

March 12, 1975

TO THE LENINIST TROTSKYIST FACTION STEERING COMMITTEE:

Dear Comrades,

Following the IEC meeting at the end of January, two members of the LTF steering committee spent two weeks in Italy where they had extensive discussions with comrades who had indicated their agreement with the LTF platform. Following their visit we have accepted applications to join the LTF from sixteen members of the GCI, the Italian section. Along with Comrade Silvio who has been a member of the faction for about a year, the LTF now has comrades in Milan, Turin, Rome, Naples, and Genoa.

Enclosed you will find the following material:

1. A statement by the IMT giving their interpretation of the decisions of the IEC.
2. A report on the IEC meeting by the Steering Committee of the Internationalist Tendency.
3. An exchange of correspondence between Aubin for the IMT and LCR, and Jack Barnes for the SWP.
4. An exchange of correspondence between John Barzman of the IT and the SWP national office.
5. An exchange of correspondence between the Political Bureau of the Belgian section and the editor of Intercontinental Press.
6. A motion adopted by the Political Bureau of the Belgian section.

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The minutes of the January meeting of the United Secretariat were jointly prepared by IMT and LTF members of the United Secretariat bureau. They accurately reflect the decisions reached at the meeting. All steering committee members should have received these minutes directly from Brussels. So long as the minutes continue to accurately record the decisions of the United Secretariat, there will be no need for separate minutes and reports.

Comradely yours,

Mary-Alice Waters

STATEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL MAJORITY TENDENCY

The results of the IEC are positive for the whole International. On the political level, the discussion on the recession and its implications for the political and social evolution of the capitalist countries confirms the correctness of the past analyses of our movement and the homogenization of its international leadership around common perspectives.

The discussion on the political situation in Argentina strengthened the positions defended by the international majority tendency and its will to fraternally continue a debate that is crucial in defending the Trotskyist conceptions by which the Fourth International lives and acts. On the organizational level, the unanimous approval of the recommendations made by the International Control Commission to the IEC and the unanimous recognition of the comrades of the IT as having the status of fraternal sympathisers of the Fourth International (formal affiliation being prevented by reactionary legislation) should contribute to protecting the unity and integrity of the International.

The existence of important political disagreements between the IMT and the minority faction is partially related to the different experiences and situations of the most important sections. This uneven development reacts on the degree of cohesion of the International. And the political and organizational weakness that flows from this for the international leadership makes it difficult to slow down this centrifugal tendency. It is nevertheless decisive that a move in the opposite direction, made possible by the significant development of the International through certain of its sections, has now been consciously initiated.

In order to genuinely undertake this, the IMT is continuing its political battle within the International in accordance with two central complementary axes: (a.) The first revolves around the necessary discussion and clarification of the political questions that are most discussed in the International today. The Argentine question is one of these; others have come up or will come up under the impetus of explosions of class struggle in which the Fourth International can and must play a more and more active and decisive role. In this sense, the debate that our movement is currently going through, whatever organizational conflicts may sometimes tend to obscure it, must in no case be considered as a rear-guard political debate that would be better relegated to second place behind the "real" discussions that should take place among comrades who are already in agreement on the broad orientations.

The political debates that more and more sections and sympathizing organizations are now going through precisely confirm this state of affairs, which must be overcome but not evaded. (b) The preservation of the democratic centralism of the International constitutes the second major axis of the political offensive waged by the IMT up to and since the Tenth World Congress.

The democratic centralist functioning toward which the International must move has been subjected to harsh tests in the recent period. On each occasion, the IMT, whose representatives hold a

majority within the leadership bodies elected by the Tenth World Congress, has voluntarily avoided using its legitimate leadership authority to impose a political resolution of the problem. The measures adopted by the IEC should allow for a favorable dénouement to this critical phase. The recognition of the full rights of the comrades of the IT as fraternal sympathisers of the Fourth International -- as in the statements of Comrades Jack Barnes and Joe Hansen, both members of the Political Committee of the SWP, and in the statements of the comrades of the IT -- should lead to the final resolution of the crisis opened by the expulsion of the IT from the SWP. The IMT is in full agreement with the report of Comrades Karl Anderson and Tantalus (approved by Comrade Hoffman) and will continue to work for a collective reintegration of the comrades of the IT into the SWP. This can now take place in the shortest possible time, that is, immediately after a favorable decision taken by the leadership of the SWP at the plenum of its National Committee. In the absence of such a reintegration, the IMT could not but support the IT in the expansion of its public activities -- aimed at assuring the organizational cohesion and integrity of a group of comrades who would be full members of the International were it not for reactionary American legislation forbidding this and carried out within the perspective of a principled fight for reintegration into the SWP.

A fruitful political debate presupposes the prior elimination of all organizational obstacles that divert the healthy development of the debate toward the sidetrack of unending "organizational" polemics. If the recommendations of the IEC are followed, as the principal protagonists of the affair have pledged, the reintegration of the IT will contribute in no small amount to the elimination of such organizational obstacles.

On the occasion of this IEC, the IMT for its part wanted to demonstrate its will to move in this direction by electing a new United Secretariat including more comrades of the minority faction. The presence of comrades of the minority faction within the Bureau of the United Secretariat should facilitate a better organizational and political collaboration within the International and its leading bodies. In the view of the IMT, this constitutes neither a favor nor a derogation, but simply the normal application of the principles of democratic centralism by which the IMT is guided in the conduct of the debate and in the direction of the activity of the International. The addition of a member of the PST to the United Secretariat with the status of an observer without deciding or recorded vote responds, according to the very terms of the resolution adopted by the IEC, to the will "to do everything to decrease tensions." These unanimously adopted decisions suggest that it may be foreseen that the minority will henceforth collaborate to the best of its means and capacities in developing the International within the framework of the resolutions of the Tenth World Congress.

The results of the IEC thus represent first achievements in conformity with the objectives sought by the IMT at the head of the International. In order that the future may confirm these initial achievements and that they may rise to these premises, the IMT will continue its struggle within the International for the development of a united and strengthened Fourth International.

For this purpose the IMT is forming tendency leadership bodies composed of the following comrades:

-Steering Committee: the full and alternate members of the IEC who are in the IMT, plus one consultative IEC member for each sympathizing organization, among them two from Mexico and three from Spain.

-Enlarged Bureau: The members of the IMT who are members of the United Secretariat, plus Comrades Petersen, Frei, Tainville, and Ségur.

-Bureau: The members of the IMT who are members of the Bureau of the United Secretariat.

March 5, 1975

PLENUM OF THE INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL
THE IEC AND THE NEW STAGE OF THE INTERNATIONAL DISCUSSION

Report Approved By the Political Committee of the
Internationalist Tendency, February 10, 1975.
(For Internal Circulation Only)

Evolution of Dispute

Prior to the IT delegation's trip to Europe, it had been our assumption that a definitive resolution of the question of reintegration could be achieved at this time. This report will explain why this could not take place. The IEC held its first meeting since the end of the Tenth World Congress at the end of January 1975. An analysis of this meeting clearly demonstrates that a new situation has emerged inside the International. On the one hand the LTF has taken a further step to the right in endorsing the PST's answer to the second letter from the United Secretariat. This endorsement has created differentiations within the ranks of the LTF. On the other hand, both the LTF and the IMT have made some organizational concessions which will strengthen the unity of the International and therefore, its ability to grow and to resolve its internal differences in the clearest political fashion. This status of the IT will reflect, somewhat belatedly, this contradictory course of the LTF. Expelled at the time of the LTF's unbridled factional war, its reintegration is tied to the process of organizational deescalation and political clarification which the IEC has hopefully initiated.

Following the world congress, the LTF had pursued a policy of hard factional warfare in violation of its commitment to abide by the Nine Point Agreement on Preserving the Unity of the International adopted at that time. Despite the USFI leadership's request that they do so, no top leaders of the SWP were assigned to observe the United Secretariat on a permanent basis. Financial contributions and non-factional internationalist activities of equivalent moral value were withheld by the LTF. The new organ of the United Secretariat, Inprecor, was ignored. The IT was purged. Existing LTF groups in Mexico, Spain, Venezuela, and Colombia, and new ones in Puerto Rico and Portugal, were built up with no attempt to reach unity on the basis of the Tenth World Congress. Finally, Intercontinental Press carried regular attacks on various sections supporting the line of the Fourth International. However, as a result of this approach, the LTF became increasingly isolated in Europe and Asia at a time when real discussions on strategy were opening in some sections, especially in Europe.

At the same time, the Argentine PST was coming under the blows of repression, and responding to it by further compromises and right-wing

deviations. The medium term result of this evolution is obvious. First, the numerical base for an LTF majority at the next world congress would become increasingly unlikely. And second, the maintenance of the LTF bloc with a rightward moving PST would create at least some questioning in LTF ranks and further obstacles to LTF gains against the IMT.

These three considerations -- the LTF isolation in Europe, the unlikelihood of an LTF majority in the F. I., and internal differences inside the LTF -- were probably decisive in bringing about a shift in the LTF's tactics. While not budging one inch from their political characterization of the IMT, the LTF came to the IEC advocating a major decrease of factional tensions and widespread unification proposals. They made these proposals in Mexico and Canada, approved the report on the world economic situation, offered increased participation in the USFI and its Bureau by a top LTF member, and indicated financial contributions would resume. In so doing, they hoped to be reintegrated in the day-to-day functioning of the F. I. in Europe, thereby gaining more legitimacy and freedom of movement in Europe. (The building of a European LTF takes a number of forms: support for the Spanish L. C.; strengthening of small tendencies in Britain, Denmark, Sweden, Germany and Belgium; work with broader dogmatic tendencies in France and Italy; and obscure maneuvers involving a wing of the French OCI -- Lambertists.)

Also, it seems that the SWP sought to alleviate the PST's organizational grievances against the leadership of the F. I. -- the fact that the PST is not present on the United Secretariat -- and the PST's sense of isolation. The insistence which the SWP put on including the PST in the USFI may have been motivated by a desire to create a framework in which a political discussion between the SWP and the PST could be conducted without organizational friction.

The question of reintegrating the IT in the SWP was discussed in this overall context. After abandoning its call for an emergency world congress, the LTF, prior to the IEC, stood firm on its position that the IT had formed a rival party and split, and that the Fourth International should leave the whole question at that. It proposed a decrease of factional tensions everywhere but in the United States where

it proposed that the IT be ignored. On the other hand, the IT's activities in the past period stood as a clear denial of this mythology. Our ability to hold together and press our appeal greatly contributed to undercutting the SWP leadership's efforts to smother the whole matter. For the IMT, the precondition for a real decrease of factional tensions was that the SWP show its good faith by reintegrating the IMT's supporters in the United States. In the meantime, the IMT once again demonstrated its commitment to respecting minority rights in the International by accepting the LTF's nominations to the USFI and Bureau.

As a result, the SWP could not avoid making a number of concessions; its goal, of course, was to keep these at a minimum. Concretely, the SWP agreed: 1) that the members of the IT remained co-thinkers of the F. I., that is, they retained the same status within the F. I. as they had before the expulsions; 2) that a member of the IT would sit as an observer on the United Secretariat; 3) they were forced to put forward some formulas on reintegration. While these formulas do not bind the SWP leadership in any way, the IMT stated that they regarded the IEC resolution as a commitment to reintegrate the IT at the SWP's April Plenum. For their part, the IT and IMT resolved to utilize the SWP's tentative shift in tactics to pull the SWP closer to the F. I. mainstream as a means of overcoming the pressures of the relatively backward level of the class struggle in the USA. This simultaneously involves a struggle against the erroneous concepts developed in the SWP and the breaking of its bloc with the PST -- a bloc which can only accelerate the SWP's rightist deformations. The centrality of our fight for reintegration flows from this perspective.

World Recession

The IEC opened with the report of Cde. Walter on the world economic situation. This report will be published shortly. There was little discussion on this point, and the report was adopted unanimously. It could be said that this unanimity represents a step forward for the LTF in relation to the positions previously expressed in its European document and world political resolution. These documents had warned against the danger of catastrophist predictions. Furthermore, a common assessment of the objective situation, combined with an actual rise of workers struggles in more areas of the world, could be the basis for a new discussion, going beyond the dialogue of the deaf which was characteristic of the last debate. However, the differences in methodology remain when it comes to analyzing the concrete political situation in a number of countries (France, Portugal, Argentina, Britain, detente and Vietnam) and the forms of the radicalization (emergence of the broad vanguard).

Argentina Was Central

The discussion of Argentina was the central political issue debated at the IEC. The resolution submitted by the IMT and adopted by the IEC was based on a text drafted by the Argentina Liga Comunista (minority of the former Fraccion Roja). While taking note of the setbacks incurred by the mass movement under the blows of repression since the police coup in Cordoba province in January 74, it predicted a continuation of defensive struggles around democratic and economic demands, posing the problem of self-defense by the workers movement. It stated that the turn of the Peronist regime toward increased legal and unofficial repression, of which the state of siege is the final expression, had created an initial breach between the Peronist masses fighting for their class interests and the government. At the present stage, the bourgeoisie had no better solution than supporting the present regime. The potential base for a Pinochet-style coup is still very narrow. The resolution called for a workers' united front against the fascist-like repression.

The resolution criticized the continuing misconceptions of the PRT that a prolonged civil war is in process, and that the building of the Revolutionary People's Army (ERP) is the central task of the workers' movement. It also criticized any militarist conception of party-building which would make the party an "armed party". In this sense, it represented a further political advance over the theses of the Ninth World Congress, and a welcome clarification of the resolution of the Tenth. Finally, it condemned the course of the PST which, instead of utilizing the increasing distrust of broad sectors of the vanguard toward the Peronist apparatus to mobilize them against the government, was adopting a fatalistic attitude toward the continuing Peronist illusions of the masses. The PST's meetings with Juan and Isabel Peron objectively contribute to maintaining these illusions. The PST incorrectly justifies these meetings by the claim that its defense of the "continuity of the government" and the "process of institutionalization" will help forestall the hypothetical danger of a fascist coup. In line with this analysis, the IEC also approved the two public letters of the USFI to the PST.

The LTF unanimously submitted the PST's second answer to the USFI to a vote of the IEC. This represented a major rightward step by the LTF as a whole on two levels. First, the LTF endorsed the erroneous analysis of the political situation in Argentina and the PST's line in this situation. Second, in order to justify this line, the LTF as a whole endorsed a series of

revisions of basic programmatic tenets of the revolutionary Marxist movement on the workers united front against fascism, the role of the colonial bourgeoisie, and the Marxist position toward institutions of the bourgeois state.

The PST statement, already published by Intercontinental Press without the prior approval of the USFI, continues to consider the government of Isabel Peron as basically the same, in the eyes of the masses, as the one elected in 1973, i. e., as a government elected by and representing the will of the Argentine working class. It sees this government as being threatened by a right wing military coup backed by the CIA and US imperialism, and projecting this hypothetical future into the present, it proposes now to defend the existing institutions of bourgeois democracy and the continuity of the government against such a coup. The PST's misreading of the situation, if it is innocent, is at least convenient to preserving their legal status. All proportions guarded, it can be compared to the CP's conjuring up of the threat of a military-fascist takeover by Goldwater in 1964, in order to justify their continued support to the Democrats and the notorious Texas politician Johnson.

In addition, the PST statement distorts the correct response that should be made to such a situation if it actually existed (independent mobilizations of the working class in defense of democratic rights, and joint military and practical operations against the reactionary coup with no endorsement of the existing government). They claim that the joint press releases which are the only concrete result of Coral's meetings, are equivalent to mass action and practical cooperation against a coup. They rationalize their distortion by theoretical revisions and false historical analogies. For example, the Spanish civil war, instead of an aborted proletarian revolution triggered by the fascist uprising, becomes a war between bourgeois democracy and fascism, with Trotsky defending the institutions of bourgeois democracy. In addition, the PST has devised a new dictum that when confronted with a government democratically elected by the majority of the working class, a revolutionary party should not put forward the overthrow of that government, even in strategic terms or propagandistically, until the majority of the working class has somehow come to oppose it.

These revisions were not accepted so easily by the LTF as a whole. Some SWP speakers stated that they supported the general line of the PST statement one hundred percent, while Cde. Barnes stated that we should never support any bourgeois institutions. Others explained that bourgeois democratic institutions are like bourgeois democratic

rights, we support some and not others. The Spanish L. C. squarely opposed the whole resolution in the LTF caucus, but confined its intervention at the IEC to an attack on the FCR for voting for some Left Radicals of the Union of the Left. But despite these ambiguities, the LTF's endorsement of the statement represents a dangerous step in that it creates a dynamic whereby the revisions will be explained and codified in their ranks, eroding the very fiber of the revolutionary Marxist program. Cde Pierre Frank warned of this danger when he announced that the IMT set itself the task of "saving the Trotskyist soul of the SWP" from the centrist temptations of the PST.

This means that in the next year or so, the SWP will be going through a very difficult period in which its ability to function as a revolutionary tool in the United States could be seriously impaired if these dangerous programmatic revisions are reflected in its practice. The danger is compounded by the severe pressures which the government and the FBI are exerting on the SWP through cross-examination proceedings in the PRDF suit, in order to curtail the SWP's internationalist activities and threaten its legal status. Indeed, if the SWP leadership maintains its defense of the PST statement, and develops new theoretical concepts in order to explain it to the ranks of the SWP which are already quite confused on the question of democracy, if these positions are maintained throughout the pre-convention discussion and in the international debate and become part of the education which the SWP cadre receives, and if the leadership begins to make parallels between the SWP's own practice (overall emphasis on the defense of democratic rights, and within this emphasis, a focus on passing laws, constitutional amendments, etc.) and the concepts of the LTF on Argentina, then we will have to assess very concretely what this means in terms of the SWP's ability to fight centrist illusions in the viability of American democracy, and to regroup the revolutionary elements of the broad vanguard.

Thus, the debate on Argentina could become key to the whole international debate. At a time when the IMT has made serious corrections of its line on Argentina, and when the LTF is moving toward unqualified endorsement of the PST's new deviations, it becomes imperative to carry the fight to the ranks of the SWP and YSA, making reintegration all the more urgent. The SWP leadership has stated that it wants to remove all organizational barriers to the fullest discussion of this important question. We must point out that this applies to the United States also. A tendency defending the IMT's positions inside the SWP will be beneficial to the party as a whole in

raising the level of discussion and clarifying respective political positions.

The Question of the IT and the SWP

The IEC dealt with this problem in a way designed to consolidate the unity of the Fourth International in the framework of its democratic centralist norms, while avoiding provocative organizational measures which could serve as a bloc to political discussion. The matter was dealt with on three levels:

- separate reports by members of the International Control Commission (ICC)
- unanimous recommendation of the ICC and unanimous motion by the IEC
- separate statements by the IMT and the LTF in the minutes.

The ICC elected at the 10th World Congress consisted of six persons -- 4 nominated by the IMT (Karl, Swedish RMF; Tantalus, Belgian RAL/LRT; Eduard, German GIM; and Hoffman, French LCR) and two by the LTF (Bundy, SWP/USA; and Gormley, Canadian LSA/LSO). Eduard, however, was extremely ill and unable to participate in the investigation. A problem developed during the investigation concerning Cde. Hoffman. In debates during the LCR congress, he stated his conceptions regarding the IT expulsion and summarized what emerged from the widely circulated SWP document entitled "Materials Related. . .". Bundy and Gormley immediately demanded his removal; the other members of the ICC rejected the demand pointing out that he had not committed himself to any position on material trusted only to the ICC, and that Bundy had turned over material of the ICC to the SWP. Ultimately, however, when faced with two walkouts by Bundy, Hoffman removed himself from active participation in this investigation. As a result, the ICC found itself without a majority or minority report, but rather two reports supported by two ICC members each. (Hoffman associated himself with the Karl-Tantalus report in a separate letter.)

The findings of the ICC will be published in a forthcoming International Internal Discussion Bulletin, along with all relevant material. The report by Karl and Tantalus is a well constructed analysis of the faulty logic of the SWP Control Commission report and of the mythology subsequently erected by the SWP leadership around the concept of an alleged "IT Party." It contains evidence of the near complete confusion between the structures of the American LTF and the structures of the SWP which existed in the minds of the SWP leadership. It demonstrates that there was no "IT Party," no split of the "IT Party," no entryist perspective, and that

the SWP Control Commission report completely falsified even the direction of the IT's course. It criticizes some of the IT's behavior and the United Secretariat's failure to respond to the IT's official request for an investigation in October 1973. Finally, it points to several aspects of the SWP's practices which are not in conformity with the norms of democratic centralism. The report is a valuable re-statement of some basic concepts of Leninist party organization and leads to the unanimous ICC recommendation that the SWP consider without delay the reintegration of the IT.

The report by Bundy and Gormley is obviously a last minute patch-up job designed to avoid endorsing the inescapable verdict of the Karl and Tantalus report. It merely restates the successive phases of the SWP Control Commission's logic. However, it concluded by raising the possibility that the IT may have changed its course since its "split," and therefore arrives at the unanimous recommendation of the ICC.

The unanimous motions of the IEC were as follows:

1. The International Executive Committee of the Fourth International accepts the following proposals commonly agreed upon by the International Control Commission in its investigation:

"1. To make the recommendation that the SWP act in good faith and consider without delay the collective application of the IT for reintegration in the SWP.

"2. We note the IT states it wants to participate in public activities supported by the SWP. We note that the SWP does not object to this. Until the situation is resolved, we recommend that when the IT and the SWP are involved in the same activities they seek to maintain a cooperative attitude avoiding public attacks on one another.

"3. The problems dealt with in our investigation lead us to the conclusion that it is necessary that the IEC initiate a discussion on the organizational norms of the movement."

2. In accordance with the "Agreement on Measures to Help Maintain Unity in the Fourth International" which was adopted by the last world congress, the status of the Internationalist Tendency is recognized as follows: Although it stands outside of the organizational structure and discipline of the Socialist Workers Party, it remains in fraternal sympathy with the Fourth International. Its members would be members of the Fourth International if they were not barred from this by reactionary legislation.

3. Since such a division of the Trotskyist movement in a single country is abnormal, every effort should be made to bring them together in a single organization on a principled basis at the earliest possible date.

4. Two members of the Political Committee of the Socialist Workers Party, Jack Barnes and Joseph Hansen, have pledged that they will urge the National Committee at its coming plenum to weigh favorable implementation of the proposals commonly agreed on by the International Control Commission in its investigation.

5. In considering the overall internal situation in the Fourth International, the International Executive Committee charges the incoming United Secretariat to do its utmost to lower tensions and to foster moves toward unification where the movement is split.

To set an example in this, the composition of the incoming United Secretariat and Bureau have been broadened to include a consultative member of the IEC. To maintain the statutory distinction between sections and sympathizing organizations, the minutes of the United Secretariat will record only decisive votes.

The Bureau will undertake a series of projects to strengthen and expand the world Trotskyist movement to which all tendencies pledge solid backing and joint commitment to insure their success.

Full members, USFI: Adair, Aubin, Claudio, Crandall, Domingo, Duret, Fourier, Georges, Ghulam, Jens, Jones, Marcel, Martinez, Mintoff, Ned, Roman, Rudi, Walter.

Fraternal Members: Atwood, Celso, Galois, Hovis*, Johnson, Pepe, Therese.

Consultative Member: Juan**.

The following list is proposed for the incoming Bureau: Aubin, Claudio, Duret, Galois***, Jens, Johnson***, Jones, Marcel***, Roman, Ned, Walter.

*Hovis: II; **Juan: PST; ***Galois, Johnson, Marcel: LTF.

These unanimous motions represent a step forward in that they reflect a possible evolution of the LTF away from its categorical refusal to have anything to do with the IT, and could thus open the way for its reintegration in the SWP. At the IEC, a member of the ITPC read a brief statement reaffirming the IT's willingness to abide by the discipline of the SWP despite continuing political differences. However, major disagreements were

not resolved and had to be expressed in the form of a separate statement by the IMT and by the LTF. The IMT's statement will express in succinct form the IMT's intentions in voting for the unanimous IEC resolution, and its understanding of the conditions that must be created for a continued and effective decrease of factional tensions in the F. I.

IMT's Approach

The IMT's approach to the question of the IT expulsion was defined by three major goals: 1) defending the norms of the Fourth International; 2) preserving and expanding the SWP's ties with the F. I.; and 3) consolidating the IT as an internal lever to aid in the transformation of the SWP.

1) The SWP's leadership's actions in "removing the IT from its membership rolls" had challenged the norms of democratic centralism in a number of ways. First, by implying that such disciplinary measures could be taken without a trial in a section or fraternal group of the F. I., it violated a basic tenet of Leninist party democracy. Second, it implied that the leadership of a section or fraternal group of the F. I. had the right to define any tendency as a rival party, even if that tendency's positions are similar to those of large numbers of members of the F. I. in other countries, not to mention those of the leadership of the F. I. itself. In so doing, it struck right at the heart of the principled basis for unity of the Fourth International, and at the heart of the F. I.'s mission to organize the international vanguard into a living world party drawing strength from its capacity to bring diverse components into united international action around a common program. The International could not tolerate that such a precedent go unanswered, lest it suffer irreparable damage in the eyes of the vanguard layers concerned with the building of a Leninist International. In addition, the SWP leadership's attempt to by-pass all existing channels and summon an emergency world congress was a direct attack on the authority of the existing bodies of the F. I. It threatened to create a situation of permanent factional warfare interspersed with bargaining sessions by parity commissions. Such a situation would paralyze the free exchange of ideas in the F. I. which is essential to making full use of the knowledge and experience of all of its members. It would prevent the full implementation on a day to day basis of majority decisions.

The United Secretariat statement of September, 1974, stated that the norms of the F. I. included the essential right -- a real, and not merely formal right -- to form tendencies and factions. The ITPC fought to have this statement clarified along the general lines

of the norms for a real reintegration passed at the October IT plenum (this does not include the poor formulations on the right to public disassociation in Point 7) to provide basic guidelines for minorities within the International. This was not done, however, and as a result, the fight for Leninist norms inside the SWP is still hampered by the absence of a precise and programmatic statement, adapted to the needs of the International, and issued by a leadership organ of the F. I. However, the IEC made a modest step forward in dealing with these challenges. The practices and organizational traditions of the SWP were not endorsed or condemned outright. Rather, the IEC proposed that they be examined in the framework of a discussion of the norms of democratic centralism which will have a chance of reaching the ranks of the SWP. This discussion should help the SWP to objectively reconsider its internal practices and will be of benefit to the International as a whole. Neither could the IEC accept a de-facto recognition of the SWP's right to define IMT supporters as a rival party. Instead, it achieved de jure recognition not only that the IT comrades were still in the F. I., as for example the splitters of the Mexican LTF still are, but also that they should be collectively reintegrated in the SWP. In this respect, the ICC's use of the word "reintegration" rather than "fusion" is a decision which colors all the other neutral formulations in the resolution. Finally, the fact that the SWP withdrew its call for a special world congress, agreed to submit to the ICC investigation, and accepted the authority of the IEC is a major victory for democratic centralism in the F. I. Thus, the IEC, despite the existence of still powerful factional pressures, was able to uphold the norms that were under attack, and to pave the way for their implementation in the concrete situation of the SWP.

2) The second major goal of the IMT was to deepen the SWP's integration into the F. I. For the IMT, the SWP, the unchallenged fraternal section of the F. I. in the U. S., represents a potential powerful avenue for the penetration of the F. I. into the American class struggle as well as a potential pillar of the F. I. as a world party. However, the SWP is subjected to pressures which have deformed its development: the isolation and backwardness of the American class struggle, the weight of erroneous political positions inherited from the past, and its aloofness from the mainstream of the Fourth International. Thus, the recent expansion of the SWP's international operations (Intercontinental Press, Pathfinder, transfers of cadre, establishment of the LTF) is a contradictory phenomenon. On the one hand, the magnitude of the investment forecloses a sudden return to a policy of splendid isolation (such as that pursued from 1953 to 1963), and brings sections of the SWP into touch with the reality of the

European sections forcing an immediate choice between an open split in the F. I. or (at least formally) recognizing the legitimacy of the F. I.'s structures and leadership bodies. On the other hand, this sort of operation was viewed as a means of expanding SWP influence at the expense of that of the F. I. leadership, weighing the SWP down with centrist pressures from its LTF allies, providing a framework for an expanded right dogmatic current in the FI, and providing a channel for the spread of the SWP's own breed of dogmatism and tail-endism throughout the International.

In this process, the IMT's goal is to break the SWP from the PST, plunge it into the work of the Fourth International, and force it to confront the problems of revolutionary strategy on a world scale. This process will help create differentiations in the ranks of the SWP, and open the way to political clarification and the development of internationalist currents oriented to the most advanced sectors of the mass movement. Here, the role of a tendency defending the outlook of the IMT is decisive. Obviously this fight would be tremendously more difficult if we are forced to remain outside the SWP, but we will wage it nonetheless. This second set of considerations explains the IMT's policy in relation to the SWP. The loss of the SWP to the F. I. through a split or an expulsion would be a defeat for our movement, adding further obstacles to the prolonged efforts to build a revolutionary party in the USA assuming its full responsibilities to the world movement. Any move which could be interpreted as a factional act against the SWP, which could have been used by backward elements to whip up a frenzy against the International, was therefore carefully avoided.

The relatively de-centralized statutes of 1965 were scrupulously respected in that the IEC recommendations are meant as statements of opinion whose power derives only from persuasion and authority. The formulations of the IEC motions are free of any unnecessary pronouncements on the correct interpretation of past events. The message is simple: the IT should be collectively reintegrated without delay and the SWP should integrate itself further into the Fourth International.

In a related move, the IMT voted to include in the United Secretariat a consultative member representing the PST, in order to give the PST a chance to defend its position on the present debate without having to rely on intermediaries. Furthermore, the IMT welcomed the long postponed assignment of a more capable SWP leader to permanent residence in Brussels and work in the center. At the same time, the IMT noted that the SWP's internationalist activities whose moral value matches that

of dues had been solely devoted to factional business of the LTF. It refused to morally credit the SWP for these, and demanded instead that additional internationalist activities be devoted to projects agreeable to the leadership of the FI and that their volume be proportional to the SWP's income.

3) The third major goal of the IMT on this point of the agenda was to politically strengthen the IT because of its important role in the process of building the revolutionary party in the USA. In the past year and a half, the IMT has expended more cadre, more resources, and more travel on the IT than on almost any other front. While this effort has often suffered from insufficient political planning, it did reflect a certain order of priority which the IMT will maintain because of its continuing understanding of the role of a minority inside the SWP in the present stage of the struggle to defend and elaborate the program of the FI and build its sections. Thus, the IMT insisted that the SWP recognize the IT's continued fraternal existence in the FI and pledge itself to reintegrate the IT as a faction. A fraternal member of the IEC, representing the IT, was elected to the United Secretariat. Furthermore, three international bulletins will deal with the IT's expulsion, the Control Commission findings, and other exchanges on the question. Thus, the membership of the FI, which is steeped in the struggle against the bureaucratic methods of Stalinism and particularly sensitive to such undemocratic practices as the expulsion of the IT, will be able to follow the progress of the IT's reintegration. To even begin to dispel the deep apprehension of large numbers of Fourth Internationalists toward the organizational practices and politics of the SWP leadership, the process should be smoothly and rapidly completed. Failure to do so would make the SWP responsible for a renewed deterioration of the climate inside the FI. Successful completion would open the way to further advances in political discussion and collaboration.

In discussions inside the IMT, it was generally agreed that materials should be gathered to prepare a discussion of revolutionary perspectives in the United States. Drawing from the SWP's experience, and critically analyzing it, will be one of the major aspects of this work. The forthcoming SWP pre-convention discussion will be the chance to test the value of this method, as the SWP leadership will be producing New Theses on the American Revolution. The IT should politically prepare itself to contribute to this discussion, through internal discussion and basic political education. (A cadre school for the IT will be held in April. Speakers from European sections and the international leadership are scheduled to participate.) In addition, a

representative of the IMT Bureau will come to the IT Plenum scheduled for March 8-9.)

Of course, the actual carrying out of the IEC resolution and the pledges of the SWP leadership depends on many factors: continuation of the trend which undercuts the basis for the cohesion of the LTF; sustained pressure on the issue of the IT from the ranks of the International expansion of the IT's offers for collaboration; and deepening of the process of rethinking in the leadership and ranks of the SWP and YSA on their past attitude toward the IT. In the next three months, leading to the SWP Plenum at the end of April, these factors should be at work. However, if the dynamic set in motion at the IEC is reversed and the SWP Plenum does not settle the matter as expected, the IMT recognized that a failure to reintegrate the IT would (besides setting in motion a re-escalation of tensions in the FI), give the IT the right to substantially increase its public activities as called for by the change in situation. In such a case, the IMT made it clear that it would not shirk its responsibilities to assist and guide the IT in every way possible.

The IT's Tasks

These are the main results of the IEC. They steer the IT into a complicated battle through which it must fight its way. But the obstacles are not artificial ones, they are long-standing difficulties of building the party in the United States which have to be overcome by patient work: the relative lack of influence of the Fourth International on the majority of American Trotskyists; the prevailing monolithic conceptions of the party, our relative lack of roots in the mass movement which could give us both the experience and credentials to effect the SWP, the under-development of our analysis of the American class struggle. These are the real subjective problems that we must overcome as the objective situation lays the basis for an expansion of the FI's political weight on a world scale, opens breaches in the SWP monolith, and brings to the fore new vanguard layers which enable us to concretize our projections and face the SWP with decisive choices.

The fight for reintegration in the framework of the decisions of the IEC is the present stage of the struggle to fulfill these tasks. There are no shortcuts around them. The IT has shown its ability to grow and endure through difficult conditions. In the next few months, other problems will no doubt come to the fore. But our experience has already begun to change the relations between American Trotskyism and the world movement, and clear the way for the elaboration of a revolutionary Marxist strategy in the USA.

We are free to develop our strategic orientation in the period ahead. We have made it clear to the leadership of the SWP that we will, if reintegrated, function as active and disciplined members of the party; we must now carry the fight to the ranks of the party and YSA. The central obstacle in the way of our reintegration is the SWP leadership's intransigence and the factional hostility it has created. We

must make it clear that any failure to reintegrate the forces of American Trotskyism is their choice and their decision. Whatever the outcome, we will continue to recognize the SWP as a part of the Trotskyist movement and to work to build a strong, united Trotskyist movement in the United States with every means at our disposal.

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Impasse
Guéméné
75004
PARIS
Téléphone :
272. 88. 96
272. 68. 82

LIGUE COMMUNISTE REVOLUTIONNAIRE SECTION FRANÇAISE DE LA 4^e INTERNATIONALE

Paris, February 18, 1975

Jack Barnes
Political Committee
S.W.P.
New-York

Dear comrades,

This letter is to inform you that comrade Bret Smiley, member of the Political Committee of the Revolutionary Marxist Group (sympathising organisation of the Fourth International in Canada) and member of the Steering Committee of the International Majority Tendency, will soon transfer to the U.S.A. in order to help and organize the process of reintegration of the Internationalist Tendency into the Socialist Workers Party.

Comrade Bret Smiley will probably stay in the States for about six months and will act there in his capacity of member of the Steering Committee of the I.M.T. As a leading member of the canadian sympathising organisation he will of course collaborate politically with our fraternal and co-thinker organisation in the U.S.A.

For all problems and arrangements related to the I.T. he will serve as a qualified member of the leadership of the I.M.T., mandated by the I.M.T. Bureau along the lines of the resolution adopted at the last I.E.C.

Until the S.W.P. Convention in August would you please contact him to facilitate his work every time that could be necessary. Anyway, comrade Bret will call you up or meet you as soon as he arrives in the States.

We took this measure to help and facilitate the process of indispensable collaboration started by the I.E.C. decisions and we are convinced you will help the best you can.

Comradely

for the I.M.T. Bureau

Aubin Aubin

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14 Charles Lane
New York, New York 10014
February 24, 1975

Aubin
I.M.T. Bureau
c/o Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire
Section Francaise de la Quatrieme Internationale
10 Impasse Guémenée
Paris, France 75004

Dear Comrade Aubin,

This is to acknowledge receipt today of your
letter of February 18. I will circulate it to the
members of the Political Committee.

Comradely,
s/ Jack

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Internationalist Tendency
c/o John Barzman
[street address]
Chicago, Illinois
February 28, 1975

Political Committee, SWP
New York

Dear Comrade Barry,

Thank you very much for returning the phone call which Bill made to the National Office of the SWP. As you requested, we will from now on direct all correspondence to yourself, with copies to the USFI Bureau.

We are presently in the process of reporting and explaining the recommendations of the IEC to our faction. Enclosed, you will find a copy of the report which was approved by the Political Committee of the IT, and circulated in our ranks. If you have a similar report, we would be interested in receiving it.

Speaking of the IT, the IEC resolution stated: "its members would be members of the F.I. if they were not barred from this by reactionary legislation." Please send us a bundle of 100 each of International Internal Discussion Bulletin #2, and the part of #3, which has already been published. As agreed in our phone conversation, please send the bundle to this address. Please let us know how you wish to have them paid for. It would be helpful if they could arrive in Chicago before our plenum March 15. Also, please notify us of other bulletins made available to members of the F.I. as a fraternal courtesy of the SWP, so that we may decide how many to order.

We will be holding a plenum of our Steering Committee the week end of March 15 and 16 in Chicago. It will discuss the recommendations of the IEC and the forms of our collaboration in the coming period. We request that you send a representative of the party to outline your position and proposals for collaboration. We believe this move would go a long way in creating a much needed climate of openness.

We will submit further concrete proposals on the forms which this collaboration could take as our discussion proceeds. We have already discussed some aspects and consider collaboration on building the May 17 anti-racist demonstration, on socialist propaganda (elections and press), and on the Coral defense tour, as particularly important. If you have any thoughts on the matter, we would appreciate your communicating them to us as soon as possible as we wish to know what you consider to be the criteria of your decision on our reintegration.

Comradely,

John Barzman
for the Political Committee, IT

cc: USFI Bureau

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14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014
February 29, 1975

Political Committee
Internationalist Tendency
[street address]
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Comrades,

This is in regard to regularizing distribution of the International Internal Discussion Bulletin to you. We propose the following: You should place a standing order with us so that we can automatically send bulletins to your national headquarters in Chicago as they come out. You would be responsible for distributing the bulletins to your membership nationally.

You should send us \$50 which we will credit in advance to your account. We will bill you from time to time so you can keep an advance deposited in the account. This will speed up your receipt of bulletins, as we will not have to wait for your payment before sending out your bulletin order.

Before each bulletin comes out we will send you a notice so that you will know which is coming and you can order additional bulletins when necessary.

You can place prepaid orders for any of the back International Internal Discussion Bulletins listed in the attached catalog. Since these lists were compiled the following bulletins have been published:

[list follows]

Comradely,
s/ Diane Rupp
SWP National Office

[This proposal has been accepted by the IT -- dr]

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14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014
March 4, 1975

John Barzman
Internationalist Tendency
[street address]
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Comrade Barzman,

This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter of February 28 and enclosure. Barry Sheppard is out of town on tour now, but I will call it to his attention when he returns.

I assume our letters concerning International Internal Discussion Bulletins crossed in the mail, so will wait until I hear from you before doing anything.

Fraternally,
s/ Diane Rupp
SWP National Office

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14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014
March 10, 1975

John Barzman
Political Committee
Internationalist Tendency

Dear Comrade Barzman,

In reply to your letter of February 28, 1975.

You will recall that the motion unanimously adopted at the IEC meeting took note of the fact that "two members of the Political Committee of the Socialist Workers Party, Jack Barnes and Joseph Hansen, have pledged that they will urge the National Committee at its coming plenum to weigh favorable implementation of the proposals commonly agreed on by the International Control Commission in its investigation." It would be inappropriate for an SWP representative to attend the Steering Committee plenums of your organization before the SWP National Committee meets and decides on this recommendation of Comrades Barnes and Hansen.

* * *

Concerning your desire to help build the May 17 march on Boston called by the NAACP, it's my opinion this can best be done by joining the National Student Coalition Against Racism as well as the broader coalitions being set up by the NAACP, NSCAR and many other groups and individuals.

You also indicate you would like to support the SWP election campaign and distribute The Militant. The SWP national election campaign is presently engaged in a big effort to distribute the Bill of Rights for Working People. This piece of campaign literature and other election materials should be ordered from the Socialist Workers 1976 National Campaign Committee, 14 Charles Lane, New York, N.Y. 10014. Financial contributions to the socialist campaign can be made to the same address. Checks should be made payable to the Socialist Workers 1976 National Campaign Committee.

The Militant is currently conducting a campaign to increase its street sales. Bundles of The Militant should be ordered directly from The Militant business office, 14 Charles Lane, New York, N.Y. 10014.

The Coral tour is being organized by the United States Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners. You should write to USLA concerning his tour. The USLA address is: 156 Fifth Avenue, Room 600, New York, N.Y. 10010.

Comradely,
s/ Barry Sheppard
National Organization
Secretary

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Brussels 24 Feb 1975

from Political Bureau Belgian Section
to USec
copy Intercontinental Press

Dear Comrades,

We were surprised to discover an article in the Feb 24 issue of Intercontinental Press on the general social situation in Belgium, based not on any consultation with the elected leadership of our section nor on any article on the official newspapers or other publications of the RAL-LRT, but written on the contrary by a comrade whose personal circumstances during the last year have removed him from the reality of the Belgian political and social situation. Our surprise is compounded by the fact that the date of the article (Jan 17) reveals that it has been in the pipeline since before the recent international meetings of, amongst others, Belgian and American Trotskyists, at which it would have been perfectly possible to canvass the opinions of leading members of the Belgian section. The elected leadership of the Belgian section cannot accept that this procedure is the result of a mere oversight.

It is for this reason that the PB of the Belgian section formerly [sic] requests that the USec confirm or deny the report we received in the fall of 1974 whereby an agreement had been reached within the International on the fact that articles by members of a minority tendency appearing in the publications of other than the national section and covering events within the territory of the national section would first be submitted to the perusal of the elected leadership of the section involved.

We feel that we are probably taxing the impatience of a number of comrades, but we nonetheless insist on repeating what we wrote a few days ago. Comrade Marcel Smet is a leading comrade of a miniscule tendency in the Belgian section. We consider it at least consistent with the attitude of other sections of the International to insist that the international responsibilities of the comrade in question in no way qualify him to act as spokesperson for the Belgian section or its leadership.

with revolutionary greetings,
for the PB of the RAL-LRT
s/levi

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March 1, 1975

Political Bureau
Belgian Section

Dear Comrades,

I appreciate your sending me a copy of your letter dated February 24 which you addressed to the United Secretariat. Unfortunately it is difficult to understand the nature of your objection to the article by Comrade Marcel Smet entitled "Belgian Workers Combat Advancing Recession," which appeared in the February 24 issue of Intercontinental Press.

1. Do you hold that it expressed a view opposite to that of the Political Bureau of the Belgian section on the subject dealt with? For instance, is it your view that the Belgian workers are not combating the advancing recession? Or do you maintain that the recession is not advancing in Belgium?

2. Could it be that the statistics cited in the article are inaccurate? Which of the figures do you hold to be in error?

3. Are you of the opinion that the demands of the unions -- whether in previous years or currently -- are incorrectly summarized? What is the substance of the errors, if it is errors that are involved?

4. Is the defense of the position of the Belgian section on unemployment and protection of the workers standard of living wrong? On what points, if any, is it wrong?

Since you do not make the slightest criticism of the article on any of these questions, I can only assume that the facts are accurately stated and that the article does not go counter to the position of the Political Bureau of the Belgian section on this aspect of the class struggle in Belgium.

Consequently I am left with nothing but the objections that you do express:

1. "Comrade Marcel Smet is a leading comrade of a miniscule tendency in the Belgian section."

Has the current "elected leadership of the Belgian section" taken the position that the correctness or incorrectness of articles is to be judged by the size of a tendency to which the author may belong?

I would appreciate knowing when it was decided to adopt such a criterion. Since the founding of Intercontinental Press in 1963 we have published articles by Belgian comrades who at least on some questions may have represented a tendency with little following, or may have expressed purely individual opinions on certain topics. We have never in the past eleven years heard any complaint about this from the Political Bureau of the Belgian section.

Such articles were signed, and thus -- like the contribution of Comrade Smet -- obviously could not be interpreted as expressions of the views of the "elected leadership of the Belgian section," which are normally voiced in resolutions, declarations by leading bodies, or statements by elected officials.

2. You ask whether "an agreement had been reached within the International on the fact that articles by members of a minority tendency appearing in the publications of other than the national section and covering events within the territory of the national section would first be submitted to the perusal of the elected leadership of the section involved."

I do not know of any such "agreement," and I would be opposed in principle to such an agreement. I agree that a national leadership has a right, and in fact is duty bound, to determine its own line and that comrades writing on topics involving that line should refrain from opposing it publicly unless the leadership has no objection to polemical articles on this or that topic.

The "rumor" you appear to be referring to involved the British section. An article, written in London, was considered by the leadership of the section to have inadvertently expressed views they did not agree with. A practical arrangement was made to check articles involving official positions of the British section so as to eliminate the possibility of new misunderstandings. But this arrangement concerned only articles directly touching on the line of the British section, and not other articles.

It should be added that the practical arrangement was a useful one in view of the fact that the comrades involved were rank and filers writing regularly for Intercontinental Press who did not have the opportunity to participate in leadership meetings or in leadership decision making, and who thus might not be aware of positions adopted by the section leadership on some questions. Otherwise such a practical arrangement, which is rather abnormal, need not have been made, in my opinion.

3. You challenge Comrade Smet's standing as a member of the International Executive Committee and the United Secretariat, saying that you "insist that the international responsibilities of the comrade in question in no way qualify him to act as spokesperson for the Belgian section or its leadership."

In the article in question, Comrade Smet did not present himself as the "spokesperson for the Belgian section or its leadership." The article, written on his own responsibility, bore his signature. Furthermore, in view of the absence in your letter of any criticism of the content of the article, it can only be assumed, as indicated above, that it presented no counter-line.

Thus what you seem to be advancing in your letter is a proposal to bar any member of the International Executive Committee or the United Secretariat from writing any articles for any publications of the world Trotskyist movement "covering events within the territory of the national section" unless such articles are first submitted to censorship by the "elected leadership of the section involved."

It is true that you would limit the proposed rule, which is truly novel in the world Trotskyist movement, only to representatives of minorities. However, that would mean, in effect, dividing the top bodies of the Fourth International into first- and second-class citizens -- a class able to write freely within the general frame of Trotskyist principles and another class subjected to censorship.

What about members of majority tendencies who might hold individual opinions on certain topics or on certain events in certain "territories"? Must their articles -- or the pertinent parts of them -- be submitted to censorship by the "elected leaderships" of the territories involved?

To avoid such vexsome questions, it would appear to me that censorship by the "elected leaderships" of the various "territories" would have to be applied to the literary endeavors of all members of the International Executive Committee and the United Secretariat.

To me it appears clear that this is the only consistent way that censorship by the elected national leaderships of all articles touching their territorial jurisdiction could be successfully -- and fairly -- applied.

In addition to that, in the interests of consistency, the proposed censorship would have to be applied not only to articles written for Trotskyist publications but still more so to articles written for the bourgeois press. Books especially would have to come under this provision in view of the difficulty in such a long-lasting literary form of rectifying errors or incorrect presentations -- including omissions -- of the territorial positions of elected national leaderships.

If you do not propose at the present time to go to such lengths, where do you draw the line and on what basis?

I would very much appreciate a reply clarifying your line of reasoning and indicating in particular why precisely at this time you have advanced a proposal so unprecedented in the Trotskyist movement as this one is.

Comradely yours,
Joseph Hansen

cc: United Secretariat
Marcel Smet

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Brussels, Feb 20, 1975

Motion voted by the Political Bureau of the RAL-LRT

The political bureau of the Revolutionnaire Arbeiders Liga-Ligue Révolutionnaire des Travailleurs, Belgian section of the 4th International, has received in good order the letter from the IEC dated February 6th 1975 and signed by comrade Robinson, informing it of the new Usec bureau elected at the last IEC meeting and requesting the release of comrade Marcel from major assignments in order that he should be able to function as a full-time member of the bureau.

The Political Bureau thanks comrade Robinson for informing it of this decision.

The Political Bureau notes the unusual procedure of electing the Usec bureau in the IEC instead of the more conventional election by the USec itself. It is also conscious of the fact that the maintenance of the unity of our movement require that abnormal and sometimes even unhealthy methods be used.

The Belgian section has always put its internationalism into practice. It has never failed to release numbers of leading members for full-time international work, and it has always been ready to put its resources, infrastructure and militancy at the disposal of the International. These efforts were usually discussed with us before being put to the vote in the higher bodies of the movement. This procedure was not unusual in the International. We are aware of infinitely more long-lasting discussions between the international leadership and much stronger sections than ours on the subject of the release of comrades for international work.

This time we have been informed after a decision was taken. The international has chosen not to handle this question in the conventional manner and we shall inevitably draw our own conclusions from our experience on this matter. It appears that the maintenance of the unity of our movement requires us to accord special privileges to a minority in passing over the heads of the elected leadership of a section. We can only hope that other sections will accept discipline in similar situations as we have done in this.

The Political Bureau of the RAL-LRT does not have a custom of taking responsibility for decisions imposed on it by abnormal means. As the IEC has apparently already chosen to do, we regard the "request" in the Robinson letter as nothing more or less than an injunction.

We nevertheless take the liberty of informing the USec of the following:

-comrade Marcel is a leading member of a minority tendency in the RAL-LRT of 9 members and obtaining 11 votes nationally at the last congress. The congress, in a broad and positive application of democratic-centralist norms, offered the tendency 2 full members and 1 alternate on the Central Committee. Comrade Marcel

is one of these full members. The democratic functioning of the Belgian section is perhaps an exception when compared with other sections of the International, but we hope that the IEC decision will not hinder this functioning or prevent comrade Marcel from participating in the work of our CC.

-we stress that comrade Marcel represents an infinitesimal minority in the RAL-LRT and that he can in no way speak for our organisation or its positions. We shall vigorously protest any course taken by which this comrade would be considered as a spokesperson for our organisation at any time or in any place. We request that comrade Marcel make it clear on every occasion and in all his assignments that he is speaking for the bureau or for the USec and not for the RAL-LRT or its leadership.

-We stress that this IEC decision does not absolve comrade Marcel from the discipline of the Belgian section.

The political bureau of the RAL-LRT requests the USec and the bureau to inform it without delay of the concrete implications this decision has for the section. We require also to be regularly informed of all the assignments that comrade Marcel is given.

We request that this motion be published as an annex to the USec minutes.