadian Trotskyism were limited almost entirely to Vancouver and Toronto. The Vancouver comrades had earlier proposed entry into the BC section of the CCF to the executive committee. The matter was not discussed through the movement and they took that action independently. Then in the summer of 1937 the executive committee majority submitted a one line resolution to the party—resolve that the executive committee endorse immediate entry into the CCF. A minority replied that the CCF was stagnant and declining and that there was no left wing that could be won to our ideas. After a long and extremely bitter conflict, the organization in convention, by a very small majority, voted to enter the CCF. No sooner had the motion been carried than almost the entire top leadership headed by Jack MacDonald, apparently exhausted by the years of isolation and gruelling struggle, stood aside. Maurice Spector, the other leading figure in the movement, had already left Canada to work in the U.S. party where he lined up with A.J. Muste against entry into the Socialist Party. The entry was thrown into the laps of young and quite inexperienced comrades and its conduct was further complicated by the failure of much of the minority (who were actually a majority of the movement's activists) to participate. Just these circumstances alone guaranteed that entry would threaten the movement with liquidation.

Not only did this entry prove fruitless in so far as bringing new blood into our movement, but the conditions and atmosphere in the CCF infected our own forces. Many comrades became demoralized and dropped away, some even became completely acclimatized to the reformist milieu.

It was not until late in 1938 that the remnants of the entrists and non-entrists with the aid of the International, became reconciled and the entry was terminated. Our weakened forces reconstituted themselves as the Socialist Workers League, but before they could consolidate and renew their national connections the Second World War broke out and the movement was driven underground. The Canadian movement, unlike our co-thinkers in Britain and the U.S. who were able to function openly with only modest adjustments, was driven underground by sweeping repressive legislation.

In November 1944 a Canada-wide conference was held in Montreal that pulled together our forces and prepared the organization of the Revolutionary Workers Party two years later. Even as we reconstituted this nucleus of the vanguard as a public independent party, we did not by any means reject the possibility of being faced again with the necessity of reentering the CCF in our struggle to build the mass revolutionary party. On the day of its formal organization the RWP took a CCF orientation—fraction work in the CCF but with major emphasis on building the independent party. Without this necessary preliminary pulling together of cadres, a subsequent entry into the CCF was inconceivable.

In 1943 the delegates to the convention of the Canadian Congress of Labor, formed in 1940 through unification of the All Canadian Congress of Labor and the Canadian section of the CIO, voted to endorse the CCF as the political arm of organized labor. By 1948 it became obvious that the CCF had not only taken on important

strength but had sunk real roots in the working class areas in all the major metropolitan centers and had become—in effect—the labor party.

With that the movement made CCF fraction work a more serious part of party work and raised the question of the advisability of carrying out an entry into the CCF. Commencing in 1948, the leadership began to prepare the movement for possible entry. Thus we come to the second entry carried out by the Canadian Trotskyists. At that time the IEC headed by Pablo was projecting entry *sui generis* in the major sectors of the globe.

How did the Canadian Trotskyists see their entry? Unlike many other periods in the history of the Canadian movement, this one is fairly well documented. The major document unanimously adopted by the 1951 convention is entitled "The CCF—Our Tasks and Perspectives" and that is exactly what it is: a detailed analysis of the CCF, and the challenge it poses for the Trotskyists in their struggle to build the revolutionary vanguard.

This document differentiates the entry that it projected from the type of entry known as the "French turn." Its premise was "not the existence of left formations—nor an increase in internal democracy in the party or a wave of growth." Its premise was that the CCF has now all the skeletal forms of the labor party, and that while we have gathered some precious cadre—we are small. We projected that in this period of extreme national and international tension, of McCarthyism and the cold war that "the CCF under the next upsurge," we projected, "will embrace the class. The class will go there and nowhere else; there it will undergo the experience of reformism—and there, given the perspective of world and Canadian capitalism will move forward to the revolutionary solution of its problems." And we said: "The struggle for a program that will express the opposition of the masses to the oppressive burden of the war and the encroachment of the Bonapartist state will thrust up a new leadership that will do battle with the Coldwell-Douglas-Millard leadership. The program, we stated very clearly, "will be the transitional program of the Fourth International; the leadership," we underscored, "will be the Trotskyist leadership of the Canadian revolution." That is, the only alternative to the reformist leadership was Trotskyism.

This discussion brought to a close, at least on the surface, a longstanding, wearing struggle that had developed in the Toronto branch with an unprincipled personal clique formation headed by Joe Rose. This clique had only in June 1951 finally put its political views down on paper—they then denied that the CCF was the mass political party of labor and formally counterposed the concept that the genuine left would only develop through the trade unions. At the convention they suddenly switched, voted for the entry, and Rose was put on the Central and Political Committees.

By March 1952 our B.C. forces publicly announced their entry without prior consultation with the P.C. In the East as we began to implement the entry, the Rose clique began to develop widening differences. Veering wildly from their previous sectarian evaluation of the CCF they moved, not to the majority position of long-term entry, but toward liquidation into the CCF milieu. They became super-security-conscious, refusing to support the application for membership of a comrade in a CCF club in which they held membership. Finally, using as an excuse the readmission of a former member in the movement, who they claimed was a security problem and whose

case went before the Control Commission where it was cleared, they walked out apparently in order to protect their own security in the CCF.

The Rose group, and those who later joined it, postulating the need to remain in the CCF "at all costs," were unable to undertake any serious left-wing initiatives, fearing that challenges to the party's right-wing establishment might provoke disciplinary reprisals. The majority, on the contrary, moved out in aggressive actions to build the CCF left and expand the Trotskyist forces. While it was felt necessary to drop our public press, we made a big effort to stimulate the BC leftists to launch with us a journal for the broad left, we were instrumental in the publication of a rash of constituency bulletins popularizing transitional demands, and our American co-thinkers allocated space in their press which we commenced to promote. We developed bookstores that carried all the publications of the Trotskyist movement, we held public forums in Toronto which utilized our comrades who had been refused membership in the CCF—and we ran candidates for public office. We made every effort to carry on with the key work of recruiting and developing Trotskyist cadre.

Suddenly the dispute which resulted in the split of world Trotskyism into two tendencies grouped around the International Secretariat and the International Committee which was healed only in 1963, broke over our heads. The Canadian leadership was totally unacquainted with these developments until it read Comrade Cannon's "Open Letter to Trotskyists" published in *The Militant*. It was an appeal to the worldwide movement to unite in a struggle against Pablo's revisionism. The Vancouver comrades immediately identified themselves with the "Open Letter." The leadership in Toronto equivocated in the belief that the issues at dispute could be discussed and decided upon at the next world congress.

It was then that a minority in the leadership and in the Toronto branch headed by Fitzgerald and McAlpine commenced to give a new interpretation to our entry—one that had never figured in any of the discussions and documentation that had decided the entry. Their arguments developed the need for entry along the following lines; 1) that the Third World War was thundering down upon us, 2) that we would enter into this war with the present alignment of forces on the left—the Communist parties, Social Democratic and labor parties, substantially as they are now, 3) that the Trotskyist forces woefully small must at all costs enter as rapidly as possible the Communist Party or Social Democratic/labor party, whichever was the effective movement of the working class in their respective countries, 4) that we could be confident that out of the impact of the world holocaust on these parties the revolutionary instrument would be forged, with our forces playing a contributory role.

To question these broad and sweeping generalizations, to suggest that the timetable might be inaccurate, that events could take place that might drastically alter it, that the traditional parties of labor might well go through some crises that would open up new roads for Trotskyism, was dismissed or ridiculed as holding on to old concepts, as not facing up to the new reality. We were even violating the position of the Third World Congress, we were told, which we had voted for without any criticism but which we were only now informed had such concepts unknown to us and not brought out to our attention at the time but firmly imbedded in them.

Suddenly on Jan. 25/54, to the embarrassment of the minority, the Rose clique bounced back into the arena with a Committee for a Socialist Regroupment. They appeared as 100% opponents of the Cannonite majority and 100% supporters of Pablo and called for a split in the Canadian section. The minority and Pablo himself in a letter to the leadership dissociated themselves from the split.

But among the resolutions and documents of the 14th plenum held by the IS headed by Pablo was one decreeing the suspension from membership in the International all members of the IEC who support the "Open Letter," who approve it and who are trying to rally on this basis the sections of the International. It ordered the suspension from their posts of leadership in the sections all those who signed these appeals or approved them.

This ukase handed to the leadership of the Canadian Trotskyist movement to enforce was immediately operative against Ross Dowson, a member of the IEC, executive secretary and member of the CC-PC, and against Reg Bullock of the CC. Dowson had come to identify himself with the "Open Letter." If taken seriously as intended, it would have decapitated the movement at one blow—placing the minority in control. The minority abstained, but not before stating their complete agreement with it and expressing regret that due to the nature of our party, because of its political level, this instruction was inoperative.

While it was clear where the Canadian Trotskyists stood, preparations were made for a convention. Suddenly on April 7, the Rose clique, along with a few other drop-outs, applied for restoration of their membership in the section. The Toronto branch voted to table the matter until after the convention called for April 10 and 11. The minority, demanding immediate acceptance, stormed out of the meeting. A day or so later a letter dated April 8 appeared entitled "The Canadian Section of the Fourth International to Carry On." It was signed by Fitzgerald, McAlpine and Grenier and announced an emergency conference for April 11 "to continue the Canadian party with all those who support the International" and to "name a temporary executive committee and a delegate to the 4th World Congress."

This rump "Conference of the Canadian Section" publicized the fusion of the Fitzgerald-McAlpine splitters with the Rose clique. Their interim NC among other strange flowers numbered in its circle one Comrade Houston, whose readmission into the section had earlier served as the pretext for the Rose clique desertion from the movement.

Fitzgerald attended the "Fourth World Congress" as the recognized delegate of "the Canadian section of the Fourth International." Before completely disappearing from the scene this assortment of splitters and deserters gave a further lesson in their interpretation of entry *sui generis*.

Suddenly almost every Trotskyist who had managed to enter the Ontario CCF found himself charged by the CCF brass with being a member of an opponent political party. As it turned out, having once started out on a liquidationist course, the rump section's alternate NC member Houston carried it further by turning informer to the CCF brass. A little later, full NC member Rose carried their entry to its ultimate. When appearing before the investigators Rose went state's evidence for a promise

that his membership might later win favorable consideration.

Was the liquidationist course to be explained away as the aberrations of disoriented individuals? When the Rose clique's call for split characterized the schism in the world movement as being between those who "are still applying the formulas of the thirties which because of the new world realities have become empty cliches" when it said: "In the words of the IS 'let the dead bury its own,' only the living can make an effective contribution to the victory of Canadian socialism," and its previous position of carrying out the entry "at all costs," it was only echoing Fitzgerald and McAlpine's words about facing the new world realities, about grasping the new Trotskyism. But what role did Trotskyists have to play at all in Pablo's war-revolution concept which was automatic and irreversible?

For its major forces which were concentrated in the East the second Canadian entry was terminated by the expulsion of almost its entire entered forces in the CCF. The Socialist Educational League was launched publicly in December 1955 with new elements who had been won in the course of the anti-expulsion fight who constituted an effective fraction in the CCF with a no-split perspective.

However, it is apparent that regardless of the expulsions, the forces of Canadian Trotskyism, in order to meet the challenge of events that were already developing, would have ended the entry in the next year or two. This is clear from the character of their activities over the next five years, the struggle along with the Vancouver comrades against a liquidationist current that developed in their branch, and the formation there of the Socialist Forum in February 1959, later the Socialist Information Center, and finally its fusion with the Toronto-based SEL under a common name—the League for Socialist Action.

In its evaluation of the entry *sui generis* held over from the Third World Congress Since Reunification in the International Information Bulletin May 1969, the United Secretariat referred to the "conjunctural factors" that were particularly cited in the debates at the time it was first projected in the early fifties, and to "the structural factors" that were emphasized when the tactic was being applied.

The resolution states:

"(7) The citing of conjunctural factors proved some time later to have been in error, the economic perspective turning out to be completely the reverse and giving way to a prolonged favourable cycle, the danger of war was postponed. On the other hand the crisis of Stalinism developed considerably faster than had been visualized." Nonetheless this entry as practiced by several sections ended only as the impact of a turn marked as being around 1966 (as the new wave of youth radicalism broke over them) led them to alter their tactics in this field. According to Comrade Pierre Frank in his report on entrism "this tactic was and proved itself to be the only one possible for a whole period."

Even today, 19 years after, the 1951 convention document's broad projection for the CCF-NDP entry remains accurate. The workers as a class are going through an NDP experience—it is only taking longer than we expected. For Bolsheviks that time is precious time indeed as it gives us new opportunities to accumulate and develop cadre which is absolutely essential if we are to take advantage of the favorable turn of events to make

a revolution.

And already by December 1955, when they had been expelled from the CCF and had set up the independent Socialist Educational League with its press the *Workers Vanguard*, the Canadian Trotskyists were feeling the pressure, the need to free themselves from the restraint that long-term entry tended to impose.

Two months after the public appearance of the SEL came the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and its revelations of the crimes of Stalin, followed shortly by the uprising in Poznan and then the Hungarian revolution. The Communist parties throughout the world underwent a profound crisis. In Canada the entire Quebec leadership split away, followed shortly by the defection of nearly all its public figures save Tim Buck. How could the Trotskyists, entered in the CCF, meet this challenge?

The CCF leadership began to shuck off every last remnant of socialism symbolized by the Regina Manifesto as they cleared the way for the launching of the NDP with the newly united CLC. The dumping of the Manifesto set off centrifugal forces throughout the CCF. Prominent BC left-winger Rod Young announced the formation of a new socialist party. How could entered Trotskyists block this dissipation of forces? Regroupment becomes a matter of great interest in socialist circles—how could Trotskyists, entered in a movement from which many of these forces were decamping, participate? Not only did the war not come, but a powerful antiwar movement commenced to develop, particularly among student youth, the first expression of the student radicalization that was to gather momentum through the '60s. The Cuban masses under Fidel and Che took power and offered a new pole of attraction on the left.

Obviously entry was becoming increasingly insufferable. The SEL moved out, within the framework of its CCF orientation, but quite prepared to risk the security of its CCF fraction, for it needed every force at its disposal. We moved right in on the CP, circulating literature discussing and challenging their line. In front of a mass membership meeting we forced CP leader Tim Buck himself to agree to a public debate (which of course never came off). We initiated a series of regroupment forums with the ex-CPers in Montreal. We launched an independent Toronto Socialist Youth Forum. As the CCF was being played down prior to the launching of the NDP we entered a candidate in a Toronto federal riding in 1958 where a token CCF candidate was in the running. When the CCF made a no-contest deal we went into the Hastings-Frontenac by-election to challenge the Minister of External Affairs for his seat. We consolidated youth contacts gained in the antiwar and labor party youth movements by launching in 1960 an open and independent Trotskyist youth organization, the Young Socialists. We moved out to popularise the Cuban cause and launched the Fair Play for Cuba Committee.

These initiatives were not taken without meeting some resistance within our own forces. In the Vancouver branch an opposition clique developed around Bill Whitney. Only for a short period had the Vancouver comrades had the opportunity and the responsibility of defending the full program of Trotskyism particularly in its highest form of expression, the building of a vanguard, in contest with all other political tendencies. They had been deprived over an extended period of time of that condition that is

normal and healthy for the full development of revolutionary socialists. Like the prisoners in the cages of Vietnam's Thieu they had been long cramped up and some such as Whitney lost the use of vital faculties. To this day Whitney is an able articulator of many of the basic theoretical concepts of Trotskyism but he is hopelessly crippled with liquidationism.

After many long and tortuous discussions where agreement was made to terminate the BC entry, which never seemed to get implemented, Whitney became isolated, the branch moved out and he broke. In February 1959, the Vancouver Socialist Forum was launched through Malcolm Bruce and Fred McNeil, former top leaders of the CP who had come to our side.

It was in this period that we gathered the key cadre for the next big opportunity that the CCF, to become the New Democratic Party, faced us with. The situation was without precedent. The Canadian Trotskyists were confronted with the challenge of being in on the birth of a new mass labor party formation. The next turn proved that through the hectic and trying struggles of the previous decades we had laid true and sound foundations under ourselves, that we had developed valuable cadre.

No revolutionary opportunity, no matter how profound, produces its own cadre. At best it only provides the culture where its elements can begin to flourish and coalesce as cadre for the next upsurge; or the opportunity for cadre that has already been formed in a previous struggle to intervene and transform itself and move forward to victory. We proved in the crucial period of 1957-63 that we had gathered together invaluable forces, that we had assimilated the program of the revolution, and that we had learned how to implement it—its politics. But we had not had time to accumulate sufficient cadre. It is this that is the ongoing and supreme challenge before the Canadian and world Trotskyist movement.

In 1955 with the merger of the Trades and Labor Congress—American Federation of Labor to the Canadian Congress of Labor—Congress of Industrial Organizations which had endorsed the CCF as labor's political arm since 1943, new opportunities opened up to widen the bases of support for independent labor political action. The CCF brass saw it as a chance to broaden their apparatus and to rid themselves of a broad left wing concentrated largely in the Prairie provinces and B.C. This left-reformist to centrist wing had crystallized in opposition to the rightward course of the CCF top brass largely around the party's founding programmatic statement known as the Regina Manifesto. This statement, essentially Christian pacifist, nonetheless committed the movement to public ownership of the basic means of production and to irreconcilable opposition against "Wars designed to make the world safe for capitalism."

While the Manifesto had long ceased to have any relationship at all to the completely opportunist positions to which the parliamentary caucus consistently committed the party, the CCF leadership formally decided to get rid of it. As the Ontario leadership expressed it in their provincial council minutes "the CCF should endeavor to make its appeal more pragmatic, more empirical," and should publish some new basic literature "which would restate the application of democratic socialism in today's world and in today's terms." That turned out to be the Winnipeg Declaration of Principles which dumped pub-

lic ownership for public control, and replaced abolition of private profit and corporate power with the concept of social planning. This statement was jammed through the 1956 CCF Convention in Winnipeg.

The dumping of the Regina Manifesto was of course also highly agreeable to the trade union brass. The *United Autoworker* applauded the new look: "Many in organized labor will welcome the Winnipeg Declaration . . . with the tag 'Socialism-Will-Cure-Everything' off its back the CCF should be . . . much more acceptable to union voters."

Early in 1957 the CCF leadership, through a series of formal and informal secret discussions with the CLC brass, laid the basis for a Joint Political Action Committee, subsequently set up by the CLC 1958 convention and renamed the National Committee for the New Party. It projected a series of seminars, conferences and forums throughout the country at which CCFers, unionists, farmers' organizations, "professional people and other liberally minded persons" could prepare for the launching of a new party to be founded in July-August 1961.

These developments had a shattering effect on the old CCF left, which we had concluded after many experiences was exhausted as a viable force. Many of them walked away, others talked in terms of splits, on the West Coast of tearing the BC CCF out of the federal movement, or of setting up a new socialist party.

We Trotskyists, however, saw a tremendous new opportunity opening up for us and decided to throw every ounce of energy into the debates, seminars and discussions, into every process leading to the formation of the new party, the new labor party striving to assure its being launched as a revolutionary party.

Of course, we knew that it could not be a vanguard party. But we decided to do everything possible to project our ideas into the situation, to give it a revolutionary program, to permeate it with the spirit of our transitional program.

We saw the situation confronting us as similar to that speculated upon by Trotsky around the possible developments of a labor party on this continent back in 1932.

"It is evident that the possibility of participating in and of utilizing a 'labor party' movement would be greater in the period of its inception; that is, in the period when the party is not a party but an amorphous political mass movement. That we must participate in it at that time and with the greatest energy is without question, but not to help form a 'labor party' which will exclude us and fight against us but to push the progressive elements of the movement more and more to the left by our activity and propaganda. I know this seems too simple for the new great school which searches in every way for a method to jump over its feeble head."

At that juncture the Communist Party was staggering from crisis to crisis—set off by the 20th Congress revelations of the crimes of Stalin. The anti-nuclear arms struggle, the Cuban Revolution and the Black struggle in the US were stimulating new elements and moving them to the left. There was a feeling of protest developing in the ranks of organized labor against the crushing of the IWA's organizing drive in Newfoundland and the rash of union-busting legislation.

The old alignments were breaking up—there was significant sentiment for the regroupment of socialist forces—the most notable expression the Council of Socialist Clubs

in Montreal. The seminars and conferences on the new party were attracting new forces. We were actively involved in all these processes.

We threw the pages of our press, the *Workers Vanguard*, wide open to discussion on all the issues. We explained the need for the new party to commit itself to public ownership, why it must take a clear and unequivocal stand against the war drive. We took on every opposition, from the Stalinists who tried to scuttle its development as a class party by advocating a "democratic national coalition of patriotic forces for peace," to the sectarian critics on the sidelines who were unable to distinguish the unions from the bureaucrats, to the Galbraithians, to the would-be liquidators into the bourgeois Liberal Party. We urged all socialists, no matter their tendency, to come in and fight for a class struggle policy and a militant leadership.

At the same time we projected the Trotskyist movement even more vigorously to the fore through fusing the Toronto-based Socialist Educational League to the Vancouver-based Socialist Information Center and launching out as the League for Socialist Action—a cross-Canada movement. We published and circulated on a big scale a simple programmatic pamphlet popularizing our transitional program and presenting ourselves as a socialist tendency whose relationship would be best expressed as an affiliate of a federated labor party.

The New Democratic Party was launched as a labor party by some 1800 voting delegates who made it the most representative working class assembly that has yet taken place in this country. The tumultuous policy debates showed the radical potential of the Canadian working class.

Our understanding of the processes at work, the implementation of our orientation, was overwhelmingly vindicated by this founding convention. The old leadership of the CCF, allied with the trade-union bureaucracy, prevailed but not without a head-on collision with a core of delegates who won such widespread support that it could only be defeated by the just elected national leader, T. C. Douglas, blackmailing the delegates into submission by announcing his resignation should they adopt an anti-NATO NORAD resolution.

For the next two or three years the tempo of NDP development continued forward at a high pitch. In Quebec in the 1965 federal elections, with practically no provincial organization and heavily marked as an English and federalist party, its vote shot up 60% to 18% in Montreal and 12% of the total vote. But increasingly it tended to move to the right, to become more structured, more bureaucratized. In 1963, a large proportion of comrades, who were our most important connection with the NDP through its youth movement, were expelled.

Without doubt our greatest successes in the earlier, formative years of the NDP were in the youth arena. In 1961, while the League firmed up as an open and pan-Canadian movement, the Young Socialists dissolved their public face and entered the NDY in order to integrate their forces fully in the building of the NDP's youth movement, the New Democratic Youth, to build its left wing and to consolidate out of it a revolutionary youth cadre. In key areas of the country—Ontario and British Columbia—they provided some of the main leadership forces in the NDY.

The Young Socialists recruited their first substantial forces out of the NDY and trained them in the fires of

its internal struggles. Our forces faced repeated and sweeping expulsions which we met with vigorous public defense campaigns through which we were able each time to reconstitute our fraction—with an increased number of new recruits who, if less experienced, were nonetheless completely immersed in the process of gaining invaluable experiences.

During this process the YS launched a Trotskyist youth newspaper, and through it expanded its open activities. In 1966-67, as the ascending youth radicalization began to move past an NDY paralyzed by its right-wing leadership, we withdrew from it and launched an independent Trotskyist youth organization which, from an effective point of view of intervening in the struggle, can be said to have replaced the NDY in the youth arena. At the same time as the YS carries our orientation to support the NDP propagandistically, without doing fraction in the NDP, it is able to operate in many ways as the pro-NDP student organization.

At our 1963 convention we concluded that the formative period of the party was then ending and at the same time new opportunities to widen the base of our league not finding reflection in the NDP were opening up. We therefore decided to pay more attention to our NDP work in the trade unions and to direct more time and energy to our independent work, to build the antiwar movement, to increase the circulation of our literature, to develop our forums. One of the most significant decisions of this new stage was to step up our commitment to participation in the developing struggles in Quebec.

We began to develop the increasingly apparent possibilities for coalescing widely diverse forces behind an anti-Vietnam war movement in 1965. The work of our US co-thinkers was of tremendous value for its scope, for the movement was more limited here, its course of development in many ways has paralleled that of the US. Our "single issue" "End Canadian Complicity" strategy, fought out with all currents and tendencies in conferences across the country, has firmly established a movement that has been capable of a whole series of actions, ever renewing itself as new waves of youth enter into the struggle. While our opponents have labelled the anti-Vietnam war movement "Trotskyist," the imperialist aggression in Vietnam has evoked such response, has proven to be such a key factor in the radicalization process, that all forces, like it or not, have had to participate in its mass actions.

The anti-Vietnam war movement has been the broadest ongoing movement in decades. Only the rising women's liberation movement, with which there is an inevitable interaction, would appear to be approaching it.

Whereas the NDP and trade-union brass first repulsed all approaches of the antiwar movement, then took a cautious, passive attitude, they have been compelled to make identity with it. We gave them no peace. We buffeted them from both inside and outside and thus have helped to raise the level of an entire mass in key sectors of the Canadian working class. In the process of this ongoing and vital

activity which we have carried, we have established right across the country a whole layer of comrades who are widely respected as leaders in their communities and whom the NDP and trade-union leadership have had to recognize.

At the same time as we moved out freely and independently of the NDP milieu, in keeping with the dynamic concept of our NDP orientation, our fraction reached out of its localized, contracting work areas to play a key role in the formation of province-wide socialist caucuses in the Ontario, Alberta and BC sections.

These caucuses, well under way by 1966, continued to expand on a modest basis for a couple of years until the rise of Waffle for which they prepared valuable groundwork. They played a pioneer role through their struggle against the reformist leadership in legitimizing caucus formations in the NDP. Through their projection of a rounded alternative socialist program and in the struggle to promote it, they trained cadre and established leading figures on the left.

Our last convention prepared our movement to meet developing Canadian national sentiments which we interpreted as anti-US imperialist, leading to anti-Canadian capitalist and to class consciousness. When this burst into the NDP with the formation of Waffle we were ready to integrate ourselves into it. With the rise and firming up of Waffle as an English-Canadian-wide force, the area of revolutionary propaganda in the NDP has been widened and the NDP has become more attractive to radicalizing youth. But Waffle is as yet to some considerable degree still outside the movement. It has not yet directed itself into the constituency organizations or towards the established union movement and so does not cause us, at this time at any rate, to make any substantial tactical adjustments in our orientation.

Our orientation to the NDP, to the labor party, is an orientation to the working class in its process of developing political consciousness. We have been firm and consistent in maintaining this orientation because we have no intention of being cut off or cutting ourselves off from the force that is destined to settle accounts with capitalist rule and establish workers power. For the period that is foreseeable ahead the working class is going to go through that experience. We intend to participate in that experience—fully. No one, nothing is going to stop us. Neither sectarians, nor opportunists—nor the labor lieutenants of the capitalist class nor their direct agents. We intend to be right in there—to expedite that experience and to assure that it moves forward to the forging of the type of instrument necessary to realize the Canadian revolution.

We are flexible in its application because the tempo of the class struggle and the maturing of the workers is vastly uneven; and it is possible—even necessary to take advantage of every opportunity that presents itself right now—to turn the relationship of forces between ourselves and the reformist leadership of the NDP to our advantage. It is necessary to build the cadre now.

LETTER TO SWP CONVENTION FROM PIERRE FRANK

Dear comrades,

It would have been a great pleasure for me to bring the fraternal greetings of the United Secretariat and those of the entire F. I. to your convention of the S. W. P. Unfortunately the citadel of the "Free World" has prohibited me and I must ask a comrade to read you what I would have liked to say in person.

First of all I express to you the attention and the passion with which the international Trotskyist movement in its entirety follows the action against the Vietnam war waged in the U. S. A. and in which you, the S. W. P., play such an important role. It is this mass mobilisation increasingly large and increasingly firm to "Bring the GIs home now" which, after the heroic resistance of the Vietnamese people, contributed decisively to sap at the determination of American imperialism and to paralyse its forces. This anti-war activity must not stop for one minute, even if the victory of the Vietnamese revolution seems imminent. It must continue in the U. S. A. as in the whole world to prevent American imperialism from making an orderly retreat, to insure that its defeat henceforth inevitable should be the worst possible.

Your anti-war activity and your other activities (Afro-American movement, Chicanos, women's liberation) inscribe themselves in the turn that the international Trotskyist movement began to effectuate since May 68. Because of the changes in the objective and subjective situation we are ceasing to be the mere propaganda groups as we had been constrained to be for decades, we can finally make the test of our ideas in actions still partial and limited, but in actions which in the eyes of the masses are a verification that even the best formulations of our ideas has not carried.

It is not possible for me to give you a complete slate of the activity and progression of our sections. Thus I will limit myself to several remarks, but in the months to come you will have the possibility during the preparation for the next World Congress of the F. I. to become aware of these activities and the results already attained.

It is in Europe, and not only in France, that the sections of the F. I. have known a development which contrasts with the situation that existed during the years of political apathy. All the sections are growing, multiplying by 2, by 3, sometimes by 8 or ten times. It is the case with England, Belgium, Italy, Germany, Switzerland. New sections are built in Scandinavia and Luxemburg. In Spain the Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire (former group "Comunismo") recently organised in four large cities simultaneous demonstrations gathering more than a thousand people. You are certainly aware of the two large demonstrations organised under the banner of the F. I., at Brussels for a red Europe against the Europe of the trusts with 3,500 participants, and the demonstration for the centenary of the Paris Commune at the Mur des Federes with 30,000 demonstrators, a political event of such importance that the bourgeois press in many countries mentioned it.

In Japan, our section is making comparable progress to those of Europe. In other Asian countries our movement knows difficulties, notably in India and Ceylon but this is because it is involved in the great struggles of these countries. In Latin America where the general situation is more than ever chaotic, in a number of coun-

tries militants draw lessons from past and painful experiences, and groupings issued from various revolutionary groups, from formations having led armed struggles, discuss the ideas of the F. I. and are attracted toward it. In some countries far from the center and where the Trotskyist movement is recent, as in New Zealand, we note a political awakening of youth directed towards our movement. In the Arab countries the heavy defeat of the Palestinian resistance weighs substantially, but political clarification is going on and we are gaining militants who will be tomorrow's cadres.

I can only mention our intervention in the workers' states. A recent conference registered the results obtained in six of these countries. You also know that in two important political trials, in Poland and recently in Czechoslovakia, in the trial of Peter Uhl and his comrades, the activity of the F. I. has been denounced by the Stalinist prosecutors.

The advances we have made are still small in relation to the needs of the world situation. But we must not forget that our movement found itself reduced to very little forces for decades, and that with the decomposition of Stalinism a considerable confusion has set in which is still far from being dissipated. In spite of all these difficulties the F. I. has completely justified itself in finding the way toward new generations, in helping them against confusion to build Marxist revolutionary parties.

We attach the greatest importance to our next World Congress, not only because a World Congress constitutes the highest instance of our movement, that which assures its unity, but above all because this time the largest part of the members of our movement will take part for the first time at a World Congress. Our new members will be able to understand internationalism not only as a theoretical concept but in the most concrete form, that of belonging to a one and single world party, thus being responsible for what is done at antipodes as well as in their own country.

The next World Congress will have to make an important analysis of the world situation, all the more that at the time it will convene the defeat of American imperialism in Vietnam will be clearer than today. The present right turn of the Chinese is very important, but the consequences of the defeat of the most powerful imperialism by a small people fighting for a socialist revolution will be more important. They will be enormous, especially in the U. S. A. The growing economic difficulties in your country will unavoidably transform themselves in political difficulties, and we can be almost certain that your working class will also begin to enter the political field.

At the next World Congress will also be discussed the divergences at present existing between the S. W. P. and the majority of the International, and as you are discussing some of them at this Convention, allow me to speak about them. I would like to start with a preliminary remark. We have noticed in the last year a tendency to add new divergences to those which existed earlier. It is possible that the objective development of the discussion needs it, but it is also possible that, for some of the differences, it is only the product of an hasty generalization. We all know the example given by Trotsky in his struggle against Burnham and Shachtman, but we should not forget that he was in presence of a tendency on its way of breaking with Trotskyism. None

of us, I hope, think that that is the case to-day. We think that it is dangerous to accumulate the matters of differences for, instead of helping to find answers to the various questions, we would risk to reduce the basis of our common activity. We think for example that on questions like China or the youth, the differences if they ever do exist are not decisive. Even on the question on the Near East we don't think that they are so decisive. Thus, if we all support the actual struggles, including these of the Fatah, we do not understand why your document supports also their proclaimed aim of a "democratic and secular Palestine." This is not our aim. We support all real struggles against imperialism without ever necessarily identifying ourselves with those who conduct them. We reject any conception of a democratic revolution, of a revolution by stages; we are in Palestine as everywhere for a socialist revolution. As for the question of the right of the Israeli Jews to self-determination, this discussion can take place without being arbitrarily associated to the other questions which appear to us of a much more decisive importance for the International. These questions are for us our orientation in Latin America and the structure of the F. I.

On Latin America I cannot avoid to deal with the text of my friend Joe Hansen, though I rather would have liked to forget it. I will put aside all kinds of digression, as the martyrs of Chicago, entryism, and so on, as they do not bring much to the discussion. I wish to deal with the essence of his argumentation, and I think that I am not distorting it if I summarize it as follows:

—a) the majority of the International, in accepting the strategy of armed struggle for Latin America, renounces the building of revolutionary parties—this dilemma is even posed in the title of the article;

—b) the orientation of armed struggle for Latin America cannot, in the logic of those who defend it, avoid to be extended to other countries than Latin America;

—c) the adoption of this policy is the consequence of ultraleft pressures on our movement, particularly on its European leaders;

—d) we see no necessity, says Joe, to oppose another policy to that of armed struggle, we remain in favor of building revolutionary parties in Latin America as elsewhere, after the 9th World Congress as before it.

A document of 62 pages is not easily summarised in a dozen lines. But I think that I have put the light on the pillars of Joe's text, and if they do not stand up—as I wish to prove—then 60 or even 600 pages will not add anything to the validity of its contents.

First of all, is it true that the policy of armed struggle is in opposition to the building of the revolutionary party? If we read carefully Joe's article we will see that he "proves" it only through quotations of Bejar, Dowbor, Bustos and other Weathermen. No doubt many ultra-lefts to-day fight the idea of building parties to lead the struggle for socialism and oppose to it the idea of armed struggles. But since when have these ultra-lefts become political authorities for our movement? Since when have *their* dilemmas become dilemmas *for us*? Do we share for example their dilemma between trade-unions and committees of a soviet type? If one wishes to have a discussion and not a dialogue of deafs, one has to discuss the positions of the majority of the International, not those of our common opponents. You cannot attribute to the International the positions of the ultra-lefts.

The dilemma armed struggle versus building the party does not exist for us. No more, shall we say, as the syn-

dicalist dilemma "general strike versus building of the party." For us the building of the party is a *permanent task*, be it for a group of 5 or 500, be it for a party already linked to the masses and even, as history has shown, a party which has already conquered power. Experience has shown that a revolutionary party has never been created once for ever. But the building of the party is not a thing in itself, it is done among other things by determining policies, which are function first of objective conditions, second of the forces of the organisation at a given moment. Propaganda and agitation are constant political tasks. But, *at given moments*, our political tasks include actions which can extend from meetings, demonstrations to more or less large actions for the defense of the working class organisations, to armed struggles which can lead to the struggle for power.

The building of the party is a permanent problem, armed struggles can only become the policy of an organisation at a given period according to circumstances. If comrade Joe wishes to combat the policy of armed struggle for Latin America, he must show that in the actual given conditions in Latin America, another policy is to be followed, for example as suggested by comrade Peter Camejo at the last Plenum of the IEC, a propaganda activity in elections. Let me say in passing that our Bolivian comrades shortly after the revolution in 1952 put up a candidate in a presidential election. If they no longer do it today, though they do not neglect propaganda, it is because their analysis of the situation in their country has led them to the preparation of armed struggle as an immediate task and not merely as an item of a programme for an indeterminate future.

The second argument of comrade Joe, i.e. that the logic of those who today advocate armed struggle for Latin America must lead them to extend it to other countries, has surprised me even more than the first one. Not that the policy of armed struggle is not relevant to other countries. I suspect that the Bengalis, the Ceylonese, for example, are giving some thoughts to armed struggle. What surprised me is first that Joe makes again his "demonstration" with quotations of ultralefts, and second that he places himself in tow of these ultra-lefts in raising the question of armed struggle for countries like the USA, Canada and Great-Britain. I really cannot understand how Joe could bring up such an argument: if you say that armed struggle is today the policy for Latin America, you will have to say that it is also valid for Great Britain. Haven't you forgotten, Joe, the numerous examples of uneven development presented by comrade George Novack? Haven't we rejected the caricatures of the permanent revolution as signifying revolution at any moment and in every country? Of course if you place yourself in the same dilemma of the ultra-lefts "armed struggle versus building of the party", you either accept armed struggle for all countries or accept building of the party for all countries. But as I have already said, *this dilemma is not ours*. For the F. I. there is an *international unity* of revolutionary struggles all over the world, but *unity does not at all signify identity*. The F. I. knows that what is good for Latin America is not necessarily good for the U. S. A. and vice-versa what is good for the U. S. A. is not necessarily good for England or Brazil. Armed struggle as a policy can be determined for a country or a group of countries only after a concrete analysis of the situation in this country or group of countries and is not conveyable to other places. I am really amazed

that Joe took for good such a dogmatic argument of ultra-lefts, only to put it inside out. That such an argumentation takes so many pages in Joe's text should give thought to the political validity of it.

Let me come to the ultra-left pressures on our movement. From the day when the radicalisation of the youth began to show, we have been very conscious of ultra-left pressures in Europe. Every section has had and still has to fight them every day, also the reflections of these pressures in our own movement. We fought for the necessity to work in the unions against those who opposed to them committees which could be only of a temporary nature in present conditions. We know when to participate in elections and when not. But I do not support at all the idea that ultra-lefts are petty bourgeois who are the image on the left of the petty bourgeois opportunists of the right. Neither do I think that to advocate armed struggle, even its particular form the guerrilla, is evidence of ultra-leftism.

To say that opportunism and ultra-leftism are petty bourgeois currents symmetrical in relation to a proletarian Marxist line may be correct if one can place himself on the plane of a pure spirit, with no links to such contingencies as men and organizations. In any case I distrust such an affirmation not only because it is too often used by bureaucrats of all ilk (see Chou En-lai's letter to Mrs. Bandaranaike) but also because it does not correspond neither to Lenin's analysis in "Left wing communism, an infantile disorder" nor to reality. For Lenin ultra-lefts are in first instance revolutionaries who errors are false reactions to the opportunism of the traditional organisations. Our aim is to eliminate from the workers movement by political means the opportunist leaders and organisations, but to cure the ultra-lefts and win them to our program and organisation. This is certainly not an easy task, in many cases we know it is hopeless. But there is no symmetry built up on pure ideology between opportunists and ultra-lefts. There is no symmetry for us between Marighella and other Brazilian revolutionaries and the Chilean president, Allende. The former have the right to our support, also to our criticism but I deplore those which were published made by Brazilians who are not in actual struggle. Whilst Allende must be denounced by us so that the working class loses confidence in him and gets rid of him.

On the label ultra-left put on those who advocate armed struggle, I would advise to be prudent, even if those who do it do not share our ideas and program on some points. Let us suppose that in the middle 50's two men had come to the office of the S. W. P. and said "Our names are Castro and Guevara, we are preparing the landing of a fistful of men in Havana to engage in guerrilla struggle against Batista. Can you help us?" How would you have qualified them *at that time*? Perhaps as some petty bourgeois ultra-lefts? Isn't it worth pondering some minutes on this question?

We in the International haven't open our arms to all those who advocate armed struggle, we have had some examples not only of ultra-lefts but also of unstable people. Yet it is impossible under the pretext of fighting dogmatic ultra-left conceptions to surrender to no less dogmatic conceptions. When it comes to armed struggles it is more than ever necessary to make a concrete study. Let me first give an example, that of the Ligue Communiste in regard to the meeting of the fascist organisation

"Ordre nouveau". You are certainly up to date concerning the facts. After all, this was an armed struggle, a punctual one certainly, not linked to a general political line, but to a propaganda campaign. There was a difficult delimitation with ultra-leftism, so much more that ultra-left groups participated in this action. Moreover there was the danger of a banning of the Ligue. Didn't we risk a reversal on our building of a revolutionary party? It wasn't an action linked with large masses, only with a vanguard.

Concerning the activities of our comrades of the Argentinian section, the P. R. T. and its armed organisation, the E. R. P., we don't look at them as being ultra-left. We think that their policy corresponds largely to the present needs of the class struggle in their country. It is true that in armed actions which involve only small numbers there is always the danger of tending to be separated from the demands and needs of the masses. This can be for example reproached to many revolutionary groups in Latin America. But all the actions led by our comrades in Cordoba, Rosario and Tucuman have shown their preoccupation to link their actions with the needs and demands of the masses. A bourgeois paper as careful and informed as *le Monde* and some Argentinian bourgeois papers have seen it a propos the Rosario affair. We are convinced that these actions, especially the latter, will be studied by revolutionary groups in Latin America and make them understand that armed struggle is only a means, that it needs a political program, which is the first step to understand the necessity of a revolutionary party.

Let me mention you on this question of armed struggle a discussion which took place in June 1938 between Trotsky and the leadership of the S. W. P. about the transitional program. I cannot read the full ten pages, but only two short excerpts:

"There are two dangers in the elaboration of the program. The first is to remain on general abstract lines and to repeat the general slogan without real connection with the trade unions in the locality. That is the direction of sectarian abstraction. The other danger is the contrary, to adapt too much to the local conditions, to the specific conditions, to lose the general revolutionary line. I believe that in the United States the second danger is the more immediate. I remember it most especially in the matter of militarisation, armed pickets, etc. Some comrades were afraid that it is not real for the workers, etc."

And further, concerning something that happened then in New Jersey:

"Now I think the example of New Jersey is very important. We should utilise everything, but this especially. I will propose a special series of articles on how the fascists became victorious. We can become victorious the same way but we must have a small armed body with the best discipline, organised workers, defense committees, otherwise we will be crushed and I believe that our comrades in the United States don't realise the importance of this question. . . . we must begin very modestly, that is, with defense groups but it should be launched immediately."

There is certainly no question for us to mechanically

apply to the present situation what Trotsky said at that period, but one can see that Trotsky did not oppose the building of the party or the transitional program to armed struggles in some given conditions. He did not see in such struggles the manifestation of ultra-leftism, he showed their importance in given conditions. We do not hold to the letter of each quotation of Trotsky, what we look in them as well as from other Marxist masters are guidance for thinking and action, their dialectics removed of dogmatism, mechanism, to approach new questions, new situations.

I come now to the most important question of all, the centralist and democratic structure of the International. Its importance is double. First it reduces the risk of errors without eliminating them, second it gives the best conditions to rectify collectively the errors which have been made. You certainly read the discussion article of comrade Alain Krivine and myself against the danger of introducing federalist conceptions in our movement. We wrote this article before having to read carefully comrade Hansen's article, and in reading it our fears were more than justified. Let us read page 59:

"To take full advantage of the openings now appearing they [the larger sections in the advanced capitalist countries] must concentrate all their resources, both in cadres and finances, on the struggles in their own areas. . . . In Latin America and similar regions, sections should clearly understand that engagement in guerrilla struggle is a tactical problem to be weighed in the light of their own resources without being able to count on anything requisite to their needs from abroad."

These lines, alas, lend themselves to no equivocation. Thus, if a section of the F. I. on the basis of the analysis of the situation in its country decides to engage in armed struggle, it is warned in advance that it will do so on its own with no aid whatsoever from another Trotskyist organisation. *This is not possible.* By the way, how could you give support for example to petty bourgeois nationalists like some of the Palestinian organisations and take a negative attitude to militants and sections of the F. I.? If a section takes the decision to engage in armed struggle and if, in addition, the majority of the F. I. approves it, it follows that this section will receive a support without any reservation, even at the expenses of some of our other activities. To do otherwise is not a matter of cents or dollars, it is to oppose the decision of a given section and it would be the negation of the world party. It would be leaving the door wide open to federalist conceptions, because it would mean acting together only on questions on which we are in full agreement. You wouldn't accept that in your national organisation, it cannot be done in a world party. So we hope that the next World Congress will not agree that the richest organisations concentrate only in their own areas but will devote men and means to the center of the International.

To conclude I hope that our international discussion will get rid of arguments which are not relevant to the

situation in Latin America. Obviously after having to use so much time about them, I cannot begin here to make a deep analysis of the general situation in this continent. But in order to understand the revolutionary potentialities contained there, let me remind you of the Rockefeller report "Quality of life in the Americas" written after his last trip in Latin America. He mentions the perspective of one or many more Fidel Castros—these are his own words. They characterize greatly the situation in Latin America. We don't draw from it mechanical conclusions: the differences are sometimes big from one Latin American country to another. For the time being, but for how long no one can say, the armed struggle is not to-day on the agenda in Chile or in Bolivia, but the trend of the situation in these countries leaves no doubt: there will be no broadening of bourgeois democracy. We should make a very concrete analysis of the situation in each country. But what is for us certain is that in most of these countries, the main bourgeois party is the army, and the mass struggles of the workers, the peasants, the students, cannot be conducted without organisations of armed defense among other things. If anyone does not share this point of view, it is his full right to defend it in the International, but it is then necessary for him to make another analysis and to present another political orientation.

We are sure that our discussion will not continue from abstract and dogmatic views. We ask you with urgency and insistence to reject all that could bring injury to the structure of the F. I. as the world party of the socialist revolution. Because of a reactionary law, you cannot formally belong to it, however you are linked to it all the more stronger by our common ideas. Any danger for the F. I. is also a direct danger for the S. W. P. itself. No Trotskyist organisation can without danger for itself take a federalist type of distance, even only on some questions. The present discussion between us has to develop, but it cannot by its very existence stop the application of the F. I. decisions taken by a World Congress. Your country if it knows to-day a political retardation of its working class movement, receives in its midst the contradictions of the whole world. The revolutionary struggles in your country will in the final instance be decisive for the world. The entire F. I. recognises the importance that the S. W. P. represents for the future of the world socialist revolution; reciprocally you will understand how directly you depend on the development of the F. I. and all its sections. You and we do not follow convergent or parallel paths, we can only constitute a single International movement.

Long live the Socialist Workers Party!
Long live the Fourth International!
Long live the World Socialist Revolution!

July 26, 1971.

s/Pierre Frank

MAY 16, 1971, LETTER FROM STEIN
TO THE NATIONAL LEADERSHIP OF THE
SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY

LIGUE COMMUNISTE
section française de la IVe internationale
95, rue du faubourg st-martin, paris 10e

Attention Cde. J. Hansen
To the National Leadership of the Socialist Workers Party

copies to: The United Secretariat
The Political Bureau of the Ligue Communiste
(SFQI)

Paris, May 16, 1971

Dear Comrades,

I am writing you this letter as a Brazilian militant, a member of the Fourth International, working with various other Brazilian comrades under the guidance and control of the United Secretariat toward the construction of a section of the Fourth International in Brazil.

This letter, concerning the publication by Intercontinental Press in its March 29, 1971, issue of a document entitled "Concerning a Kidnapping in Brazil" was already being written when we learned of the publication of the same document in the *International Socialist Review* through an article reviewing it in the April 30, 1971, *Militant*. These new developments call for some supplementary remarks, which will be made further on. In brief, we consider it very regrettable that after a long period without anything being published on Brazil by the comrades such a document should be circulated. This leads us to pose a question of principle with you.

Let us commence then with what seems to us to be the most important. The question of principle concerns the article on Brazil that we sent to Intercontinental Press last March 8. The article, entitled "Brazil: seven years of military dictatorship," with a first part on "Torture and 'Economic Miracle'" and a second part on "The Revolutionary Left," was written by two Brazilian militants, members of the Fourth International. This article was published in the March and May 1971 issues of the magazine *Quatrieme Internationale*. I admit that I am ignorant of what the group Ponto de Partida, which authored the article "Concerning a Kidnapping in Brazil," represents politically. But one thing is certain—this group does not belong to the Fourth International and no one has ever heard of it before. Can one therefore ask why Intercontinental Press published the long declaration of this group and not a document written by members of the Fourth International, of whom one can think that they "express the standpoint of revolutionary Marxism" that Intercontinental Press is presumed to present and defend in the first place? The two authors of the document are myself on the one hand (whom both Comrade Jack Barnes and Comrade Pete Camejo have met on their trips here) and another Brazilian comrade who joined the International several months ago after a report made about him at the United Secretariat. The document introduces the analysis that I developed during a report made at the United Secretariat after I spent three months in Brazil in 1970 contacting revolutionary organizations and defending the program and perspectives of the International

so far as I know, no other contradictory analysis on the political conjuncture or on the situation in the revolutionary left in Brazil has been made by members of the Fourth International. As you know, we have no section in Brazil. This article expresses the point of view of Brazilian Trotskyist militants immersed in political work in their country. The decision of Intercontinental Press not to publish it and to publish instead the document of Ponto de Partida thus seems absolutely incomprehensible to me and I fail to see the political reasons for it. Consequently I believe that a statement or a rectification on this point is required.

But I could not write you this letter without utilizing the occasion to inform you of the estimate that we must make as Brazilian revolutionary militants on the document in question by Ponto de Partida. This discourse of a philosophy student is in fact hard for anyone to swallow who has experienced the conditions of revolutionary struggle in Brazil under the military dictatorship. It is obvious that the most prominent revolutionary organizations in Brazil can and must be criticized from a revolutionary Marxist point of view. But the entire reasoning of the Ponto de Partida document is based on the argument that the kidnappings produce a more intensive repression. This is an argument in the purest Social Democratic style, holding that it is the action of the revolutionists that is responsible for the repression by the ruling classes. It is a shameful Social Democratic position—it is lamentable to see this published in the Trotskyist press. Trotskyism has already suffered sufficiently from Posadism in Brazil to let this type of stuff go by. The other criticisms in the document concerning the kidnappings are totally abstract. The author seems not to be aware that the principal aim of the kidnappings is to free political prisoners from the jails of the dictatorship. It is a pure and simple abstraction to say in the concrete situation of total demobilization in Brazil that mass pressure is required to liberate them, if not a word is said on how it would be possible to reconstitute a mass movement able to gain even partial victories without becoming the target of the machine guns of the dictatorship. On this the document is silent. Thus Ponto de Partida, of which no one has ever heard, sets out to give lessons in a way that can never influence a single Brazilian militant. And what self-complacency, what presumption to seek to judge what is Marxist and what is not. The author attacks in a gratuitous manner (a chapter devoted to it) Comrade Ruy Mauro Marini, one of the most eminent Latin American Marxists (Comrade Ernest Mandel, who knows his contributions well, would be entirely in agreement on that). Precisely in this passage, the author of the document, so expert in Marxism, finds that it is absurd to speak of Brazil being subordinated to the USA, to the Federal Republic of Germany, to Japan, and to Switzerland. Marxism recognizes only "interdependencies" among the different parts of the capitalist world. If the author of the document knew anything about Marxism, he would be aware of what imperialism is, the highest stage of capitalism. If he knew anything about Brazil, he would be aware that these four countries are among those in the forefront of the impe-

rialist penetration there. If the relations flowing from that are not of subordination, I admit not being up to date on this new "contribution" to Marxism. This document has meaning only for inactive, gossip-mongering students of philosophy, who prefer to carry on their studies abroad. From an armchair there it is easy to give lessons. But on the concrete problems facing the Brazilian vanguard, not a word is said. Before treating in such a cavalier way the revolutionary militants who are struggling against the dictatorship, Ponto de Partida should show its capacity to advance concrete perspectives and to reply to the numerous questions posed by militants from every side. Because if you want to speak for the political vanguard, the capacity is needed to state in what way it should intervene. Thus it is not sufficient to cite as an example the victorious FIAT strike in Córdoba, Argentina. What is required is to state what this strike implies from the point of view of the organization and of its armed defense for example—the plant was literally encircled with various explosives and other arms. And Ponto de Partida forgot to speak about the intervention of the political vanguard there, which was the subject it began with. That's unfortunate, because precisely in this exact case, those involved were our comrades of the Revolutionary Army of the People (ERP), the armed organization created and led by the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT), Argentine section of the Fourth International, who are capable of making a criticism on the political level and on the practical terrain of the deviations that certain Latin American organizations can commit in their armed actions. To do that, they have no need of utilizing old Social Democratic arguments nor of giving lessons. They are also certainly much more effective in their criticisms.

As for the article published in *The Militant*, I think that it is regrettable that an American Trotskyist jour-

nal, that claims to be consistently internationalist, publishes nothing on Brazil except an article disavowing the kidnapping of ambassadors, including . . . an American. It is regrettable to see *The Militant* finding itself very far in the rear of the very bourgeois-capitalist *New York Times* in denouncing the repression and torture in Brazil, but ahead of it with regard to condemning the acts of revolutionary militants.

Finally I will make a last remark on a detail, but one that nevertheless appears important to me, concerning the article of Comrade Peter Camejo in *The Militant*. He says: "The Tupamaros . . . asserted that in 'other countries' (not Uruguay) it is possible to 'achieve a revolution' by means of election." The Tupamaros never said that, comrades. According to the Intercontinental Press of March 1, 1971, they declared: "We do not honestly believe that we can achieve a revolution in Uruguay today by means of elections. It is incorrect to transpose the experiences of other countries." Quotation marks must not be played with Comrade Camejo. The article in *The Militant* contains an improper interpretation. The Trotskyists have suffered sufficiently in the past from this type of procedure to make it a duty to refrain from utilizing it against others. Moreover, the declaration of the Tupamaros is sufficiently clear and explicit. To say merely that they support the Popular Front without citing their political considerations and their statement: "regrets, however, that this closing of ranks came specifically for the elections and not before" could lead to confusion.

To return to the principal point of my letter and in view of the question of principle that I have raised, we would ask that the article on Brazil which we sent last March 8 be published in Intercontinental Press. I would likewise ask that this letter be published in the Internal Bulletin.

Trotskyist greetings,
s/Stein

*JUNE 1, 1971, LETTER FROM
JOSEPH HANSEN TO STEIN*

Intercontinental Press
P. O. Box 116
Village P. O. Station
New York, N. Y. 10014

June 1, 1971

Ligue Communiste
Paris, France

Attention: Stein

Dear Comrade Stein,

This will acknowledge your letter dated May 16, 1971, which we received May 27. I am transmitting it to the Political Committee of the Socialist Workers Party in accordance with the way you have addressed it.

At this point, as editor of *Intercontinental Press*, I should

like to take up only one question raised by your letter. You state that *Intercontinental Press* made a decision not to publish the article which you dated as having been written last January and which you included with a letter to us dated March 8. However, we placed it on our agenda along with other articles that we have received from various comrades, for translation and publication.

You state further: "The article, entitled 'Brazil: seven years of military dictatorship,' with a first part on 'Torture and "Economic Miracle"' and a second part on 'The Revolutionary Left,' was written by two Brazilian militants, members of the Fourth International. This article was published in the March and May 1971 issues of the magazine *Quatrième Internationale*."

We received the March issue of *Quatrième Internationale* — I am not sure now whether it was the latter part of

April or beginning of May—and saw that the first part of your article was included in that issue. As yet we have not received the May issue of *Quatrième Internationale*. But since your letter, dated May 16, affirms that the second part of your article *was published* in it, we can only assume that through some slipup the comrades failed to send us a copy.

Consequently I would greatly appreciate it if you would airmail a copy of that issue to us by return post.

In view of the importance of your article as an expression of majority opinion on the situation in Brazil, I think it advisable to make sure that the English translation conforms as closely as possible to what is published in *Quatrième Internationale*, thereby taking into account any modification that may have been introduced into the original manuscript by the comrades in charge of editing the material that appears in its pages.

Comradely yours,
s/Joseph Hansen
Editor, *Intercontinental Press*

cc: United Secretariat
Political Bureau of the Ligue Communiste
Political Committee, Socialist Workers Party
Editor, *Quatrième Internationale*

*JUNE 15, 1971, LETTER FROM
STEIN TO JOSEPH HANSEN*

ROUGE
14 rue du fbg saint denis
paris 10

Paris, June 15, 1971

Joseph Hansen
Intercontinental Press
New York

Dear Comrade Joseph Hansen,

I received your letter of June 1, 1971 all right. While awaiting a political reply to my letter of May 16, 1971,

I would like to make just one remark of a technical order:

For a possible English translation of the article on Brazil (by Pinheiro-Mattos), I would appreciate your utilizing as a basis the copy that I sent you under date of March 8 last. In reality, unfortunately, this article was published in *Quatrième Internationale* with a series of misprints and typographical errors, and words or parts of sentences were left out. The version that I sent you, which is complete, is the one that will be published, moreover, in *Cuarta Internacional*, the U. S. Spanish magazine.

Fraternal greetings,
s/Stein

JUNE 24, 1971, LETTER FROM
JOSEPH HANSEN TO STEIN

June 24, 1971

Dear Comrade Stein,

Thank you for your letter of June 15, 1971.

In accordance with your request, we are going ahead and utilizing the copy of the manuscript which you sent us as the basis for an English translation of the article by Pinheiro-Mattos on Brazil.

I am disappointed that you did not send me a copy of the May issue of *Quatrième Internationale* as I requested in my letter of June 1. You stated in your letter of May 16 that the article in question was published in the issues of March and May. As yet neither I nor anyone else that I know of here has received a single copy of the May issue of *Quatrième Internationale* although it is now almost the end of June. It is hard to understand why you decided against airmailing me a

copy.

As to a "political reply" to your letter of May 16, you stated that what was "most important" and what you considered to be a "question of principle" concerned the alleged rejection by the editor of *Intercontinental Press* of the article on Brazil submitted by Pinheiro-Mattos. From your letter of June 15 I gather that you now recognize that you were mistaken in your assumption.

With regard to the objections you leveled in your May 16 letter against making it possible for our own circles to read the contribution of the Ponto de Partida group to the general discussion in Latin America on tactics and strategy ("Concerning a Kidnapping in Brazil"), I assume that since you have submitted your May 16 letter for publication in the Internal Bulletin that possible replies will similarly be submitted for publication there.

Fraternally,
s/Joseph Hansen

cc: United Secretariat
Political Bureau of the Ligue Communiste
Political Committee, Socialist Workers Party
Editor, *Quatrième Internationale*

JUNE 30, 1971, LETTER FROM
JOSEPH HANSEN TO STEIN

June 30, 1971

Dear Comrade Stein,

This will acknowledge receipt of a copy of the May issue of *Quatrième Internationale*. It came in today's mail.

I note that the envelope was postmarked June 24, 1971. There may have been a delay of a day or two in delivery because the old address of *Intercontinental Press* was used. We have written twice asking that *Quatrième Internationale*, like the other publications of our move-

ment, be mailed to our new address; but as yet no attention seems to have been paid to our request.

In any case, we finally received a copy of the issue of *Quatrième Internationale* containing the second part of the article on Brazil by Pinheiro and Mattos which was dated as having been written last January. We plan to publish an English translation of this part in the July 12 issue of *Intercontinental Press*. The first part will appear in the July 5 issue, which is now at the printers.

Comradely yours,
s/Joseph Hansen

cc: United Secretariat
Political Bureau of the Ligue Communiste
Political Committee, Socialist Workers Party
Editor, *Quatrième Internationale*

By Peter Camejo

Comrade Stein in his letter of May 16, 1971, addressed to the national leadership of the Socialist Workers Party protests the publication by *Intercontinental Press* of a document entitled "Concerning a Kidnapping in Brazil" written by Ponto de Partida and its alleged failure to publish an article of which he was one of the authors.

Comrade Stein states: "Can one therefore ask why *Intercontinental Press* published the long declaration of this group and not a document written by members of the Fourth International, of whom one can think that they 'express the standpoint of revolutionary Marxism' that *Intercontinental Press* is presumed to present and defend in the first place?"

The quotation "express the standpoint of revolutionary Marxism" is taken out of context to give an exactly opposite meaning from *Intercontinental Press*' policy statement, which reads as follows: "Signed articles represent the views of the authors, which may not necessarily coincide with those of *Intercontinental Press*. Insofar as it reflects editorial opinion, unsigned material expresses the standpoint of revolutionary Marxism." The Ponto de Partida article was signed. Not only that; it was published in the section of *Intercontinental Press* devoted to "documents."

Intercontinental Press runs documents and articles of general interest to the socialist movement that do not express the views of revolutionary Marxism. For instance, Héctor Béjar's entire book *Peru 1965: Notes on a Guerrilla Experience* was run in *Intercontinental Press*. Béjar, an ultraleft foquista, who recently capitulated to the bourgeois military dictatorship, certainly did not represent revolutionary Marxism. Recently *Intercontinental Press* ran the full statement of the Tupamaros' declaration of support to the popular front in Uruguay. I presume Comrade Stein will agree that also is not the position of revolutionary Marxism. Since Comrade Stein has never protested these and many other such articles published in *Intercontinental Press* I presume he agrees it is in order for *Intercontinental Press* to make such information available to its readers.

Comrade Stein refers to the authors of the article, Ponto de Partida, as "a philosophy student." He also states: "This document has meaning only for inactive, gossip-mongering students of philosophy, who prefer to carry on their studies abroad. From an armchair there it is easy to give lessons." To characterize Ponto de Partida, either in its composition or politics, in such terms is inaccurate. Such a description does not fit with Comrade Stein's own statement, "I admit that I am ignorant of what the group Ponto de Partida, which authored the article, 'Concerning a Kidnapping in Brazil,' represents politically."

Ponto de Partida is a group of Brazilians in exile all of whom have been active in Brazil. The group came into existence out of common concern to find a solution to a key problem—how can the revolutionary left overcome its present isolation from the masses in Brazil? Rejecting the opportunism of the Communist Party, which does mass work only to betray the workers, Ponto de Partida advocates turning to mass work but with a consistent revolutionary program. Although the Ponto de Partida group are only beginning to clarify their views they definitively consider themselves Trotskyist.

Most of Comrade Stein's letter centers on the content of "Concerning a Kidnapping in Brazil." The Ponto de Partida comrades believe that the concept behind kidnapping is wrong and that as a tactic it is incorrect. Possibly Comrade Stein disagrees with their evaluation and believes kidnapping is a correct tactic in Brazil at this time. Certainly, then, it is important to fully discuss this question.

The charges Comrade Stein makes against the comrades of Ponto de Partida are unjustifiable in my opinion. He begins by stating: "But the entire reasoning of the Ponto de Partida document is based on the argument that the kidnappings produce a more intensive repression." They make no such argument. Their fundamental argument is that kidnappings stem from a general strategy which leaves out the masses and leads to a separation of the vanguard from the masses.

"The imprisonment of hundreds of valiant revolutionists and the breakup of the armed groups require a profound rethinking of positions." Thus Ponto de Partida begins what they refer to as "An Attempt at an Answer." They point out that "What enables the government to act without apparent opposition in Brazil is the absence of organizations through which the exploited masses could express their discontent." Their central thesis is that the revolutionary left has fallen into the error of what they call "vanguardism"; that is, attempting to substitute themselves for the masses.

They point out that the purpose of the kidnappings, to free political prisoners, is not achieved by kidnappings. Speaking of the case of the kidnapping of Elbrick, they say: "This action, carried off in September [1970], achieved its objective. Fifteen revolutionists were released. However, at the end of the year, at least 200 more political prisoners were being held in the jails of Brazil. At the same time in Argentina, the jails were being emptied. Many other more recent examples could be cited such as Bolivia, Peru and Chile in 1970. All of these cases confirm the rule that the only force that can compel a reactionary government to backtrack is one based on the mass movement."

They do not say that kidnappings should be avoided on the ground that they only bring added repression. Although the Ponto de Partida comrades did not make that point, I cannot understand why Comrade Stein should object so vehemently against anyone pointing to the obvious fact that ultraleft actions aimed at terrorizing the bourgeoisie—such as assassinations or kidnappings of individuals—are used by the ruling class to justify and increase repression against the workers movement. But the authors of "Concerning a Kidnapping in Brazil" do not argue from that standpoint; they are concerned with more basic considerations.

Then Comrade Stein states: "The author seems not to be aware that the principal aim of the kidnappings is to free political prisoners from the jails of the dictatorship." The authors are obviously aware of this. Again I quote: "This action . . . achieved its objective. Fifteen revolutionists were released." Various other sections of the Ponto de Partida document such as Section III entitled "Kidnapping and Freeing of a Political Prisoner"

and Section V "Arguments that Reveal a Concept" directly take up and answer whether kidnappings achieve their principal aim.

Comrade Stein's description of and accusations against the Ponto de Partida article being the product of "a philosophy student" or of using "Social Democratic" arguments or of not being "aware" of the "principal aim" are not really serious political considerations against the views presented by them. He does raise one point that is quite important. Comrade Stein says: "It is a pure and simple abstraction to say in the concrete situation of total demobilization in Brazil that mass pressure is required to liberate them, if not a word is said on how it would be possible to reconstitute a mass movement able to gain even partial victories without becoming the target of the machine guns of the dictatorship."

Why is there a total demobilization? Ponto de Partida points out that 51 percent of the voters in some of the big cities cast spoiled or blank ballots against the dictatorship in the recent elections. Could the present strategy being followed by the revolutionary militants have any relation to the "total demobilization"? How did Lenin's party build a mass movement in spite of "becoming the target of the machine guns of the dictatorship"? Why did Lenin's party refuse to engage in kidnappings or other forms of individual terrorism?

Actually the view presented by Ponto de Partida is a repetition of Lenin's views under present conditions. Possibly Comrade Stein believes Lenin's concept of party building is no longer applicable under present-day conditions in Brazil.

Near the end of Comrade Stein's letter he accuses me of misrepresenting the position of the Tupamaros in an article reviewing "Concerning a Kidnapping in Brazil" published in *The Militant*. I was making the point that all basic questions—popular frontism, the necessity for armed struggle, the limits of elections, etc.—are still being discussed throughout the left in Latin America. As an example I cited the Tupamaros on the impossibility of winning in Uruguay through elections. In justifying their contention, the Tupamaros said: "It is incorrect to transpose the experience of other countries." I interpreted this as a reference to Chile although it really doesn't matter which country they were referring to. Everyone else has interpreted that sentence to mean Chile. Doesn't Comrade Stein? Is he questioning the fact that the Tupamaros officially support the popular front in Uruguay? He must be aware that they also support Allende's government in Chile and the "reformist" military dictatorship in Peru. Was it really wrong to use this example to show that the necessity of armed struggle is still not understood?

I cannot understand why Comrade Stein thinks that the statement by the Tupamaros in support of the popular front can lead to confusion unless one adds their statement, "regrets, however, that this closing of ranks came specifically for the elections and not before." It seems to me that a "closing of ranks"—that is, the subordination of the working class to the bourgeoisie in the name of unity against imperialism—is wrong at any time, wheth-

er it involves elections or not. What the statement of the Tupamaros shows is confusion on their part.

Most serious of all, however, is the charge Comrade Stein levels against the Socialist Workers Party. First he states: "It is a shameful Social Democratic position—it is lamentable to see this published in the Trotskyist press." Later on he continues: "As for the article in *The Militant*, I think that it is regrettable that an American Trotskyist journal, that claims to be consistently internationalist, publishes nothing on Brazil except an article disavowing the kidnapping of ambassadors, including . . . an American. It is regrettable to see *The Militant* finding itself very far in the rear of the very bourgeois-capitalist *New York Times* in denouncing the repression and torture in Brazil, but ahead of it with regard to condemning the acts of revolutionary militants."

His assertion that we are publishing Social Democratic positions and "condemning the acts of revolutionary militants" clearly implies that he believes the Socialist Workers Party is bending to pressures from American capitalism and disavowing revolutionary struggles. His statement also implies lack of concern on our part towards the victims of the repression in Brazil.

Comrade Stein is wrong on all counts. We are not publishing Social Democratic, that is, reformist or social-patriotic positions. We are not disavowing any revolutionary struggle directed against American imperialism anywhere in the world, from Vietnam to Brazil. I should like to remind Comrade Stein that when it was a great deal more difficult to speak out against imperialist war, eighteen of the central leaders of the Socialist Workers Party went to prison for their consistent internationalist positions. That was during World War II. Today it is quite popular in broad circles to publicize atrocities in Vietnam or tortures in Brazil. Although it is important to run such articles on the atrocities committed throughout the colonial world, this is not the central question for real internationalists. The key point is how to mobilize the largest possible mass pressure to aid imprisoned revolutionists and help them to advance their struggles for national liberation and socialism.

The campaign mounted internationally, including the United States, that saved the life of Hugo Blanco is a model of the kind of action revolutionists must help carry out. Unfortunately, both in Europe and the United States, our limited forces do not enable us to do all that is objectively possible. But to deny the record of the Socialist Workers Party in such defense efforts or to charge that it is adapting to imperialism represents gross departures from the truth.

Lenin's whole life was devoted to fighting for clarity in politics. Comrade Stein's letter protesting the publication of the document "Concerning a Kidnapping in Brazil" clouds rather than clarifies the political issues touched upon. A further statement by Comrade Stein clarifying his views on terrorism in general and kidnappings in particular, on Lenin's concept of party building and on the importance of defense work for political prisoners would seem to be in order.