

New York, New York
May 18, 1976

TO ORGANIZERS WHO ARE MEMBERS OF THE LTF

Dear Comrades,

Attached for your information is a statement titled "The Present Crisis of the Fourth International and the Tasks of the Leninist Trotskyist Faction," signed by four members of the Communist League of Spain. The document was originally drafted last August, and has been distributed to Steering Committee members of the faction.

This is the document that was referred to and discussed in Barry Sheppard's LTF report during the plenum. But it mistakenly was omitted from the kits of organizers who are in the LTF.

Comradely,

Caroline Lund

TRANSLATION

THE PRESENT CRISIS OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL AND THE TASKS OF THE LENINIST TROTSKYIST FACTION

As the LTF sees it an ultra left political course was initiated at the Ninth World Congress and continues up to today. This turn expressed an adaptation to such components of the youth radicalization as Castroism and Maoism.

The introduction of guerrilla warfare as the strategy for Latin America implied a dynamic toward generalization of the "turn," geographical as well as programmatical.

The Tenth World Congress sanctioned this turn at the programmatic level, explicitly revising a point in the Transitional Program which was replaced by the resolution on armed struggle.

In the words of Comrade Hansen, the meaning of the Tenth World Congress was that ". . . the ultraleft course on which the international was placed at the Ninth World Congress will be continued until at least the next congress." (Report to New York Caucus of the LTF.)

The August 1974 statement of the LTF, drawing a balance sheet of the events following the Tenth World Congress, reaffirmed this evaluation. Later, at the January 1975 IEC meeting the balance sheet put forth by the LTF stated that the errors made by the IMT on democratic rights fit the pattern of the ultraleft "turn."

Finally, last July, during the United Secretariat discussions on Portugal, LTF members asserted the report given by the IMT carried forward the same ultraleft errors that appeared in 1968-69 on Latin America.

According to this analysis, the positions of the IMT have not undergone any substantial change in the last six years. In our opinion, holding on to such an appraisal incapacitates the LTF in the struggle to resolve the crisis of the Fourth International.

I: THE BANKRUPTCY OF THE LINE OF THE MAJORITY OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

1. The "Turn" of the Ninth Congress

The rise of the class struggle during the 1960s brought the crisis of "entrism sui generis" to a head and precipitated its empirical abandonment and the substitution of a new "tactic for building sections of the Fourth International." This was later called "winning hegemony among the new vanguard."

This turn reflected the pressures coming from the youth radicalization. It can be asserted that, in laying out the guerrilla line, the ultraleft youth that Mandel-Maitan-Frank wanted to win over carried more weight than the cadres of our own movement in Latin America.

As the IMT would later explain, this new orientation meant that the politics of the F. I. should be suited to the concerns of the so-called "new vanguard" instead of to the concerns of the masses. That is how adaptation to Castroism, Maoism, etc., took shape. At that time these currents hoodwinked broad sectors of young fighters eager to find an alternative to the Communist parties and the Social Democracy.

Guerrillatism and minority "initiatives in action" took the place of a necessary reaffirmation of the need to build Leninist parties rooted in the masses on a class-against-class line and confronting both the dictatorial forms of bourgeois rule and those based on class collaboration.

As a cover to justify the line adopted, the IMT resorted to a variety of mechanical analyses, all divorced from concrete reality.

Theories about the advent of bloody dictatorships in all of Latin America came along to explain the need for guerrilla war. Likewise, in Europe, "initiatives in action" were justified by theories about the growing trend toward the "strong" state or the "fascitization" of the state apparatus.

The main resolution contained, in addition, a whole series of concepts (the terms "revolutionaries" or "revolutionary vanguard" to refer to centrists, ultralefts, etc.; social-democratization of the CPs; the errors on Vietnam, etc.) that formed a complete methodological unit with all that went before and was subsequently developed, that played an important role in the politics of the IMT. In this connection we must also mention the resolution on the Cultural Revolution. It brought to the fore grave errors about the orientation of the Chinese CP as well as about its character.

2. The "New Orientation and Method" in its Context

At first, the turn threw the sections of the F. I. into "exemplary" substitutionist activity: either in the form of disastrous guerrilla-like adventures or more modest "revolutionary initiatives of the vanguard." In any case, it meant abandoning the real responsibilities essential for progress in constructing Trotskyist parties and a failure to take advantage of the opportunities opened by the worldwide crisis of the class struggle.

But it became evident that this orientation not only came into conflict with the needs that stemmed from the evolving general objective situation, but also with the changes taking place in the concerns of the "new far left."

The rise in workers struggles and the increasing growth of popular-frontist alternatives opened a process of accel-

erated crisis in the majority of the centrist and ultraleft organizations. Rotting away more and more to the right, they had gone from objectively playing into the hands of the reformist apparatuses to capitulating on the essential points of their class collaborationist politics.

This phenomenon was not restricted to capitalist Europe. It was also happening in other parts of the world; Chile, Bolivia and Uruguay being some examples in Latin America. France and Spain signaled the beginning of these processes' development in Europe. The evolution of Castro's politics, the Maoist bureaucracy's abandonment of its "leftist" mask, the negotiations that led to the Paris accords, were all factors that accelerated this dynamic.

The majority of the Fourth International -- which had adapted to guerrillism when the Guevarists were already in retreat -- very soon found itself faced with the consequences of its untimely opportunism. That is why it had to embark on a series of empirical rectifications and zigzags whose common denominator was adaptation to the changing views of the "mass vanguard" it wants to win over.

The fact is that the IMT finds itself confronted with an objective situation in rapid evolution. The very growth experienced by the Fourth International in recent years does not permit it to vegetate for years as a marginal group without feeling the tremendous jolts of the class struggle. This luxury could be enjoyed by MMF in the years of "entrism *sui generis*," during which developments were much slower. Today it would lead to immediate suicide which is something the IMT is not ready to contemplate at the moment. This explains the rapidity of the turns and re-adjustments imposed upon it.

Thus, in the recent period accommodation is made not only to radicalized layers of the youth, but also to sectors of young workers such as those in the French CFDT or in the Spanish workers movement, who are politically organized by centrist formations (the first congress of the LCR clearly expresses this fact).

3. The December 1972 International Executive Committee

The December 1972 IEC represented a key point in this evolution. The IEC majority, faced with the catastrophic result of its line for Latin America and lashed by the minority's powerful criticism began a process of "honorable retreat" from guerrillism, taking its distance from the PRT-ERP. Completely on the defensive, it reaffirmed "in its essential line" the "armed struggle" position, introduced a maximum degree of confusion about the Ninth World Congress documents, and began to launch frantic attacks on the PST.

At the same time it prepared to entrench itself in Europe. But this attempt coincided with the beginning of the crisis in its sections (split in Spain, Third Congress of the French section, etc.). Thus while the IMT was hastily

calling its ranks to order regarding the wilder ultraleft extrapolations (Bulletin No. 30 of the French section, polemics on the worker or bourgeois nature of social democratic parties, etc.), it also began to cover up for theoretical adaptations flowing from the new moves to the right. This came to light mainly in the political propositions that led to the factional struggle in Spain (the "en marcha" faction's positions on the workers commissions, the Spanish CP, the Assembly of Catalonia, etc.) and the IMT documents and attitudes concerning the discussion about the Union of the Left in France (Third Congress and the vote for the Union of the Left and the Radicals in the legislative elections).

These positions were joined at the same time by those supporting the Vietnamese PRG and its program, and reaffirmation of the "independence" of the VCP leadership. Although talk about the progressive aspects of Peking's line was moderated, the basic errors on the nature of the Maoist bureaucracy were not retracted.

Bureaucratic methods in internal relations of the Fourth International were crudely expanded (splits in Spain, Australia, Canada; the letters from the six United Secretariat members to the PRT of Argentina behind the back of the U. Sec., etc.)

4. Formation of the LTT

The fact that the IEC majority clung to the line adopted at the Ninth World Congress even though it had been proven bankrupt in practice was the main reason the minority decided to take a new step in its struggle against the political orientation of MMF: to organize this struggle on the level of the entire Fourth International, calling for the formation of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency.

Let us point out two important points: 1) The central political axis was the struggle against the guerrillaist orientation, correctly seen as the key point at that moment; 2) This central point and other political differences already apparent were explicitly connected with some basic methodological questions:

"It is the existence of conflicting concepts on the methodological level (which includes party-building methods) that explains not only the development of opposing positions on the guerrilla orientation, but to a large degree the development of differences of varying sharpness on various other important questions, such as the nature and role of the Maoist variety of Stalinism, party-building orientation not only for the sections in Latin America and Europe but elsewhere, construction of Marxist youth organizations, the historical balance sheet on 'entrism *sui generis*,' policies in the antiwar movement, and now the assessment of the Vietnam agreement and the nature and role of Stalinism in Vietnam," (IIDB Vol. X, No. 3, March 1973)

5. Period Preparatory to the Tenth World Congress

The period preparatory to the Tenth World Congress showed a strengthening of opportunist positions on basic questions in the class struggle. The same basic line comes through in the vote for the Union of the Left, in joining the Bolivian FRA and in the attitude of the IMT toward the Chilean Unidad Popular, even though the line may be accompanied by ultraleft errors such as the June 21 action in Paris.

With the departure of the PRT-ERP the IMT continued its efforts to move away from its guerrillaist errors but without owning up to them. The document, "Know Our Own Weaknesses in Order to Better Fight the Minority," by Jean-Pierre Beauvais which had wide repercussions in some of the European sections is an important expression of this operation. The pressures of the IMT on Livio Maitan for a partial self-criticism of the guerrillaist policy, which is reflected in the Barzman letter, confirms this process. A step-up in the majority's factional methods accompanied their turn to the defensive on political positions. Barzman's letter unveiled the IMT as a secret faction which subordinated the interests of the Fourth International as a whole to its own particular interests. The danger of split increased. A wing of the IMT continuously pressed in that direction. This wing was germinating the most open and profoundly revisionist positions for which the majority's course had provided both a cover and a framework in which to develop.

The LTT transformed itself into a faction in response to this escalation of bureaucratic and factional methods; not because of some qualitative change in the IMT's political positions but because of the increase in internal tensions and the danger of a split.

The change to a faction would aid the battle to change the composition of the leadership of the F. I. as was explicitly stated in point 8 of the LTF platform, and it would permit us to face the new situation in a disciplined way.

6. The Tenth World Congress

We have already mentioned Comrade Hansen's evaluation of the Tenth World Congress. According to this evaluation there was a reaffirmation of the Ninth World Congress turn in relation to the "strategy of armed struggle" with some secondary self-criticisms. It means spreading this turn to the rest of the world and implied a policy directed mainly at favoring minority violence.

On the theoretical level the adoption of the resolution on armed struggle revised a key point in the program of the Fourth International.

In our opinion, the Tenth World Congress represented an attempt to synthesize and justify steps taken by the European sections, especially the French, in changing their course of mainly ultraleft errors to one that made possible and inevitable more and more moves to the right.

The majority's world political resolution doesn't reflect the projection of an armed struggle line on a world-wide scale. Rather, it elevates to an international level the European line, the axis of which is "transformation of the new mass vanguard into an adequate instrument." In short it consists of abandoning the Marxist conception of the party as the only instrument capable of leading the working class to power and rejecting the Trotskyist method of party building. This is replaced with a policy of adapting to the current supporters of the so-called "new far left" which in turn yields more and more openly to the reformist bureaucracies' politics of class collaboration.

The IMT freed itself from the dead weight of the guerrilla strategy while at the same time refusing to draw a balance sheet of its results and making concessions to its more pro-split wing (one furthest from the Trotskyist heritage). These concessions meant upholding the need for minority violence initiatives in the form of armed actions by the party in opposition to the point in the Transitional Program on the arming of the proletariat.

What is involved here is a serious and explicit revision which we must keep struggling to undo. But we must see it in the context of a more general line which includes at least one other grave revision: abandonment of Marxist teachings on popular fronts and the need to struggle to break the workers movement from the bourgeoisie (the Chile point in the world resolution). This contributes to the disarmament of Trotskyists on the central question of the period.

7. After the Tenth World Congress

What happened after the Tenth World Congress confirms our evaluation of the fundamental character of the IMT's errors. The problems posed by the Union of the Left and the events in Portugal took it by surprise, just as had earlier happened in Chile.

The theory and practice of the IMT regarding France, Spain, Chile, Italy, etc., become as nothing compared to their errors on Portugal and Vietnam.

Adaptation to the MFA-PCP, direct or indirect support to all their reactionary maneuvers (trade-union law, attacks on democratic rights, etc.); theories about the possibility of the CP taking power and that it promotes workers and popular struggles, doubts about the CP's Stalinist character, support to CP demagoguery about workers control, and finally, the refusal to call for a break with all bourgeois parties at the governmental level are the central elements which characterize the IMT's politics in Portugal.

It is true that there have been and will continue to be ultraleft errors. But they have been relegated to the area of tactical questions. Although it is our duty to criticize these errors, we cannot overlook the role they play within the IMT's politics as a whole.

D. Bensaid's reason for supporting the prospect of fusion with the PSU that was decided at the last congress of the French section was that it was impossible for Trotskyists alone to build the revolutionary party. At that congress, the author of Bulletin No. 30 at the same time that he was singing praises for Santucho and the MIR, did not blush to put forward for a vote one of the most revisionist texts on popular fronts and Stalinism our movement has ever known.

And in Spain, the LCR-ETA VI comrades, in applying the resolutions of the Tenth Congress, carefully explain to us the role played by the democratic assemblies as "organs of struggle;" organs promoted by the Democratic Junta at the price of destroying the workers commissions.

In Vietnam, capitulation to the VCP reached the point of theoretically justifying the need for class collaboration in order to build a "workers state" which, according to the IMT, presently exists in South Vietnam. And we've had to watch the sorry sight of the press of the sections and of the U. Sec. itself using the same arguments used by the Stalinized Third International to justify the VCP alliance with the "third force" or other bourgeois sectors.

Internally, the crisis continued to deepen. It led to continuous changes and vacillations in the practical leadership of the sections, to processes of organic decay, to a slowing of recruitment, to the loss of cadre, to an upsurge of sharp and confusing debates, and to an increase in attacks on the LTF.

Defensive bureaucratic mechanisms were strengthened to meet this crisis. That is the source of the failure to publish the LTF's World Congress documents (or to published them in condensed versions), the reason for the monopoly of international bodies, for the IT split with the participation of the IMT leadership, etc.

8. The January 1975 International Executive Committee

The Argentine question was the central axis of the January 1975 IEC. Initially, the IMT's position was based on its need to provide a safety valve for pressure from its "ultras." That was the role played by the constant attacks on the PST and other sections that support the LTF.

On the other hand, and more important, the discussion on Argentina allowed the IMT to avoid the basic discussion and divert the International's attention from the burning issues of the class struggle, which at that moment were centered around Portugal.

Evidently, the IMT was also trying to create a smoke screen to cover the total bankruptcy of its Argentine section which was in a process of increasing splits and decomposition.

A sectarian conception of democratic rights also played a role. We say sectarian and not ultraleft because sectarian-

ism is part of the workerist and economist logic common to Eurocentric currents. For example, rabidly opportunist groups like the Lambertists have repeatedly expressed the same sectarian conceptions with regard to democratic rights, downplaying the colonial revolution and the struggle against national oppression and the movements of oppressed layers (women, etc.), and we cannot characterize them as ultraleft because of this. We cannot even say they make concessions to ultraleftism.

We think it was a mistake to play the IMT's game. It is clear that an incorrect characterization of the political axis of the present struggle and an incorrect setting of priorities by the majority of the LTF comrades has aided the IMT's maneuvers.

On the organizational level, we don't think the bureaucratic methods of the IMT have been relaxed. On the contrary, the IMT's factional maneuvers have reached alarming proportions in the recent period.

The coverage of the split in the SWP and the public attacks on the PST and other similar matters are totally in keeping with the maneuvers we saw prior to the Tenth World Congress.

Partial victories have been won, such as PST participation in the United Secretariat (although with obvious limitations); recognition of the LTF's right to choose its own members of the United Secretariat, etc. Nevertheless, the basic concepts and their manifestations remain and set the general mood. Some sketchy serious political discussion in some of the last United Secretariat meetings is more of a response to the pressures of the class struggle than to a predisposition on the IMT's part to carry out an honest non-factional debate. (The class struggle doesn't permit continuous discussion on only organizational matters, it forces political discussion to the fore.)

The IMT's attitude can be proved by pointing to recent examples ranging from the congress of the French section to maneuvers against the Spanish Communist League (refusal to translate and discuss their statements in the United Secretariat despite the proposal for unification). At the moment this attitude finds its clearest expression in the IMT's intervention in the LCI congress.

II. THE DISCUSSION WE PROPOSE FOR THE LTF

1. The Need for a Balance Sheet

At the August 1974 LTF meeting we held to the need to define: a) the central political axis of the discussion in the Fourth International, b) the characteristics of the IMT line and c) the need for an overall characterization of the current represented by the MMF nucleus, and we held to our proposed characterization and presented our point of view on these questions.

In the intervening period the IMT line has demonstrated its bankruptcy. However, the LTF was not prepared. It hasn't been armed to respond to this crisis. Maintaining the original LTF line has left us unable to offer an overall explanation and understanding of the IMT's politics: its opportunistic strategic adaptations and its ultraleft tactics. It doesn't permit us to pose an alternative to its incapacity to come up with a strategic class orientation. We confront the IMT only on its guerrillaist flank; this leads to aberrations in documents as basic as our political resolution which foresees only ultraleft errors and leaves the cadre unprepared to fully understand the unfolding of the majority line. At the same time, it opens the door to errors of the opposite type.

The LTT, now the LTF, has been systematically taking up all the differences. However, it has approached each of the political issues in a partial way, each isolated from the others, without putting them together at the political level to form an overall strategic understanding. We believe this step should be taken before defining the class character of the majority line. The need for a new step is evident at the present stage of the debate unfolding in the Fourth International: it is necessary to generalize and correctly order the political level of the criticisms of the IMT positions and our alternative. At the moment, the axis around which it is possible to set straight all the tactical and partial questions, including armed struggle and democratic rights, is the question of class collaboration and the popular front and their opposite, class-against-class alternative, along with the question of Stalinism. The armed struggle question signifies an important revision of a central programmatic point. This was a key point earlier. The problem the cadre of the F. I. have to take on today in relation to the class struggle is not this or that partial aspect of the IMT's line but rather the total bankruptcy of its line. This puts the question of popular fronts on the order of the day.

All discussions now taking place in the sections are centered on these points as the key question in the class struggle today. Inside the sections they are intertwined with the question of democratic centralism. Encompassing all of them is the method of building the party.

The LTF line has made it difficult for us to minimize the costs of demoralization and the loss of cadre which the majority policy implies, and to confront the rise of "intermediate" tendencies between the IMT and the LTF. It also explains the faint response our positions have found in the latest discussions which appear as repetitions of the previous ones, impeding us from winning over the cadres of the sections (the growth of the LTF after the tenth world congress is meagre), and therefore from carrying out the responsibilities presented to us by crisis in the Fourth International today.

This has repercussions in the LTF itself. In fact, this discussion on popular fronts and Stalinism has run through

the LTF, from the polemics on the Chilean Unidad Popular to the important differences on Portugal, and the same kind of problems arise when characterizing the Vietnamese leadership. This constitutes a part of the balance sheet of the LTF. They are problems we cannot ignore and which need to be confronted.

2. The Need for a Characterization of the General Orientation of the IMT since the Tenth World Congress

As the LTF sees it, the adaptation to guerrillism and ultraleftism, the abandonment of the method of the transitional program, leads to combining opportunistic practices with ultraleftism. All ultralefts capitulate to popular fronts. But support to frontism is not a basic question in characterizing the IMT politically. For example, the vote for the Union of the Left in 1973 and 1974 had as its objective advancing the armed struggle. That is to say, the motivation was ultraleft, and this simply confirms the nature of the IMT's line.

We think this characterization is incorrect. We don't think objective political errors can be confused with the subjective motivations that lead to the errors. The political positions held on events in the class struggle determine the character of a political line, not the subjective factors which can lead to taking these positions.

a) The underlying characteristic of the IMT line is that in the face of the objectively posed requirements for the proletariat it is incapable of providing a strategic alternative, counterposed point by point, to the popular-frontist line of the treacherous leaderships, and that it covers up this impotency with leftist tactics and revolutionary phraseology.

We believe this is what characterizes a left-centrist policy, not a leftist one. Trotsky has left us abundant material on the characterization of left-centrism. The POUM's capitulation to the Popular Front was accompanied by revolutionary phraseology, leftist tactics, and even great honesty on Nin's part. But Trotsky didn't take the leftist tactics into account, nor the phraseology, nor Nin's honesty when it came time to characterize the policy. In defining it he based himself on its objective repercussions in the class struggle, not on subjective motivations. Trotsky also extended these analyses to those who remained in the Trotskyist movement but had a similar policy or simply tried to justify Nin. All the criticisms he directed toward Voretsken, Sneevliet and others ended with this political characterization, because they capitulated or adapted themselves, to a greater or lesser degree, on the "question of questions," frontism in all its variants.

b) But even on the subjective level the IMT's adaptations cannot be identified with vulgar ultraleftism. The subjective mechanism of adaptation is opportunistic. It isn't that of a Castroist, nor is it one of putting the gun above politics, it is rather one of conceding before the

pressure of these currents. This comes about through mechanisms specific to the MMF current. The method lying at the root of these opportunistic deviations is the same one that underlay the "turn" of the ninth world congress and the political mistakes of the last twenty years.

c) However, as against earlier adaptations, today's deviations are characterized by an intermediate link, in this case, the evolution of the "far left."

3. The Need for a Characterization of the MMF Nuclens

If we pose the necessity to clearly define the fundamental methodological pillars of the IMT, and to go on from there to analyze the kind of current it represents, it is because we believe that at this point in the discussion in the Fourth International we must clearly show where the current crisis leads and why the IMT has led the Fourth International to this pass.

We don't think one can isolate the most leftist expressions of the ninth world congress "turn" from the historically opportunistic character of the politics of that current which today constitutes the majority of the United Secretariat.

From the historical perspective, it can be stated that such events are an episode of senile ultraleftism in the history of this current. In the historic sense, the course opened at the ninth world congress is not independent from the orientation that underlay "entrism sui generis" (we note in passing that this is why the IMT was obliged to vote a correction of that orientation at the tenth world congress.)

a) The same method lies behind one or another "tactic" for the construction of the party.

b) The new factor is adaptation to the ideology predominant in sectors of the "far left" which, having broken with the reformist apparatuses, claims to offer an alternative.

c) The expressions of this adaptation are fundamentally support to the popular front, as well as initiatives in action, and initially, guerrillaism. The LTF mistake was to make an absolute of the adaptation's guerrillaist political expression without analyzing it during its evolution and in its entirety.

4. The Methodological Pillars of the IMT's Politics

a) The basic kernels of the International Majority Tendency's revisionism can be seen in: their position on the nature of the bureaucracies in general (USSR, China, Vietnam, CPs, . . .) and the character of their politics, which is not always openly counterrevolutionary. Several IMT documents speak about the "double nature" of the bureaucracy, and draw an overall "centrist balance" of the role played by Stalinism. But, the Stalinist bureaucracy's step from a centrist policy to an openly counterrevolutionary policy was the point of departure for the construction of the Fourth International.

The historical origins of this revision can be found in the events following the Second World War. The fact that some of Trotsky's tactical predictions were not fulfilled confronted the Fourth International with serious theoretical problems, all of them related to Stalinism. The objective base is found in the victory of the USSR, the changes in the East European countries, the Yugoslav and Chinese revolutions and the growth of Stalinism's influence on the European working class. This favored the growth of the idea that Stalinism can play a positive role in spite of its bureaucratic methods, and put strong pressures on the cadres of the Fourth International.

On the other hand, they had to explain how a Stalinist leadership was able to lead the Yugoslav and Chinese revolutions. As subjective factors we can mention the isolation the Fourth International was submitted to and the existence of some leadership cadres, mainly in Europe, with large gaps to cover, and they are the ones who remain as leaders.

The pressure of Stalinism led to revisions of a theoretical nature, which were codified at the third world congress in the resolution on the "Rise and Fall of Stalinism." It will be necessary to look more concretely at how these questions were developed and modified in subsequent congresses.

The political repercussions of this revision:

In relation to the bureaucracy of the workers states, the statement that a bureaucracy of a workers state is an agent of the bourgeoisie is avoided. This is related to the present failure to consider the dangers of restoration and the constant refusal of the IMT to propose a struggle for the United Socialist States of Europe against both imperialism and the bureaucracy at the same time as is traditional in our movement.

In relation to China, the characterization of the Maoist bureaucracy as centrist is maintained in obvious contradiction with the call for a political revolution, which they accepted in 1969. The same method is utilized in the case of Vietnam, although ultimately the political expressions may be more dangerous.

Along with the theory of the "double nature" it is affirmed that the national CPs correctly organize the struggle around elementary questions and only betray at the moment of revolutionary crisis. (For example, the tenth world congress and the last congress of the French section of the Fourth International). They do not see the role of the CPs within the popular fronts as that of the most resolute promoters, but rather as they who "contaminate" the scarce bourgeois forces with their working class character. This is where the assertion that these are not class collaborationist bodies, because of the decisive weight of the CPs, comes from.

b) The revision of such a fundamental point as the

nature and character of Stalinism leads the IMT to a lack of understanding of the dynamic of revolutionary mobilization of the masses, totally confusing the working class and its organizations, on the one hand, with the traditional leadership, on the other. The IMT thinks that when workers swell the ranks of the traditional parties, they do so knowing that the politics and leadership of these parties are counterrevolutionary and traitorous. The IMT does not see the contradiction that arises (and which it is our task to sharpen) between the working class combativity this process reflects and the policy of betrayal the leaderships offer it.

The thesis that the working class "is spontaneously Stalinist" and that "its consciousness is inconsistent with communism," explicitly defended by the French section and by the LCR-ETA(VI), is not confined to these sections. The European document identifies the fundamental contradiction as not between the working class and its leadership, but between the masses who follow the reformists and the "new vanguard" that is oriented toward the "revolutionary alternatives" of the "far left," one component of which are the Trotskyists. What is involved here is an overestimation of the influence of the Stalinist and social democratic leaderships on the working class and an underestimation of the ongoing crisis that is shaking these parties, a crisis provoked by the contradiction between their politics and the dynamics of the mass movement. For the most recent period, we must add the underestimation of the degree of influence the Stalinist and social democratic parties have in the entire far left, which capitulates to frontism. This shows open skepticism, a profound lack of confidence in the revolutionary capacities of the masses. Let us point out in passing that an ultraleft current is characterized by just the opposite error, that is, an excessive confidence, an underestimation of the weight of bourgeois ideology and the obstacles which the traditional leaderships place in the way of the proletariat.

c) If the reformist apparatuses are the natural political expression of the struggles of the working class, or if the class is tightly controlled by the reformists with no cracks in sight, the IMT must logically conclude that it is impossible to build the party in the heart of the mass struggles. This is what prompts the constant search for shortcuts that can break through the "situation" and resolve the party problem by a much shorter path than the one taught in the transitional program. The IMT has only two possibilities: "initiatives" or tailending existing leaderships.

The party building tactic called "winning hegemony in the new vanguard" in capitalist Europe and the "strategy of guerrilla warfare" in Latin America mean an explicit renunciation of the construction of the party according to the method outlined in the transitional program, in the heart of the mass struggle. Theorizing about bypassing the "classical variant" of the revolution, eliminating the necessity of a Leninist party, and substituting for it some kind of

adequate instrument is cover for renouncing party building.

This revision of the transitional program method of party building is the fissure through which non-proletarian class pressures continually penetrate and all the adaptations, which vary according to the dominant surrounding pressures, follow. Today the pressure is from the far left.

The next step leads to liquidation of the central strategic task of the Fourth International. The party is replaced by "adequate instruments" such as the "red" bureaucracy in Vietnam or the "new far left" in other places.

d) All of the above is inseparable from the analytical distortions and the programmatic revisions (armed struggle and others) made by the IMT. The purpose is to theorize and rationalize the different tactics for party building. These analyses can change more or less rapidly depending on the evolution of the class struggle, but the underlying method that inspires and encourages the new ones never varies (for example, just six months after their congress, not one of the resolutions adopted by the French section remains standing, and now the work of the leadership centers, naturally, around "correctly concretizing the method of the European document").

e) It is true that the leading nucleus has until now always drawn back from the logical consequences of its course. It broke with Pablo and was not willing to follow the PRT-ERP to the end. The result is that it isn't tied to any specific current at the moment. But the leading nucleus still holds to the same profound revision of the method of party building that time and again brings it to adapt to the milieu and to make serious revisions of other programmatic points which in the present period greatly increases the danger of the destruction of the Fourth International.

f) These positions are accompanied by and are reflected internally in a formalist, technical conception of democratic centralism. This has various implications:

--In the first place, the Leninist organization ceases to be the work of programmatically conscious Leninists. It becomes a category into which the most diverse "revolutionary forces," from Tito to Ho-Chi Minh, can be more or less correctly assimilated.

--On the other hand, this formalism -- already present in the Fourth International before the entrism turn and the split of the 1950s -- is responsible for the recourse to organizational formulas and leadership methods which abstract from the situation of the Fourth International in the class struggle, its ties with the class struggle, and its internal maturation. One of the most fatal manifestations of this grotesque "Cominternism" is the imposition of tactics on an international scale -- tactics elevated to the level of strategy -- and bureaucratic intervention in the national sections to carry out the "world political line"; this has

had an uninterrupted course, from entrism to guerrilla warfare. Hence, the organizational question has constituted a fundamental chapter in all episodes of the crisis of the Fourth International: in 1952-53 and in 1969-74.

-- Secret factionalism and bureaucratic measures, always present in a latent form as a consequence of the revision of the methods of party building, are multiplied to the degree that the class struggle disproves the political line and the danger arises that it will meet with opposition from sectors of the Fourth International.

-- This logic determines the relations of the center of the Fourth International with the different sections, and relations between certain sections and others (the French CL and the LCR), and enters into the functioning of each national organization, becoming a terrible means for the mis-education of cadre.

-- This provokes antibureaucratic reactions of all kinds. In many cases, incapable of replying with an overall alternative method, comrades end up exalting the worst anti-Leninist retrogressions.

From all of the above, we can determine the stable traits of this current, which we have characterized as a centrist current of Trotskyist origins. This current has not yet gone so far as to cut all ties with the Trotskyist program, but it continues to preserve the method which gives rise to new "leftist" and opportunist actions.

Finally, we would like to point out that today it is possible and necessary to draw a balance sheet of the IMT's attitude toward the reunification. Such a balance sheet is pending. We believe that the overall balance of the principled reunification promoted by the SWP comrades is very positive. It has permitted the development of the discussion and a clarification of the Trotskyist program, in relation to the various errors of MMF, within a unified and therefore strengthened organization during the rise of the class struggle. The tenth world congress was proof of this in spite of its limitations. In addition, the fact that the sects that didn't accept the reunification of the majority of the Trotskyist movement -- such as Healy and Lambert -- are today in total crisis and have to maneuver in order to try to recuperate and to participate in the discussion in the Fourth International, confirms that evaluation.

But we also believe the balance sheet that must be drawn of the attitude of the MMF nucleus concerning reunification will show that they supported it without changing their presuppositions and that they have not shown any desire to do so. They haven't in the least rectified the methodological bases and the political problems which led to the split ten years earlier. The Domingo letter's revelation about "progressive assimilation" of the nucleus that came from the International Committee, fits into the

framework of their entire course. And it is because of this that the same essential problems which were at the base of the split are once again on the table, because the MMF nucleus has changed absolutely none of its positions.

IMMEDIATE TASKS OF THE LTF

We will try to lay out in a systematic way the basic area of the tasks we think the LTF should adopt for the following period:

1. To pursue our analysis and debate on the crisis of the Fourth International and our tasks and see if we reach agreement on the need for making changes and readjustments in our platform along the following lines. The first is to put in the forefront the fight against class collaborationism in general and popular frontism in particular. This involves a discussion on Stalinism. Another important point is to conduct a discussion on democratic centralism in order to take on the IMT within the internal framework of the Fourth International. On the methodological level, we should deepen the polemic over the method of building the party. Finally, we need to include an overall characterization of the IMT's orientation since the Tenth World Congress as left centrist. Moreover, we should also characterize the IMT as a historical current along the lines we have indicated before.

2. To discuss the political resolution that the LTF submitted to the Tenth World Congress as approved in the meeting in August 1974.

3. To draft regional documents on the basis of this resolution. We think that the objective situation and the subjective situation of the Fourth International itself poses an urgent need for a European document. With regard to this, we wish to indicate that we do not propose a document dealing with tactical questions for a great variety of countries that have important structural differences.

We think that the congresses of the Communist International offer a correct methodology that can help us to solve this problem. In these congresses resolutions were presented on the world situation and its sectors. Following this, a series of specific points were made for blocs of countries with similar characteristics. And, finally, more concrete resolutions were adopted for individual countries.

This method can be used to present a more concrete alternative in what is one of the vital centers of the class struggle in this period and the main bastion of the IMT.

4. We can extend this to deal with individual countries, beginning with concrete balance sheets of the course of the sections and trying to advance class struggle alternatives at this level. Balance sheets on points such as Portugal, Spain, France, and Italy obviously take priority here.

The coming world congress raises the need for developing a concrete balance sheet of the IMT's orientation. While the IMT's positions on Latin America took two or three years to be disproved, it has taken less than a year for the European document, which was presented as the supreme contribution to the Fourth International, to come into conflict with every single aspect of the class struggle.

5. To begin work on a balance sheet of the reunification, not to settle accounts with the 1950s but so as to be able to identify more precisely the inner mechanisms at the

roots of all the IMT's political errors.

6. Finally, simply to point out the need for bringing the functioning of the LTF more into line with our needs. This involves more regular meetings of the leading and coordinating bodies, as well as periodic meetings of the LTF nuclei in Europe with a view toward an exchange of experiences that in the present situation would be very helpful for us.

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