

International Internal Discussion Bulletin

volume XIV number 3

May 1977

Contents

	Page
Correction Concerning the "Self-Criticism on Latin America" by the International Majority Tendency	2
September 18, 1976, Letter from United Secretariat to the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International	3
Motion on OCRFI Passed Unanimously at October 1976 United Secretariat Meeting	3
October 27, 1976, Letter and Statement of the OCRFI	4
Letter to OCRFI Approved by November 13-14, 1976, United Secretariat Meeting	5
Motion and Statement by Jones at November 13-14, 1976, United Secretariat Meeting	6
December 8, 1976, Letter from Comrades Barnes, Hansen, Sheppard, and Waters to the United Secretariat	7
Enclosure: Preface to La Correspondance internationale, No. 1, October 1976	10
December 10, 1976, Letter from OCRFI to United Secretariat	13
Letter to Comrades Barnes, Hansen, Sheppard, and Waters Approved by December 20-21, 1976, United Secretariat Meeting	15
Appendix I: Introduction to the Study of Marxism, from Documents of the OCI No. 4, published in October 1976	19
Appendix II: Excerpts from 'Resolution on the Current Stage of the Struggle for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International,' Adopted by OCRFI International Bureau April 20-23, 1973	25
Motion and Statement by Jones at December 20-21, 1976, Meeting of United Secretariat	27
Message from United Secretariat to Meeting of International Bureau of OCRFI December 26-30, 1976	28
Statement to United Secretariat from OCRFI International Bureau	31
Letter to OCRFI Approved by February 5-7, 1977, United Secretariat Meeting	32
Statement by Atwood, Galois, Johnson, and Thérèse at February 5-7, 1977 United Secretariat Meeting	32
March 7, 1977, Letter from OCRFI to United Secretariat	33
Motion on OCRFI adopted Unanimously at March 22-23, 1977 Meeting of United Secretariat	33
Statement by Galois and Johnson at March 22-23, 1977 United Secretariat Meeting	33
Motion Concerning SWP Convention Adopted by Central Committee of French LCR in August 1976	34
November 14, 1976, Letter from United Secretariat to Lutte Ouvrière	34
December 9, 1976, Letter from Lutte Ouvrière to United Secretariat	35

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Correction

The following correction should be made in the statement "Self-Criticism on Latin America," by the Steering Committee of the International Majority Tendency, printed in *International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, Volume XIII, Number 8, December 1976.

Page 9, paragraph 8, line 1 should read:

"The example of the Chilean PSR—its inability to intervene. . . ."

The International Internal Discussion Bulletin is the English-language edition of the internal discussion bulletin of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.

It is published by the Socialist Workers Party as a fraternal courtesy to the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.

Bulletin Department, 14 Charles Lane, New York, N. Y. 10014

**September 18, 1976, Letter from United Secretariat
to the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction
of the Fourth International**

United Secretariat of the
Fourth International
September 18, 1976

To the "Organizing Committee
for the Reconstruction of the
Fourth International"
François DeMassot
c/o Informations Ouvrières
Paris

Dear Comrades,

The United Secretariat of the Fourth International has discussed the question of its relations with Trotskyist organizations, or organizations calling themselves Trotskyist, which are outside the Fourth International. A resolution on this subject has been passed. It contains a

section pertaining to your organization, in view of your having proposed to the United Secretariat that a discussion be opened, for which you have not submitted any prearranged agenda.

A meeting between representatives of our two organizations would be in order, with a view to examining various aspects of a possible discussion of this type. Given the need for comrades residing in different, widely separated countries to attend this meeting, we would prefer to plan it for around October 19, 1976. Please let us know as soon as possible if this date is convenient for you.

Internationalist communist
greetings,
s/Ernest Mandel
for the United Secretariat
of the Fourth International

**Motion on OCRFI Passed Unanimously
at October 1976 United Secretariat Meeting**

We propose that the United Secretariat of the Fourth International and the Organising Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International make parallel statements to be printed in *Rouge, Informations Ouvrières* and other publications of the Fourth International and the OCRFI.

1. That the goal of the discussions is to strengthen the force of the Fourth International as a single international organisation based on the program of Trotskyism, including adherence to democratic centralism.

2. That the United Secretariat and the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire while holding deep differences with some of the positions of the OCRFI and the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste consider them to be revolutionary organisations.

3. That the OCRFI and the OCI similarly affirm that they consider the Fourth International and its French section, the LCR, to be revolutionary organisations although they hold deep differences with some of their positions.

In view of the agreement on these points, the United Secretariat will open an organised discussion with the OCRFI on the basis of a mutually agreed on agenda.

Internal part of motion: If the OCRFI rejects making any statement along the proposed lines the United Secretariat and the participants supporting it at the meeting agree that an organised political discussion will not be entered into at this time.

October 27, 1976, Letter and Statement of the OCRFI

Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International
Paris
October 27, 1976

United Secretariat of the Fourth International

Dear Comrades,

This is to confirm that the text which we submitted to you in Brussels constitutes the final version of our statement. We are attaching a copy.

Likewise, we are enclosing an English translation which we think should be used as the English version of our statement.

Trotskyist greetings,
s/P. Lambert
For the International Bureau of the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International

cc:	Barnes	Michaloux
	Ernest	Riddell
	Hansen	Robs
	Horowitz	Udry
	Jones	

* * *

The delegation of the International Bureau, mandated by the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International, after discussion with the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, considered the following resolution adopted by the United Secretariat:

We propose that the United Secretariat of the Fourth International and the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International make parallel statements to be printed in *Rouge, Informations*

Ouvrières and other publications of the Fourth International and the OCRFI.

- 1- That the goal of the discussions is to strengthen the force of the Fourth International as a single international organization based on the program of Trotskyism, including adherence to democratic centralism.
- 2- That the United Secretariat and the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire while holding deep differences with some of the positions of the OCRFI and the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste consider them to be revolutionary organizations.
- 3- That the OCRFI and the OCI similarly affirm that they consider the Fourth International and its French section the LCR to be revolutionary organizations although they hold deep differences with some of their positions.

In view of the agreement on these points, the United Secretariat will open an organized discussion with the OCRFI on the basis of a mutually agreed on agenda.

The OCRFI renews its proposal to open a discussion between the two international organizations, without any conditions or preliminary requisites, the objective being to reconstruct a united Fourth International on the basis of its founding program; in order to try to overcome the differences that were at the origin of a split that lasted for almost a quarter of a century.

That the goal of the discussions is to strengthen the force of the Fourth International as a single international organisation based on the program of Trotskyism, including adherence to democratic centralism.

The delegation of the Organizing Committee holds that ties with the Fourth International and affirmation of the validity of its program characterize an organization as revolutionary.

Both the United Secretariat and its sections, and the Organizing Committee and its organizations affirm the necessity for the Fourth International and the validity of its program. This characterizes both of them as revolutionary organizations.

Letter to OCRFI Approved by United Secretariat Meeting of November 13-14, 1976

[The following letter was approved by majority vote at the November 13-14, 1976, meeting of the United Secretariat.]

United Secretariat of the Fourth International
To the "Organizing Committee for the
Reconstruction of the Fourth International"

Brussels
November 14, 1976

Comrades,

Attached to the letter of October 27, 1976, the United Secretariat (US) has received the statement of the "International Bureau of the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International" (OCRFI).

The US considers that the statement by the International Bureau does not *really* meet the demand formulated in Point 3 of its resolution of October 17, 1976 (i.e., "that both the OCRFI and the OCI state that the Fourth International and its French section, the LCR, are revolutionary organizations, even though they may have deep differences with some of the positions held by the latter organizations"). This failure in fact to meet our demand is illustrated by the following facts. The manifold characterizations of the Fourth International, its United Secretariat, and its sections, by OCRFI and its organizations, together with the *practical consequences* that flow from these characterizations, have up till now been the major obstacle to any discussion. However, *after* the meeting between a delegation from the US of the Fourth International and a delegation from OCRFI, *after* the statement made at the time of this meeting, the same sort of characterization, in a line of continuity with previous characterizations, has appeared in your official publications. The concluding paragraph of your October 1976 statement, therefore, has not cleared up the situation. In fact, in a document dated October 1976, you state the following:

"Crisis of the Fourth International? We think that in 1950-1953 the Fourth International suffered a *destructive* crisis, marked first by the arbitrary expulsion of the majority of the French section, and then in 1953 by a split in the Fourth International on a world scale, with the formation of the International Committee including, notably, the SWP, along with the English, French, Swiss, and Chinese sections.

"The destructive character of this crisis arose from the fact that it was provoked by an offensive against the principles and program of the Fourth International by a revisionist current that formed in the very center of the International, in its leadership.

"We think that this crisis has not been overcome, that it can only be overcome by the *elimination from the Fourth International of revisionist positions contrary to the principles and program of the Fourth International*. This

cannot be accomplished by diplomatic niceties or administrative procedures but by drawing a balance sheet of the history of the Fourth International and its crisis, in relation to the problems that have arisen in the course of the class struggle itself.

"If we judge that the crisis of the Fourth International had a destructive character, this is above all because the blows dealt by the revisionists to the international organization founded by Leon Trotsky resulted in its *destruction* as a centralized worldwide organization based on the Transitional Program."

(Introductory note to the October 1976 issue of *Correspondance Internationale*, the international bulletin of the OCI. Our emphasis.)

Such ambiguity cannot but help give working-class opinion and revolutionary militants the impression that your declaration was made in the framework of an unprincipled operation.

In fact, the concluding paragraph of your declaration does not involve any explicit clarification as regards the type of statements quoted above. Therefore, not only do such statements contradict it but they deprive of any value your statement (which relates to Point 1 in the US resolution) that "the aim of discussions is to strengthen the Fourth International as a united international organization based on the program of Trotskyism, which involves accepting democratic centralism."

A clear position on the latter point remains a prerequisite for any discussion between our organizations, just as does OCRFI characterizing the Fourth International as a whole as revolutionary.

In our opinion, discussion whose aim is to "strengthen the Fourth International as a united organization based on the program of Trotskyism, which involves accepting democratic centralism," assumes not only a programmatic agreement and the acceptance of democratic centralism but also the possibility for unity in action in the ongoing class struggle between all sections and sympathizing organizations of the Fourth International and the organizations adhering to the OCRFI.

In line with this, only a clarification from you as regards Point 3 of the US resolution in particular can clear the way for opening up a debate enabling us to see if these three criteria can be met. As of now, the "International Bureau of the OCRFI" must give an unambiguous answer to the three points of the US declaration.

In conclusion, the US considers the position taken publicly by the Political Bureau and Central Committee of the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (French section of the Fourth International) with regard to the attacks by OCI members on members of the LOR and of the LCR in Amiens on October 20, 1976, to be perfectly justified.

Revolutionary greetings,
United Secretariat
of the Fourth International

Motion and Statement by Jones at United Secretariat Meeting of November 13-14, 1976

[The following motion concerning the OCRFI was defeated at the November 13-14, 1976, meeting of the United Secretariat.]

Resolution by Jones:

The United Secretariat considers that the OCRFI statement meets the conditions for opening a discussion, as decided upon at the October 16-17, 1976, United Secretariat meeting. The United Secretariat therefore decides to issue a public statement to be published parallel with the statement of the OCRFI. The text of the United Secretariat statement will be that of the resolution adopted at the October 16-17, 1976, meeting, edited for public use.

The United Secretariat will discuss at its December 1976 meeting the forms and modalities for this discussion that will be proposed to the OCRFI. The United Secretariat will also make proposals for joint actions with the OCRFI, with the objective of linking the progress of the discussions to progress of common activity. The United Secretariat will also decide the organizational framework under which the Fourth International will function in the discussion with the OCRFI.

In light of developments since the October discussion a further meeting should be held with the OCRFI to clarify:

- i. the significance of the statements in *Correspondance Internationale* of October 1976 and the nature of polemics between the two organisations;
- ii. the issue of violence in the workers movement;
- iii. proposals for joint work.

Statement by Jones

Given the unanimous resolution at the last United Secretariat meeting on a coherent and correct position on relations with the OCRFI it was important if possible to continue unanimous approach at this meeting. In particular, it was important to have an agreement with the French comrades on tactics on how to continue the line adopted at the last United Secretariat; this is for the evident reason that relations between the LCR and the OCI are a dominant element in relations between the United Secretariat and the OCRFI. However, at this Secretariat a position was taken which on a number of crucial points is impossible to support and is in contradiction to that taken at the last meeting.

1. The United Secretariat letter demands an admission from the OCRFI that they have changed their position ("une caractérisation de même nature, s'inscrivant dans la continuité des caractérisations précédentes"). This is not a permissible method either in relation to where such demands for self-criticism have their historical origin or even from the point of view of elementary social and political psychology. We can and *must* demand absolute clarity and lack of ambiguity on *present* positions of the OCRFI, but we cannot demand an explanation of whether they have *changed* and *self-criticized* previous positions.

2. In my opinion, and based on a study of available material, it is absolutely clear that violence by the OCI

took place at Amiens—the only question is whether this was organized by its leadership or brought about by individual leaders or rank-and-file elements. The fact that the OCI leadership covered up this situation with pathetic statements and denials is both extremely serious in itself and revealing on the methods of this leadership. This issue, and the position of the OCI on the LOR (Vargaites) must be dealt with at a meeting with the OCRFI as soon as this can be organized—the very first meeting of any discussion. However, this strong personal opinion is something quite different from the United Secretariat as a body taking a position that acts of violence by the OCI members have occurred. For such a serious accusation to be made, one which if substantiated and not clarified by an unambiguous position of the OCRFI, must lead to the rapid break of any discussions with them, clear and unambiguous evidence accepted as authoritative by militants outside our ranks must be brought forward. Such evidence is clearly accumulating in the dossier presented to this United Secretariat. However, the Secretariat has *not* had a serious discussion on the issue and it is *irresponsible* and lowering the authority of the Secretariat in such circumstances to send declarations such as the last paragraph of the letter.

3. The draft letter asserts that the declaration of the OCRFI is not clear on whether it regards the International as revolutionary. There is no doubt that the declaration of the OCRFI is weak, above all that virtually no practical consequences of such a recognition are drawn. I stated at the time of the October 19 meeting with the OCRFI that a clearer and stronger statement should have been asked for. However, at that time other comrades did not agree with this. Taking the OCRFI statement as it is, however, the declaration does satisfy the correct conditions laid down by the United Secretariat. Naturally, the reasons the OCRFI gives for considering the United Secretariat revolutionary are not the ones we would give. The declaration does not make it clear that the practical conclusions which we would demand of a recognition of an organization as revolutionary will be met. But it does satisfy the condition the Secretariat laid down for *initiating* a discussion, which is of course something quite different from a satisfactory *conclusion* of the discussion.

It is true that since the October meeting statements have been made, notably in *Correspondance Internationale* of October 1976, that at least arguably call into question the meaning of the OCRFI declaration. It is correct to demand unambiguity and clarification of these statements. However, this should be taken up in the meetings with the OCRFI which would be necessary for determining a discussion.

The correct procedure is to publish the two declarations, which read by any militant would clearly mean what they say and not any "secret" meaning given to them by any party, and to proceed rapidly to discuss the points indicated above and in the resolution voted for by 2 United Secretariat members and which it was indicated was supported by two observers.

If it could have been possible to arrive at a compromise

to clarify matters further and satisfy comrades, for example by having a further meeting with the OCRFI, this would have been correct to preserve a unanimous approach, although it would have been tactically bad in actual relations with the OCRFI. However, as discussion revealed it was not possible to have compromise even on this minimal proposal, it is important that clarity of positions is revealed. For that reason not a compromise resolution but a slightly amended version of the original one I drafted was submitted to the vote.

It goes without saying that although the United Secretariat resolution is incorrect it must be carried out and no action taken outside the framework laid down by the United Secretariat is permissible under democratic centralism. However, in light of the decision taken at this United Secretariat it will be necessary for those forces in the International in disagreement with the line adopted at the Secretariat, and in agreement with the general alternative resolution, to meet to discuss how to undertake a struggle to gain a correct decision.

December 8, 1976, Letter from Comrades Barnes, Hansen, Sheppard, and Waters to the United Secretariat

New York, N.Y.
December 8, 1976

To the United Secretariat

Dear Comrades,

As observers at the United Secretariat meeting of October 16-17, 1976, we shared the sense of accomplishment felt by everyone there over the unanimous vote for resolutions opening the door to a united center, organizing a democratic and authoritative world congress, and clearing the way for a discussion with the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International. We felt equal satisfaction when the OCRFI on October 19 accepted the conditions laid down in the latter resolution.

Consequently, the letter to the OCRFI dated November 14, which was approved by a majority of the United Secretariat, has aroused grave concern among us. It goes against the unanimous decision of the October 17 United Secretariat meeting.

Before taking up the questions it raises, we think the letter itself calls for clarification; it is written in such an obscure way that it is difficult to determine its purpose and what it is talking about.

The context is the sustained effort of the OCRFI to open up friendly relations and a political discussion with the United Secretariat of the Fourth International despite repeated rebuffs. The OCRFI's effort led, after various ups and downs, to a meeting of representatives of the two organizations on October 19. At this meeting the United Secretariat delegation presented the resolution adopted unanimously by the United Secretariat two days previously. The text is as follows:

"We propose that the United Secretariat of the Fourth International and the Organising Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International make parallel statements to be printed in *Rouge, Informations Ouvrières* and other publications of the Fourth International and the OCRFI.

"1. That the goal of the discussions is to strengthen the force of the Fourth International as a single international organisation based on the program of Trotskyism, including adherence to democratic centralism.

"2. That the United Secretariat and the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire while holding deep differences with some of the positions of the OCRFI and the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste consider them to be revolutionary organisations.

"3. That the OCRFI and the OCI similarly affirm that they consider the Fourth International and its French section, the LCR, to be revolutionary organisations although they hold deep differences with some of their positions.

"In view of the agreement on these points, the United Secretariat will open an organized discussion with the OCRFI on the basis of a mutually agreed on agenda."

After some discussion on various matters, including the meaning of the three points, the delegation of the OCRFI accepted the resolution of the United Secretariat. In its statement, which it drew up in a caucus during the meeting, the OCRFI delegation first repeated the text of the resolution and then specified acceptance of it in the following terms:

"The OCRFI renews its proposal to open a discussion between the two international organizations, without any conditions or preliminary requisites, the objective being to reconstruct a united Fourth International on the basis of its founding program; in order to try to overcome the differences that were at the origin of a split that lasted for almost a quarter of a century.

"That the goal of the discussions is to strengthen the force of the Fourth International as a single international organization based on the program of Trotskyism, including adherence to democratic centralism.

"The delegation of the Organizing Committee holds that ties with the Fourth International and affirmation of the validity of its program characterize an organization as revolutionary.

"Both the United Secretariat and its sections, and the Organizing Committee and its organizations affirm the necessity for the Fourth International and the validity of its program. This characterizes both of them as revolutionary organizations."

The two delegations expressed their pleasure at having finally succeeded in overcoming the obstacles to a fraternal relationship that would make possible a mutually profitable discussion.

Proceeding in accordance with the agreement reached October 19, the OCRFI drew up an English translation of their statement for publication in its press internationally. Again in accordance with the agreement, the OCRFI submitted the draft with its English translation to the United Secretariat for approval. An accompanying letter was dated October 27, 1976.

The United Secretariat majority followed a different course. Instead of moving ahead on the basis of the agreement it had demanded the OCRFI accept, the United Secretariat majority switched its course 180 degrees. By way of justification, the United Secretariat majority contends in its November 14 letter that something new and unexpected happened, putting everything in question. The charge is formulated as follows:

"The manifold characterizations of the Fourth International, its United Secretariat, and its sections by the OCRFI and its organizations, together with the *practical consequences* that flow from these characterizations, have up till now been the major obstacle to any discussion. However, *after* the meeting between a delegation from the US of the Fourth International and a delegation from the OCRFI, *after* the statement made at the time of this meeting, the same sort of characterization, in a line of continuity with previous characterizations, has appeared in your official publications. The concluding paragraph of your October 1976 statement, therefore, has not cleared up the situation." (Emphasis in original.)

As can be seen, the letter charges that the OCRFI issued a new statement "in your official publications" *after* the October 19 meeting in which representatives of the two organizations reached the agreement indicated above. The implication is that if the statement had been issued *before* the October 19 meeting there would have been no cause for complaint.

As proof of the charge, several paragraphs are cited from the preface to the October issue (No. 1 of a new series) of the international information bulletin, *La Correspondance Internationale*, published by the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste, which adheres to the OCRFI.

The sentences in question express the view that in 1950-53, the Fourth International underwent a "destructive crisis," that this crisis has not yet been overcome, and that it "can only be overcome by the elimination from the Fourth International of revisionist positions contrary to the principles and program of the Fourth International." Without indicating the omission of three intervening paragraphs, the letter cites another sentence in the same vein in which the authors of the preface state that in their opinion the "destructive character" of the crisis in the Fourth International "resulted in its destruction as a centralized worldwide organization based on the Transitional Program."

The November 14 letter draws the following conclusion:

"The US considers that the statement by the International Bureau [of the OCRFI on the three points] does not *really* meet the demand formulated in Point 3 of its resolution of October 17, 1976 (i.e., 'that both the OCRFI and the OCI state that the Fourth International and its French section, the LCR, are revolutionary organizations, even though they may have deep differences with some of the positions held by the latter organizations')." (Emphasis in original.)

Furthermore, according to the letter, the OCRFI's

statement as a whole is put in question: "Such ambiguity cannot but help give working-class opinion and revolutionary militants the impression that your declaration was made in the framework of an unprincipled operation."

The letter goes on: ". . . only a clarification from you as regards Point 3 of the US resolution in particular can clear the way for opening up a debate enabling us to see if these three criteria can be met."

The letter also appears to demand that the OCRFI say something about points one and two, although this is not at all clear: "As of now, the 'International Bureau of the OCRFI' must give an unambiguous answer to the three points of the US declaration."

* * *

On the substantive questions the November 14 letter does not stand on firm ground.

1. The allegation that the preface to the new OCI bulletin was written *after* the October 19 meeting is particularly weak. No attempt appears to have been made to verify the facts. The IMT members of the United Secretariat, who drew up the letter, do not appear to have even asked the OCRFI about the date.

2. It can easily be shown that the bulletin containing the preface was printed *before* the October 19 meeting. For instance, a copy was received in New York on October 16.

3. Long before the October 19 meeting, the United Secretariat had taken note of the views of the leaders of the OCRFI on the nature and consequences of the 1950-53 crisis in the Fourth International as well as their views on the 1963 reunification.

These opinions were considered to be no barrier to opening a discussion with the OCRFI centered on current political issues. In fact there was general acknowledgment that precisely these opinions of the OCRFI leadership would have to be included among the topics to be discussed. No demand was made on the OCRFI to give up its view in advance of a discussion. What was demanded of the OCRFI was acceptance of the three requisites that were codified in the resolution presented by the representatives of the United Secretariat at the October 19 meeting. The OCRFI accepted the three requisites. The United Secretariat delegation voiced its satisfaction. That should have closed the long chapter marked by the dragging of feet and placed everything on a more auspicious basis.

* * *

The November 14 letter sent to the OCRFI places the United Secretariat in an untenable position.

First, it is ridiculous to demand that the OCRFI reaffirm acceptance of the three points they already accepted on October 19. If the leaders of the OCRFI take the oath a second time, what then? Will this satisfy the majority of the United Secretariat? Or will the majority demand that the OCRFI raise their right hand and solemnly swear a third and a fourth time?

Second, the majority of the United Secretariat has suddenly decided that the OCRFI's views on the "revisionism" to be found in the Fourth International contradict the OCRFI's acknowledgment that the Fourth International is a revolutionary organization.

It is the majority of the United Secretariat who are illogical. The discussion is called for *because* there are

differences. The premise accepted by the OCRFI is that both sides should be open to persuasion. If there were no differences there would be no grounds for discussion, or trying to convince each other.

If the majority of the United Secretariat were to apply their new position logically, it would have truly drastic repercussions within the Fourth International. For instance, we have not changed our views on the destructive role played by Pablo. Others are of the same opinion, including members of the International Majority Tendency (Comrade Lequenne, for example). About half of the international holds that the famous turn at the Ninth World Congress marked a departure from Trotskyism. Leading comrades hold that the resolution on armed struggle, passed by a majority at the 1974 congress, revises the tenets of Trotskyism.

Does the majority faction propose to refuse to discuss with these comrades unless they first give up their views? Will they demand an oath to that effect? Would the majority faction demand that they repeat the oath because of the suspicion that they had their fingers crossed and thus were not *really* unambiguous? We trust that the demands of logic will not carry the majority faction that far.

Third, the letter deals a political blow to the Fourth International. The letter testifies to indefensible capriciousness in the conduct of negotiations. It likewise demonstrates that the United Secretariat, for whatever reason, stands in fear of opening a discussion with the OCRFI.

Fourth, the letter is evidence of the growth of sectarianism in the leading body of the Fourth International. While proclaiming a policy of seeking to unite the mighty proletarian forces required to advance the world revolution to success, the IMT demonstrates in practice that it is not even capable of welcoming the overtures of a Trotskyist current that wishes to strengthen the Fourth International. It rejects the positive course adopted by the OCRFI of seeking to overcome the years of bitter partisan polemics through a discussion that will demarcate the differences and probe the possibility of resolving them.

The least that can be said of this sorry performance is that the majority leadership of the Fourth International has in this instance shown political incompetence.

* * *

Why was such a letter written? In our opinion, the IMT has been divided on how to respond to the overtures of the OCRFI. One current, seeing the obvious advantages to be gained from accepting the positive moves of the OCRFI at face value, favored opening a dialogue and seeking to act in common in the class struggle wherever possible.

Another current, unfortunately in the majority, took a sectarian stance. It was determined to block any rapprochement. However, its leaders did not act forthrightly. In the United Secretariat they approved a course of responding positively to the advances made by the OCRFI. At the same time they adopted an extremely hostile attitude toward the OCRFI. This went so far as condemning friendly gestures to the OCRFI such as extending invitations to send observers to conventions.

In addition the majority of the IMT sought to provoke the OCRFI into moves that would blow up the efforts at rapprochement.

Another tack was to lay down conditions they felt certain the OCRFI would refuse to meet. Thus they counted on the OCRFI rejecting one or all of the demands in the resolution passed at the October 16-17 meeting of the United Secretariat. When the OCRFI, much to their surprise, accepted the demands, the majority of the IMT found themselves trapped by their own maneuver.

Instead of recognizing the damage to the Fourth International already inflicted by their unprincipled maneuvers and sectarian attitude toward the OCRFI and deciding that it would now be better to act in accordance with the positive approach approved by the United Secretariat, the majority of the IMT decided to push for an end to the attempt to establish friendly relations. This is the meaning of the November 14 letter. It is worse than previous moves because it comes *after* a meeting with the OCRFI in which agreement was reached.

The rationale for this course is the diehard factionalism of the IMT. The key leaders are afraid that the OCRFI might continue along the course it has begun until a fusion of forces would be feasible. If that were to occur, the IMT visualizes a bloc being formed by the Leninist Trotskyist Faction and the OCRFI. From their corner, such an outcome must be nipped in the bud at any cost!

The reality is that the LTF scorns a narrow factional outlook. From the beginning, the LTF has adhered to the principle that the interests of the Fourth International stand above those of any faction. To build and to strengthen the Fourth International by bringing and keeping together all the forces standing on the program laid down by the founding congress, including democratic centralism, is a task that should be carried out without regard to narrowly conceived factional interests.

In this respect, it remains to be seen how the OCRFI will evolve. The organization is not monolithic. A current may exist that opposes rapprochement, particularly with the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire. It is certain, however, that a positive outcome hinges at this point on opening a fraternal discussion with the OCRFI and doing everything possible to foster and advance comradely relations with them.

In line with this, we would propose the following immediate steps:

1. To reconsider the November 14 letter. It was a blunder to approve it.
2. To resume the favorable attitude taken by the delegation of the United Secretariat toward the OCRFI's acceptance of the conditions laid down in the October 17 United Secretariat resolution on this question.
3. To open regular meetings with representatives of the OCRFI to remove possible misunderstandings that may have arisen recently or that may arise again in working to improve relations.
4. To publish in the *International Internal Discussion Bulletin* the preface to the first issue of *La Correspondance Internationale* so as to make it available to the membership of the Fourth International.
5. To likewise publish in the *International Internal Discussion Bulletin* the text of the statement that the OCRFI proposed to publish in line with the agreement reached at the October 19 meeting.
6. To move ahead with the discussion with the OCRFI projected in the agreement reached October 19.

7. To nominate an official United Secretariat delegation to observe the December international conference of the OCRFI. The OCRFI has invited observers of the United Secretariat to take the floor there and say whatever they wish. This would constitute an excellent opportunity, it would seem, to present the viewpoint of the United

Secretariat directly to members of the OCRFI from many countries.

Comradely yours,
s/ Jack Barnes, Joseph
Hansen, Barry Sheppard,
Mary-Alice Waters

[Enclosures one and two attached to the above letter appear previously in this bulletin. They are the November 14, 1976, letter from the United Secretariat of the Fourth International to the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International, and the October 27, 1976, Statement of the OCRFI.]

Enclosure Three

[The following is a translation from *La Correspondance internationale* (international bulletin of the OCI of France) no. 1, October 1976.]

Preface

[*La Correspondance internationale* [International Correspondence] will appear hereafter as an international information bulletin published under the auspices of the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste [Internationalist Communist Organization], an organization belonging to the Comité d'organisation pour la reconstruction de la IV Internationale [Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International].

Our goal is to have this bulletin appear regularly as a monthly. In this way we intend to regularly provide OCI militants, and all those who follow our activities or are associated with us, the information they need about the activities of organizations affiliated to the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International, and about problems and discussions that arise in the course of the activities of these organizations, as well as about the issues being debated more generally within organizations and currents that claim adherence to the Fourth International.

At the same time, *La Correspondance internationale* will continue to serve as the forum for publishing in French the political documents drawn up by the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International on the basis of its discussions. In order to accomplish this task, supplements or special issues will be published as the need arises. But parallel to this, we thought it was essential to make known as widely as possible some of the various aspects of the struggle to reconstruct the Fourth International, without waiting for documents to be drawn up on these questions by a meeting of the International Bureau.

This need arises from the way in which the struggle to reconstruct the Fourth International is progressing—which is primarily expressed by the life and the activity of the Organizing Committee—and from the OCI's responsibilities in this struggle.

From this standpoint, the decision by the OCI's Central Committee to publish an international information bulletin answers to the needs of the political campaign whose thrust is indicated in the letter addressed by the OCI to the

readers of *Informations Ouvrières* [Workers News] to activists, workers, and youth.

Therefore, since the revolutionary actions of the Spanish workers foreshadow upheavals that will have immense impact on the world working-class struggle, in the next issue of this bulletin we will publish the documents adopted by the conference of the Spanish Trotskyist group, Fourth International, which is affiliated with the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International.

In the December issue we will try to draw the political lessons of the November 13-14, 1976, symposia on the political revolution, at which the discussion begun in March with Leonid Plyushch, Jiri Pelikan and Jan Kavan will be carried forward and broadened.

In this first issue we are publishing a balance sheet of the positions taken by the United Secretariat on the Portuguese revolution.

It was necessary to draw an initial balance sheet here for several reasons. In the first place, new problems are being brought to the fore by the advance of the class struggle in Europe, whose axis and direction, as we have stressed, is indicated by the Portuguese revolution. Or rather, in various forms the fundamental problems of revolutionary strategy and tactics are being posed anew. In line with this, it is indispensable to try to grasp the essential lessons of the period we have gone through and not let these be forgotten.

Furthermore, in a document adopted in February 1976, the United Secretariat has itself drawn a balance sheet of sorts on its orientation in the period following April 1974. This is why *La Correspondance internationale* is publishing unrevised a discussion article completed shortly before the Portuguese presidential elections. The fruitless attempt to run a "revolutionary" candidate, as well as the divisions that appeared subsequently within the United Secretariat majority (and the majority of the French LCR), with some asserting that a vote for Carvalho had the same significance as one for Pato, while others (Alain Krivine, for example) openly called for a vote for Pato in disregard of any class criterion, were the result of basic positions that had crystallized previously in response to the Portuguese revolution. A postscript would not modify our conclusion.

Having said this much—since this article represents a contribution to a debate we believe to be necessary—we must specify in what framework the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International places this discussion.

Why a Discussion?

It has now been three years since we in the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International asked the United Secretariat of the Fourth International to be allowed to participate in the discussion for the Tenth World Congress that it was preparing to hold. The Organizing Committee got the brush-off.

The Tenth World Congress has since been held. But it did not even temporarily resolve the problems before it nor remove the grounds for the Organizing Committee's proposal.

Since then, most importantly, the class struggle on an international level has scored such advances that we are obliged to speak of a turn in the world situation.

This turn was expressed by the opening of the proletarian revolution in Portugal and by the defeat of imperialism in Vietnam, an event of worldwide importance. This turn is reflected also in the accelerated breakdown of the world market. The various facets of the economic downturn are being promoted by the generalized political crisis of the bourgeoisie's methods of rule, and they themselves are becoming factors aggravating this political crisis.

This turn in the world situation is occurring in the context of the phase in the class struggle whose features became clear in 1968. Marked by an imperialist defeat of worldwide importance, and by the fact that the proletarian revolution came onto the agenda in Europe in general and actually began in Portugal, this phase of the class struggle is moving toward a multiplying of revolutionary situations in which the question of power will directly be posed.

The OCI does not see the problems and crisis of the Fourth International in separation from the demands posed by this situation. (The theses adopted in 1972 by the 17th congress of the OCI stressed, "There is no doubt that the crisis confronting the Fourth International and the crisis of the workers movement dominated by Stalinism and reformism, are one and the same problem.")

It is in accordance with such a perspective that the OCI assesses the difficulties it encounters on the road to achieving an organized discussion that will make it possible to overcome this crisis. This is why we are not worried about personal or prestige considerations, or by the ups and downs that mark this process.

This is why, without raising any prerequisites or conditions, we have repeated our proposals for a discussion and taken numerous initiatives to facilitate opening such a discussion.

Perhaps at the outset it is necessary to give a resume of our basic positions.

What do we mean by a crisis in the Fourth International? We think that in 1950-53 the Fourth International experienced a destructive crisis that was marked above all by the arbitrary expulsion of the majority of the French section, and later in 1953 by a split throughout the Fourth International worldwide, in which the International Committee, made up in particular of the SWP and the English, French, Swiss and Chinese sections, was formed.

This crisis was given its destructive character by the fact that it was provoked by an offensive against the principles and program of the Fourth International by a revisionist current that formed in the very center of the International, within its leadership.

We believe that this crisis has not yet been overcome, and that it can only be overcome by the elimination from the Fourth International of revisionist positions contrary to its principles and program. This aim cannot be achieved by diplomatic arrangements or by administrative procedures, but by drawing a balance sheet of the history of the Fourth International and of its crisis as this relates to the pressing problems raised by the development of the class struggle itself.

In a discussion with the United Secretariat delegation, we were asked "What is your objective?" An OCI representative replied:

"Reconstructing the Fourth International on a principled basis, and we believe there are currents alien to the Transitional Program within the United Secretariat. There is no question of any splitting operation. If our objective were a split, we would know how to bring one about. What we want is discussion leading toward the reconstruction of the Fourth International, the instrument bequeathed by Trotsky, which was reconstituted in 1943-47 and destroyed in 1950-53 by Pablo and Pabloism."

Reconstructing the Fourth International? Yes, a unified Fourth International must be reconstructed on the basis of its founding program, the Transitional Program, as a leading center functioning in accordance with the norms of democratic centralism.

If we consider that the crisis of the Fourth International has had a destructive character, that is above all because the blows dealt by revisionism to the international organization founded by Leon Trotsky have led to its destruction as an organization centralized internationally on the basis of the Transitional Program.

To take one example that the class struggle has brought to the fore, no one denies that all the organizations and currents of the workers movement have had to respond to the problems posed by the Portuguese revolution.

On this subject we wrote in the report adopted by the Twentieth Congress of the OCI:

"All the organizations and currents of the workers movement are confronted with the problems raised by the course of the Portuguese revolution. No one can escape this test or avoid taking a position.

"In 1936-37 the Spanish revolution played a similar role. With incomparable clarity, the flame of the revolution illuminated the opposing positions within the workers movement. As early as July 27, 1936, Leon Trotsky wrote in a letter to the International Secretariat of the movement for the Fourth International: 'The question of the Popular Front is now posed with absolute clarity before all the workers.' Since the revolution posed them in terms that were crucial and urgent for the future of the Spanish proletariat—and for the world proletariat—all the questions of revolutionary principles, strategy and tactics demanded unequivocal answers. The cleavages that took place at that time were to prove fundamental in the formation of the Fourth International itself.

"But this analogy must not lead us to forget the essential differences between the periods. The revolutionary upsurge of 1936, which culminated in Spain, took place in a period of the class struggle marked by terrible defeats for the proletariat, the responsibility for which was borne by those who led the workers movement, in particular the Stalinist leadership of the degenerated Communist International serving the counterrevolutionary interests of the Kremlin bureaucracy. The beginning of the proletarian

revolution in Portugal heralds the dawn of a new phase of the world proletarian revolution. At the same time the onset of this revolution is itself the result of profound changes within the world working class, initiated by the revolutionary upsurge of the proletariat that marked the conclusion of the Second World War.

"But the course of the class struggle is not mechanically predetermined. The counterattack made by the workers under the extremely difficult political conditions following the crushing of the German working class and its organizations, which culminated after the French general strike of June 1936 in the Spanish revolution, opened up new perspectives. Under the leadership of Leon Trotsky, the organizations that were fighting for the Fourth International, which had just held the 'first international conference for the Fourth International' in July 1936, threw all their forces into the battle.

"And at the international level, this battle was fought in a centralized way.

"The organizations that were acting to form a new international, the Fourth International, were for the most part numerically weak. They had to confront the counter-revolutionary frenzy of Stalinism within the workers movement. Their cadres were often inexperienced. Their organizations were at times torn apart; splits took place even at the national level. Nonetheless, the international leadership acted as a genuine political center, not simply an administrative or organizational framework. In relation to the vital problems of revolution and counterrevolution, Trotskyist politics were ONE. . . .

"In 1974-75 from this point of view the situation was totally different. A whole gamut of organizations and tendencies claimed adherence to Trotskyism, sometimes without even formally adhering to the founding program of the Fourth International. They held the most contradictory positions on the central problems of revolution and counterrevolution. Organizations that claimed to speak and act in the name of Trotskyism pursued an orientation and carried out a type of work thoroughly contrary to the most elementary teachings of Leon Trotsky.

"This fact confirms the political conclusion that was the basis for forming the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International: the blows dealt to the Fourth International after the crisis of 1950-1953 have led to the destruction of the Fourth International as a centralized world organization based on the Transitional Program. The revisionists were not able to destroy the Fourth International as a program. Its political continuity has been preserved throughout the struggle at the national and international levels by Trotskyist organizations that have defended the program and the gains of the Trotskyist movement. . . ."

Let us add that the importance of the Portuguese revolution consists in the fact that it is not an isolated, Western phenomenon but is both the highest political expression at this stage, and at the same time a component part, of a combined movement. Placing the proletarian revolution on the agenda in Europe, it constitutes an axis indicating the direction that the struggles of the world working class, particularly the European proletariats, are going to take. It also constitutes a political force impelling the proletariat toward revolution.

The Portuguese revolution takes place in a world situation in which we see coming together in Spain all the

elements of an open revolutionary crisis that is going to have incalculable consequences for the entire "European order," a world situation in which the crisis of bourgeois rule in the major European countries is deepening, while the Stalinist bureaucracy, caught in a vise between fundamental class forces, is itself on the road to explosive crises. Already the contradictions opening up in the bureaucracy are cracking and weakening its international apparatus.

To put it in different terms, the international situation we have described can be characterized as one in which the bases of the world order established at Yalta are in the process of collapsing, while the international political relationships inherited from that former equilibrium still survive but are in crisis.

In a more profound sense, assessing this situation as it is reflected on the level of political relationships, and the relationship of forces within the working class, we might say that new relationships are tending to be established between the masses, the militants and the counterrevolutionary apparatuses that are subordinated to imperialism.

In *The Third International after Lenin*, Trotsky remarked that "politics seen as a mass historic force always lags behind the economy." By that he meant that there is always a lag between the objective foundations of a historical epoch—or even of a period in the class struggle—and their expression in social processes as a whole, in the activity of millions of people. The period of the class struggle that opened in 1968 is characterized by the OCI as one in which all the features and tendencies of the imperialist era are coming to their full maturity.

It is a period marked by a tendency for the class struggle to return to its basic forms, and a tendency for the international working class to regroup on new axes.

More precisely this is a period which, far from making the principles, method and strategic line of the Transitional Program of the Fourth International "outmoded," on the contrary gives them their full meaning. Mobilizing the masses to take power through transitional demands that lead "inevitably to one and only one conclusion," the conquest of power by the proletariat, is the very key to the entire present international situation.

That is why a discussion of strategic and tactical problems, the workers united front, the workers and peasants government, and the concrete application of these slogans in each country, is so vitally needed and why this goes hand in hand with the need for drawing a balance sheet of the crisis in the Fourth International.

Beyond a doubt, the advance of the international class struggle offers great opportunities for the Trotskyist organizations.

However, the international document adopted by the Twentieth Congress of the OCI pointed out: "as a conscious expression of an unconscious process, the program and political action based on the program are indispensable to realize the full possibilities of this period."

The opening up of this new period in the class struggle has exacerbated the unresolved crisis of the Fourth International. Every organization and current has had to follow the implications of its orientations to the end and apply this orientation to the vital questions of the class struggle.

By itself, the objective situation has not, and could not, resolve the differences existing between different organiza-

tions, as well as within the United Secretariat itself. On the contrary, it has confirmed the importance of these differences and clarified what they involve.

In our opinion, the reason for the new splits and continuing fragmentation can be found in the continued presence of revisionist positions within organizations

adhering to the Fourth International. This process can only be halted by an organized political discussion that would go to the root of the positions that run counter to Trotskyism, positions that emerge all the more clearly as everyone is obliged to confront the most burning questions of the class struggle.

December 10, 1976, Letter from the OCRFI to the United Secretariat

Organizing Committee for
the Reconstruction of the
Fourth International
Paris
December 10, 1976

‘United Secretariat
of the Fourth International’

Dear Comrades,

We have received your letter of November 14, 1976. We must express to you our surprise at the arguments you offer for rejecting collaboration in working out concrete measures to make it possible to open up an organized discussion between the United Secretariat and the Organizing Committee.

You assert that the statement signed by our International Bureau at the October 19 meeting in Brussels does not “really” reply to point 3 of the United Secretariat resolution dated October 17. The term “really” remains somewhat mysterious, especially since it is followed by your complaint about our continuing our characterizations of the United Secretariat. Are we thereby to understand that we must change our political positions even before the discussion is opened up?

As we have explained on several occasions—and again in Brussels—our starting point is a political assessment that has been worked out in the course of experiences that have unfolded over nearly a quarter of a century. But we are prepared to modify our positions as the discussion develops, just as we think you would be prepared to modify yours, if you were convinced of the correctness of one or another of our positions.

It might be said in passing that the October issue of the OCI International Bulletin, *La Correspondance Internationale*, was printed before our meeting; thus the articles it contains were written long before. But that is a secondary question.

The paragraphs you quote from the October issue of *La Correspondance Internationale* repeat the assessment of the problems of the Fourth International which the Organizing Committee has made many times before. Our assessment of the crisis which developed in the Fourth International between 1950 and 1953 is nothing new to you, any more than is the fact that we believe its consequences have not been overcome to the present day.

As for the assertion that the reconstruction of a unified Fourth International can only take place on the basis of eliminating political positions contrary to the program and principles of the Fourth International—it is precisely

that which defines one of the areas of discussion. If we did not think that the “deep differences” (to use the term that the United Secretariat resolution uses) that separate us touch on the program and principles in certain instances, we would be proposing not a common framework for discussion but as rapid a reunification as possible; and we would be prepared in that case, as we will be if the international discussion has positive results, to agree to apply democratic centralism in the framework of a single international organization.

You refer to our characterizations of the “United Secretariat and its sections,” and to the practical consequences that flow from them, as constituting the main obstacle to any discussion. Isn’t it clear, on the contrary, that it is these characterizations and the consequences that flow from them which make a discussion necessary? The main “practical consequence” is our existence as a separate international tendency, having an independent life. In fact, the existence of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International on one hand and the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International on the other hand makes it impossible for us to speak of the Fourth International today as a world organization centered on the Transitional Program. If we did the opposite, contrary to our long-established political positions, we would be involving ourselves in unprincipled maneuvers.

Consequently, there are no grounds for surprise if the October 19 statement by the International Bureau does not go against our general political positions. Beyond this, our characterizations are a matter for discussion.

We repeat what we said on October 19. A split which has lasted for almost twenty-five years cannot be explained by personal factors or be the result of conjunctural questions. Both sides have made deeply divergent political assessments, and in some cases we think that these differences involve questions of program and principle. In this sense, we do in fact believe that there are political positions within the United Secretariat and its sections that we would call revisionist and which we consider obstacles to reconstructing a united Fourth International on the basis of its founding program.

Only an international discussion can make it possible to overcome these problems. That is our opinion. We are ready to be convinced, in the course of the discussion, that there are no such revisionist positions that go against the program of the Fourth International. What we hope for is a positive outcome: namely, the reconstruction of a unified

Fourth International on the basis of its program.

Our initiative is based on the advances in the class struggle and on an accumulation of experience, which we think make it possible to overcome the crisis in the Fourth International. It is incompatible with any aim of provoking new splits.

It is through the international discussion that we will come to one conclusion or another. We will try to convince you that some of your positions are incorrect; we are prepared to be convinced that we might have incorrect positions concerning the problems facing the Fourth International today. No one can prejudge the outcome of this discussion.

Nor can anyone demand that these problems be considered as having been already resolved before the discussion takes place, or as a "precondition" for the discussion. That would be unacceptable because it is contrary to the basic spirit of any discussion.

At the root of the form taken by the crisis in the Fourth International is the expulsion of the majority of the PCI, French section of the Fourth International, in violation of the principles and statutes of the Fourth International, because it claimed the right to form an international tendency. Let us recall that the French majority had agreed to accept international discipline, even as regards following Pablo's orientation, which it condemned. It demanded the right to continue the political struggle by constituting itself as an international tendency. It was the denial of this right that led to the split; it was not the fault of the French majority.

The only precondition that you put forward on October 19 was that both sides recognize the other's organizations as revolutionary. We responded unambiguously to this by declaring that "ties with the Fourth International and affirmation of the validity of its program characterize an organization as revolutionary. Both the United Secretariat and its sections, and the Organizing Committee and its organizations affirm the necessity for the Fourth International and the validity of its program. This characterizes both of them as revolutionary organizations."

It seemed to us, coming out of the October 19 meeting, that an important step had been taken towards a discussion, and we can only deplore the fact that you are once again placing obstacles in its path.

You add: "In our opinion, discussion whose aim is to 'strengthen the Fourth International as a united organization based on the program of Trotskyism, which involves accepting democratic centralism,' assumes not only a programmatic agreement and the acceptance of democratic centralism but also the possibility for unity in action in the ongoing class struggle between all sections and

sympathizing organizations of the Fourth International and the organizations adhering to the OCRFI."

We quite agree, and that is why, in France for example, the OCI had proposed that the LCR and the OCI discuss running a single candidate in the legislative by-election in the 5th Arrondissement in Paris, insofar as the positions of the two organizations would permit. If this type of political action in common was impossible, it is not on account of the OCI.

We understand, incidentally, that in Québec, despite the tactical differences between the two organizations, the GSTQ (adhering to the Organizing Committee) called for a vote for the LSA candidate, and that both organizations called for a vote for independent working-class candidates in opposition to all the bourgeois candidates.

Let us add, since you refer to it briefly, that the OCI categorically denies that there was the slightest act of violence on its part in Amiens on October 20, and that, for that matter, we congratulate ourselves on the positive discussions which have taken place, whether at meetings sponsored by the LCR or the OCI, between LCR and OCI militants.

In conclusion, we are convinced that some of the aspects which you consider "ambiguous" form part of the discussion itself and cannot be clarified outside this context.

In this regard, we would like to inform you of the fact that on December 26-30, 1976, a meeting will take place in Paris of the enlarged International Bureau of the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International, in which representatives of our organizations in Argentina, Peru, Bolivia, Venezuela, Brazil, France, Germany, Britain, Italy and Canada, among others, will take part. Central to the work of this meeting will be the problems of the Fourth International today, particularly the need for an organized discussion of the type the Organizing Committee wants to begin with the United Secretariat. The International Bureau invites the United Secretariat and any of its sections that may be interested to observe the proceedings. Naturally, your delegation would have the right to present its views fully, if it so wished.

Again, we are ready at any time to reopen the discussion begun in Brussels on October 19, and to cooperate with you on setting up a schedule for the international discussion.

For the International Bureau
of the Organizing Committee
for the Reconstruction of the
Fourth International

Letter to Comrades Barnes, Hansen, Sheppard, and Waters Approved by December 20-21, 1976, United Secretariat Meeting

[This letter was approved by a majority of the United Secretariat at its December 1976 meeting.]

December 21, 1976

Dear Comrades,

We have received your letter dated December 8, 1976. In it you state: "the letter to the OCRFI dated November 14, which was approved by a majority of the United Secretariat, has aroused grave concern among us." You continue: "The letter itself calls for clarification; it is written in such an obscure way that it is difficult to determine its purpose and what it is talking about."

In order to alleviate your "grave concern," which must have been evoked by your difficulty in "determining the purpose" of the letter from the United Secretariat, we propose to make its content explicit—even though it would seem that, despite your uncertainty, you have already decided on the following interpretation: "The key leaders [of the United Secretariat] are afraid that the OCRFI might continue along the course it has begun until a fusion of forces would be feasible. If that were to occur, the IMT visualizes a bloc being formed by the Leninist Trotskyist Faction and the OCRFI. From their corner, such an outcome must be nipped in the bud at any cost!"

1. Let's look at the facts. You tell us: "The two delegations expressed their pleasure at having finally succeeded in overcoming the obstacles to a fraternal relationship that would make possible a mutually profitable discussion. Proceeding in accordance with the agreement reached October 19 [the date of the meeting between the delegations from the United Secretariat and the OCRFI], the OCRFI drew up an English translation of their statement for publication in its press internationally. Again in accordance with the agreement, the OCRFI submitted the draft with its English translation to the United Secretariat for approval. An accompanying letter was dated October 27, 1976. The United Secretariat majority followed a different course. Instead of moving ahead on the basis of the agreement it had demanded the OCRFI accept, the United Secretariat majority switched its course 180 degrees."

These assertions deserve some comment. Generally speaking, there was neither agreement nor pleasure. A delegation from the United Secretariat confined itself to presenting the OCRFI delegation with the resolution adopted at its October 16-17 meeting. The OCRFI responded with the text accompanying the October 27 letter addressed to the United Secretariat. It was up to the United Secretariat to decide whether or not this text corresponded to the letter and spirit of the resolution approved by a unanimous vote of the United Secretariat. If it did, the United Secretariat was prepared to publish the OCRFI statement in its press alongside a United Secretariat resolution on the subject.

Now, the judgment of the United Secretariat, during its November 13-14 meeting, was that the OCRFI statement left open a number of ambiguities, particularly in light of

statements made in the October 1976 issue of *Correspondance Internationale*.

The United Secretariat confined itself at that point to demanding a *simple clarification*. Contrary to what you imply, it did not ask the OCRFI to "raise their right hand and solemnly swear."

The purpose of such a clarification was, among other things, to prevent the creation of grave concern in the mind of the working class and among revolutionary militants as to the real meaning of what you characterize as "the sustained effort of the OCRFI to open up friendly relations and a political discussion with the United Secretariat of the Fourth International." This clarification would also have made it possible for us to test the possibility of placing the discussions with the OCRFI in the context of "strengthening the force of the Fourth International as a single international organization based on the program of Trotskyism, including adherence to democratic centralism." (Point 1 of the United Secretariat resolution of October 16-17.)

2. In its reply to the letter from the United Secretariat of the Fourth International of November 14, 1976, the OCRFI, while refusing to clarify its October 19 statement, at the same time bluntly makes clear its intentions concerning the aim of its "fraternal approach," and its evaluation of the Fourth International and its sections.

The letter from the OCRFI dated December 10, 1976, states:

"We do in fact believe that there are political positions within the United Secretariat and its sections that we would call *revisionist* and which we consider *obstacles* to reconstructing a united Fourth International on the basis of its founding program. . . .As we have explained on several occasions—and again in Brussels—our starting point is a political assessment that has been worked out in the course of experiences that have unfolded over nearly a quarter of a century. . . .Our assessment of the crisis which developed in the Fourth International between 1950 and 1953 is nothing new to you, anymore than is the fact that we believe its consequences have not been overcome to the present day. . . .The reconstruction of a unified Fourth International can only take place on the basis of eliminating political positions contrary to the program and principles of the Fourth International." (our emphasis)

In anticipation of the OCRFI's reply, and in order to minimize the impact of the OCRFI's characterization of us as "revisionist," you are trying to shuffle the cards by remarking, for example, that "about half the International holds that the famous turn at the Ninth World Congress marked a departure from Trotskyism."

Does the OCRFI, either in its letter or in its body of official documents, develop a position on this question similar to the one you outline here? We don't think so.

Indeed, the OCRFI's logic rests on the link between the following two premises: on the one hand, there are "revisionist political positions within the United Secretariat"; on the other hand, "the reconstruction of a unified

Fourth International can only take place on the basis of eliminating political positions contrary to the program and principles of the Fourth International.”

There can be no doubt as to the fact that an otherwise revolutionary organization can hold revisionist positions on certain questions. On this point, it is sufficient to recall the example of Rosa Luxemburg on the national question. Likewise, we are certain that when you characterize certain positions taken by the Ninth World Congress as revisionist, you in no way mean to cast doubt on the revolutionary character of the Fourth International.

When, on the other hand, the OCRFI declares that only the elimination of these revisionist positions can make “the reconstruction of the Fourth International” possible, it is obviously *making revisionism the main criterion of its characterization of the Fourth International, which logically leads it to proclaim the necessity of reconstructing the Fourth International, which has been destroyed by revisionism.*

For that matter, that is what Pierre Lambert wrote to Jack Barnes on July 23, 1976:

“The fact that there was a revisionist current in the ranks of the Fourth International is something that we together have noted and described since 1950-53. The fact that this revisionist current has not laid down its arms can be seen in the struggle that you, the SWP, for your part, have been conducting since 1969 in the ranks of the United Secretariat, and in the one that we, along with the organizations adhering to the Organizing Committee to Reconstruct the Fourth International, have been conducting. The differences now cover *all the most important questions of principles, strategy, and tactics.* Mandel has just taken a step forward, publicly stating *that he considered liquidating the Fourth International, and thus its program, a possibility. At the same time, the LCR leadership has not hesitated to come out in support of the Union of the Left-Popular Front.*” (our emphasis)

Thus, we cannot help but reject the type of analogy which you are attempting to draw—in order to obscure this question—between the current debate within the International concerning this or that political position which you characterize as revisionist, and the characterizations formed by the OCRFI *with their practical organizational consequences.*

For that matter, in the concrete political arena, this essential difference is not difficult to discern. In its December 10 letter, the OCRFI quite appropriately picks the recent example of the *elections in Québec.* They write:

“We understand, incidentally, that in Québec, despite the tactical differences between the two organizations, the GSTQ [Groupe Socialiste des Travailleurs du Québec—Québec Socialist Workers Group] (adhering to the Organizing Committee) called for a vote for the LSA [League for Socialist Action/Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière—Canadian Section of the Fourth International] candidate, and that both organizations called for a vote for independent working-class candidates in opposition to all the bourgeois candidates.”

The LSO ran a candidate. The GSTQ did not, and unconditionally supported the candidates of the social democratic NPD-RMS, while the GMR ran three candidates.

Now, on this point, we read in *Libération* (the newspaper of the LSO) of December 1976: “The LSO also pointed out the GSTQ’s error in refusing to support the GMR [Groupe

Marxiste Révolutionnaire—Revolutionary Marxist Group]—another Trotskyist organization—while at the same time uncritically supporting the NPD-RMS coalition [a coalition of the New Democratic Party and the Rassemblement des Militants Syndicaux—Assembly of Trade Union Militants].”

Is not the fact that the GSTQ called, on the one hand, for a vote for “independent workers candidates in opposition to all the bourgeois candidates,” and, on the other hand, refused to call for a vote for the three GMR candidates a concrete result of the OCRFI’s characterization of a “tendency” within the Fourth International as revisionist? There cannot be the slightest doubt on this point. Could this refusal to call for a vote for the GMR be further explained by the fact that the three candidates of a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International (the GMR), supported by the LSO, were not “independent working-class candidates”? If so, the GSTQ’s “error” would have a definite meaning.

The quotations provided above from the OCRFI’s letter, in addition to the attitude of the GSTQ, amply justify our referring in our letter of November 14, 1976, to the *continuity* of the positions of the OCRFI. Besides, they themselves make this claim in their December 10 letter!

3. The letter adopted by the United Secretariat and its specific demands for clarification obviously were not aimed at demanding that the OCI and the OCRFI make a self-criticism, but to force these organizations to withdraw such formulations as:

a) “decomposed intellectuals exude the hatred of the petty-bourgeoisie for the working class and its traditions; hatred for the proletarian revolution and its centralized goal, the dictatorship of the proletariat; hatred for Bolshevism. . .” “Decomposed leftism misleads youth by extolling the sexual, moral and ideological ‘revolution’. . . Revolution is not a matter of an individual revolution. It has aligned itself with the bourgeois order; whether consciously or unconsciously matters little at this stage of analysis. The petty-bourgeois decomposed leftist organizations, the PSU [Parti Socialiste Unifié—Unified Socialist Party], Ligue Communiste, AMR [Alliance Marxiste Révolutionnaire—Revolutionary Marxist Alliance], Mouvement du 22 mars, Lutte Ouvrière, anarcho-maoists, etc., have lined up with the bourgeoisie on the basic question of every revolution, which is, we repeat, the question of power. May-June 1968 shows that along with Stalinism, as its consequence and its flip-side, decomposed leftism has become the worst enemy of the revolution.” (17th Congress of the OCI, 1971.)

b) “However, between them (workers and youth) and the OCI there are illusions, the false perspectives of decomposed leftism and within this decomposed leftism present-day Pabloism is usurping the ‘label’ of Trotskyism, with the complicity of the bourgeoisie and its apparatuses. . . . As for the LCR’s Pabloism, whose revisionist-liquidationist and reactionary centrist character we have established, it uses precisely the ‘label’ of Trotskyism to lead a certain number of youth into the swamp of decomposed leftism and ‘popular front’ Stalinism.

“The function of Pabloism hereafter consists of a mission as *flank-guards for the Stalinist apparatus.*” (Documents of the OCI No. 4, *Introduction à l’étude du marxisme [Introduction to the Study of Marxism]*, p. 195, edited by the OCI’s educational commission; published in October 1976, emphasis ours.)

c) "It is true that Lutte Ouvrière, which lined up with the Ligue Communiste in the legislative elections, nevertheless condemned self-management as reviving Proudhon's corporatism. It is no less false and dangerous to identify socialism with suppressing the hierarchy and establishing fraternity.

"These moral abstractions cannot make us forget that Lutte Ouvrière, in alliance with the Ligue Communiste, which was itself allied with the Union of the Left, *that is, allied with a bourgeois party*, bore a share of the responsibility for maintaining Pompidou as president of the Republic, which the Union of the Left wanted at the time of the 1973 elections." (*Les Marxistes contre l'autogestion; recueil d'analyses, d'articles et de documents écrits de 1962 à 1974 pour combattre l'intoxication autogestionnaire* [Marxists Against Self-Management: A Collection of Analyses, Articles, and Documents Written Between 1962 and 1974 to Combat the Self-Management Fraud], pp.106-107; emphasis ours.)

d) "The character of the LCR (of Spain) as a petty-bourgeois organization and flank-guard for the Stalinist apparatus is expressed in the area of the national question as in every other." (August 1976 resolution of the Spanish OCI, published in *Correspondance Internationale* no. 2, November 1976, p. 18.)

Although we have never demanded a self-criticism of the past as a precondition, we would like to stress two points. *In the first place*, it seems normal and necessary to us that, in the face of such attacks against its French section, the LCR, or against its Spanish section, all the forces of the Fourth International respond with unfailing solidarity—unless, of course, we view these insults, slanders, and attacks over the last several years as a "friendly approach!" *Secondly*, all these attacks commonly characterize the LCR as an organization that expresses the interests of a *class* or a *social grouping* hostile to the proletariat. For us, recognizing a current of the workers movement as radically different from reformism and centrism and as clearly revolutionary is not simply a question of words. That means that, whatever errors it may commit on a *particular point*, this current taken as a whole clearly expresses the interests of the working class as against those of other social classes or social groupings (the Stalinist bureaucracy). You should also have examined the true meaning of the OCRFI's text that accompanied their October 27 letter from this angle.

4. Consequently, at this stage there is no reason to expect that the goal of even a discussion held "without conditions or prerequisites" on the part of the OCRFI would actually be for them, to strengthen the Fourth International and its sections. We would be interested in knowing the substantive reasons corroborating your distinct assertions concerning the OCRFI's objectives, what you call the "proposals from a Trotskyist current that wishes to strengthen the Fourth International." A reply on this matter would certainly contribute to guiding our understanding of the obscure motivations directing the course of the OCRFI.

5. Finally, in our November 14 letter, we enunciated what seemed to us to be the three criteria that allow us to respond effectively to a "policy attempting to unite the gigantic proletarian forces necessary to move toward the success of the world revolution."

We wrote:

"In our opinion, discussion whose aim is to 'strengthen

the Fourth International as a united organization based on the program of Trotskyism, which involves accepting democratic centralism,' assumes not only a programmatic agreement and the acceptance of democratic centralism but also the possibility for unity in action in the ongoing class struggle between all sections and sympathizing organizations of the Fourth International and the organizations adhering to the OCRFI."

Concerning this type of problem, if we take the example of the SWP, we find that *its* criteria for fusion are very narrow and confining, even marked by a dangerous sectarianism, because they require substantial agreement on national political tactics. Thus Comrade Larry Seigle, speaking of other revolutionary groups in the U.S.A., said in his report to the August 1976 SWP convention: "Provided that there is substantial agreement on what Trotskyists ought to be doing in the U.S. now, we would like to see a fusion of our forces with these groups." (*Internal Information Bulletin* no. 10, September 1976, p. 46, second column.)

On the other hand, comrades Barnes, Hansen, Shepard, and Waters are not afraid to stretch the principles Larry Seigle defined and to exhibit the greatest laxness at the international level when it suits them! They indicate agreement on the Transitional Program (of 1938) including democratic centralism as the *only* criterion for strengthening the International: "To build and to strengthen the Fourth International by bringing and keeping together all the forces standing on the program laid down by the founding congress, including democratic centralism, is a task that should be carried out without regard to narrowly conceived factional interests."

For our part, it is the *combination* of programmatic agreement, acceptance of democratic centralism, and the possibility of common work—*based* on characterizing the partners as revolutionary, with the implications that has for their role in defending the historical interests of the working class—that seems to us to constitute a solid nonsectarian foundation for engaging in a discussion with a perspective toward fusion.

Moreover, we recognize that the United Secretariat resolution of October 17, 1976, would certainly have gained clarity by making these three criteria explicit. Indeed as we explained in our November 14 letter, we believe that any perspective for strengthening the Fourth International or for fusion at the national and international level should be based on a theoretical and practical verification of these three criteria. That is what will demonstrate that a true convergence between various revolutionary organizations does exist.

6. In this context, in order to focus on the starting point for a possible evolution on the part of the OCRFI and the OCI, which you imply, it is useful to state the concrete points of convergence in the present state of affairs, in the current class struggle, between the OCI, the determining force in the OCRFI, and the LCR, the French section of the Fourth International. Obviously, in order to meet the need for information on the part of the militants of the International, the United Secretariat will provide all the necessary materials on the subject in the future. Nevertheless, let us briefly highlight several problems.

a) In one essential area of revolutionaries' intervention, that of trade union work, the political and practical differences are so great that they prevent any common work between the OCI and the LCR. Suffice it to mention,

by way of example, what the OCI had to say about one of the most significant workers struggles in recent years in France: the strike and occupation of Lip. After having made it out to be a strike led by representatives of the Catholic Church and its hierarchy (see *Marxists Versus Self-Management*, p. 147-198), *Informations Ouvrières* said recently: "There are still 900 workers unemployed, and no one finds it ironic, 900 workers led to an impasse in the name of the holy self-management alliance (uniting the late Sargueil [one of the Lip bosses] and the perpetually active Clavel [a Catholic writer] and Piaget [a leader of the CFDT at Lip and of the national leadership of the PSU])." (No. 751, May 12-19, 1976.)

This statement by the OCI is in the same vein as the following: "The left wing of the self-management current is the Ligue Communiste; the right wing is the 'vanguard' of the bosses. That should be pretty clear." (*Marxists Against Self-Management*, p. 74). Yes, it is clear indeed! As for the CFDT [Confédération Française et Démocratique du Travail—French Democratic Confederation of Labor], it is consistently characterized as an "instrument of the Catholic hierarchy," as the "Catholic federation," etc., in a manner similar to the old tradition of radical freemasonry.

In the teachers union, the FEN, the OCI has a very tiny fraction. There, by contrast, at the last trade union congress, it voted in favor of the general secretary's report, presented by the social democrat, James Marangé. It did likewise in the FO [Force Ouvrière—Labor Force] union in relation to the report of its secretary, Bergeron, an anticommunist social democrat and a firm partisan of collaboration with the bosses.

Let us then cite the OCI's positions on self-management and the CFDT:

"Self-management has become quite a fashionable item in recent years. The CFDT claims to be the axis of the self-management front around Edmond Maire and the 'revolutionary' leader Charles Piaget, and including Michel Pablo, Alain Krivine, the PSU, Jacques Delors (former advisor of Chaban-Delmas), and André Henry (secretary of the FEN); but this front also includes Prince Charles-Hugues of Bourbon-Parme and the Nouvelle Action Française group. Maybe Alain Krivine thinks he can find the basis for socialist self-management in the Transitional Program of the Fourth International. But Delors and the Gaullist FJP believe that the sources of self-management lie in the ideas of General de Gaulle and the labor relations policy of Chaban. André Henry believes that the term is rather confusing, but that, on the whole, self-management must be a good thing. As for the CFDT, the legitimate heir of the social doctrine of the church, it states that it is merely reviving the 'revolutionary syndicalist' tradition as improved by the pontifical encyclicals and modestly rebaptized after the 35th congress of the CFDT as a 'combination of Christian humanism' and 'ideological trade unionism.' To complete the picture, it should be added that that anarchists have also come out for self-management. So has Marshall Tito. Finally, the Portuguese self-management currents (MES, FSP) declare, alongside the Stalinists, that the emancipation of the workers will be the work of the bourgeois generals themselves; this was approved by the CERES, the 'self-management' wing of the French Socialist Party, as well as by the different varieties of decomposed ultraleftism.

"What, then, is this theory that forms the basis of such a wide political rapprochement which extends, left to right, from Krivine, the ferocious revolutionary of TV Channel One to His Royal Highness, the Prince of Bourbon-Parme, a candidate for the Spanish throne and the heir of Charles Quint? From the theoretical point of view, self-management is only an ideological curio, combining a series of old, pre-Marxist notions, drawn mainly from Proudhonism. These notions are being used today by social Catholicism to camouflage its war machine against the proletariat and its class organization." (page 1)

"All the other experiments of this type, the CFDT theory of self-management, or of Gaullist participation, or of the Labor Charter of Pétain are only variations on the same theme: corporatism. This is what forms the doctrine of Christian trade unionism, and which is the reference point of all corporatism. The CFDT paid attention to the first congress of the CFTC in 1920 and stressed, in the results of the congress proceedings, this important and vital point. . . (p. 13)

". . . the bourgeoisie is trying to create a 'self-management front' aimed directly against the workers united front, under the auspices of the apparatus of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, which is what the CFDT is. . ." (p. 14)

"But one cannot put the CFDT on the same plane as the workers organizations that remain reformist and Stalinist. The CFDT is an organization set up against the organized workers movement. The same goes for organizations like the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire, which have seen in the 'self-management current' a 'new vanguard' that can be advantageously substituted for the struggle to build a revolutionary party. Thus, the struggle we are carrying out in defense of the unity of the FEN, which has been jeopardized by the turn towards the CFDT, is not simply a question of concern to teachers. It is the continuation of Marx's fight for the unity and independence of the proletariat, against all theories that lead the class astray." (p. 15)

(These are excerpts from the booklet *Ecole marxiste de l'OCI*, No. 1: "l'autogestion contre la classe ouvrière" [Marxist School of the OCI, No. 1: Self-Management Against the Working Class], published in 1975.)

b) In relation to the women's movement, one of the crucial aspects of the general crisis of bourgeois social relations in the present crisis of the imperialist system, the OCI not only ignores this question, but opposes the mobilizations of the 'independent movement' of women. This clearly prevents any kind of collaboration. Furthermore, this position is not without serious repercussions in the internal functioning of the OCI.

c) As for the vast antimilitarist movement that developed in France and that has had an important impact on the traditional organizations of the workers movement (the parties and the trade unions), the OCI has purely and simply ignored it in practice. Worse yet, it employs the most repugnant kind of slander against those who have done all they could to develop this movement in the barracks, in the schools, and in the trade unions, and who were strongly attacked for their efforts by the advocates of national defense.

"On the one hand, the ultralefts, the Pabloites of the FCR, and the Lutte Ouvrière group, after thunderous declarations about the army of Capital, are proposing a policy in the bulletins, appeals, and petitions of the

Committee in Defense of the Draftees, that *very clearly stands on the familiar ground of national defense and acceptance of the government.*" (*La Vérité*, publication of the OCI, no. 565, January 1975, p. 42, column 2. Our emphasis.)

It would be difficult to be more exact in making characterizations of the FCR, the predecessor of the LCR, as well as of Lutte Ouvrière.

After examining these facts, do you believe that it is possible for the United Secretariat to foresee "the formation of a bloc between the LTF and the OCRFI"? Up to now *nothing* allows us to envisage the possible formation of a bloc—unless it were unprincipled—between the LTF and the OCRFI. So, from where do the signers of the letter draw their interpretation of the views that they attribute to the IMT?

7. To conclude, we are informing you of the decisions taken at the time of the last meeting of the United Secretariat on December 20-21.

a) Given the latest December 10 response of the OCRFI, we favor a *public discussion* between the United Secretariat of the Fourth International and the OCRFI. But at this stage, precisely because of the positions of the OCRFI that have been expressed in its December 10 letter and elsewhere, such a discussion *cannot take place* within the framework of point 1 of the United Secretariat resolution of October 16-17, 1976. Thus, this can only be a public discussion between the USFI and the OCRFI.

b) We are publishing in the international internal bulletin, for the information of the members of the Fourth International:

— your letter of December 8 and its appendixes (the United Secretariat letter of November 14 to the OCRFI, the OCRFI declaration attached to its letter of October 27, the preface to *Correspondance Internationale*, No. 1, October, 1976).

— the OCRFI letter of December 10, 1976.

— the United Secretariat letter addressed to comrades

Barnes, Hansen, Sheppard and M.A. Waters and its annexes: 1) passages from the OCRFI resolution of 1973; 2) pages 184-196 of *Introduction to the Study of Marxism*, document no. 4 of the OCI, published in October 1976.

— the United Secretariat message to the meeting of the International Bureau of the OCRFI, December 26-30, 1976.

c) The United Secretariat will send a delegation to the upcoming international meeting of the OCRFI, this December 26-30. This United Secretariat delegation will explain that we have not asked for a self-criticism on the past, but that we are demanding a clear, unambiguous declaration on the present position of the OCRFI towards the Fourth International; that we are demanding a clear and unambiguous characterization of the Fourth International as a revolutionary organization. This implies, among other things, the explicit recognition that whatever may be the errors committed on one or another point, the general political nature of the Fourth International and its sections corresponds to the historic interests of the proletariat against any other social group or social class.

Furthermore, the United Secretariat delegation will explain the political and organizational consequences of the characterizations of the Fourth International that have been made by the OCRFI—and repeated in its letter of December 10, 1976—and that treat revisionism as the dominant criterion in the OCRFI's assessment of the Fourth International.

Finally, it will explain, on the one hand, why there are no signs of practical political convergence in the current class struggle between the OCI, the main organization of the OCRFI, and the LCR, French section of the Fourth International. On the other hand, it will clarify the political reasons why, at this stage, only a public discussion is possible between the United Secretariat of the Fourth International and the OCRFI.

Fraternal Communist Greetings,
The United Secretariat of the Fourth
International

Appendix I

Introduction to the Study of Marxism

[The following was translated from Documents of the OCI No. 4, p. 195, edited by the OCI's educational commission, published in October 1976.]

I. Pabloism and the Destruction of the Fourth International

Pablo, an apparatus man, was able to establish his personal bureaucratic control over the International Secretariat of the Fourth International at the end of the Second World War. In addition, he gained control over the leadership of the PCI [Parti Communiste Internationaliste—Internationalist Communist Party]. It was in this section of the International, however, that he met with the strongest resistance to his revisionist scheme.

Pablo's revisionism can be summed up in the following points:

1. The notion that the "material and technical forces" were undergoing renewed expansion. Without acknowledging the fact, Pablo was challenging Trotsky's theory that "humanity's productive forces had ceased to expand." This provided an opening for the idea of "neocapitalism" for which Mandel later became known, which attempted to project a new historic future for capitalism, in utter contradiction to Lenin's analysis of "imperialism as the highest stage of capitalism."

2. That the Stalinist bureaucracy was destined to assume leadership of a new proletarian revolutionary upsurge, owing particularly to the the imminence of World War III, and to bring about socialism in its own way. This represents a challenge to the Trotskyist analysis that the

contradiction between the proletariat and the bureaucracy, the grave-digger of the gains of October, will inevitably lead to political revolution.

3. That in the neocolonial countries, bureaucratic or bourgeois nationalist parties could successfully lead the struggle against imperialism and substitute for nonexistent revolutionary workers parties. From this perspective, Nasser, Sekou Touré and Ben Bella were christened "natural Marxists."

These "theories" are the direct result of a petty-bourgeois underestimation of the mass movements and the revolutionary capabilities of the masses. They question the leading role of the proletariat in the revolution, relegating the historic mission of establishing socialism to forces alien to the working class (such as the Stalinist apparatus, the petty bourgeoisie, or the so-called new vanguard). This is a total revision of Marxism, carried out in the name of Marxism and fraudulently laying claim to the banner of the Fourth International. It is this revision of Marxism which paved the way for open support to Popular Fronts. In the guise of bringing the Transitional Program "up to date," as Rousset (whom Pablo fought at the time) had previously claimed to do, these theories laid the groundwork for abandoning and betraying the theory and practice of the permanent revolution, while at the same time constituting ideological justification for *long-term capitulation to the Stalinist apparatus*.

The whole history of Pabloism, with or without Pablo (who subsequently evolved toward the self-management ideology touted by the bosses and the church hierarchy), is studded with capitulation to Stalinism. The most recent example to date is Portugal, where the Pabloites supported the Armed Forces Movement and the PCP [Portuguese Communist Party] to the hilt, to the detriment of the revolutionary movement of the masses.

It would be useful to examine the Pabloite theories point by point, in order to demonstrate their mistaken and reactionary character.

1. With regard to the productive forces, Pabloism has developed the out-and-out bourgeois concept of a "third industrial revolution"—as though Marxists could talk about "revolution" outside the context of a radical change in the relations of production and of the class struggle!

In 1972, the Ligue Communiste [Communist League], faithful to its Pabloite heritage, actually wrote about this so-called "third industrial revolution." There had been, according to them, a first "industrial revolution," in which the productive forces of industry were created, followed by a second, which consisted of "the introduction of mechanization and the development of capitalism." And finally, today, we are witnessing a "third industrial revolution"—characterized in particular by the automation of the productive processes.

The Pabloites wrote:

"The upheavals which this industrial revolution has already wrought, in the still limited number of sectors affected by it, affords a glimpse of the possibilities that have been opened up for a radical transformation of society and of our way of life. The use of new energy sources, such as nuclear energy, the revolutionizing of raw materials brought about by the use of synthetic materials, and the introduction of cybernetic installations capable of automatically controlling entire production complexes has already brought about a basic change in the distribution of work. Workers, the 'classical' machinery operators, who

made up 60 to 70 percent of traditional mechanized industries, now make up only 10 percent of modern industries. They have been replaced by regulators (up to 30 percent of the work force), maintenance workers, and repairers, whose qualifications are much higher. Along with this, the number of researchers, engineers, and economist-technicians has substantially increased." (*Ce que veut la Ligue communiste* ["What the Communist League Stands For"], Maspéro, 1972, pp. 19-20.)

Unfortunately for the Pabloites, *this is completely wrong*. Their ideological speculations are no different from those of economists, sociologists, and other contemporary bourgeois "specialists."

Let us summarize these weighty statements.

a) They speak of a "third industrial revolution," a renewed expansion of the productive forces, when in fact the maintenance of capitalist relations of production is holding back the productive forces today and preventing their further development. Nuclear energy, referred to by the Pabloite document, is being put to use mainly for purposes of massive destruction, while the discovery of cybernetics has been used mainly to step up the exploitation of labor, in an attempt to offset the tendency of the average rate of profit to fall.

b) The proletariat is said to be diminishing in numbers, while the middle classes are actually becoming more and more proletarianized and the petty bourgeoisie is continually being transformed into wage workers. The declaration that "the number of researchers, engineers, and economists has substantially increased" is ironic, since it is precisely these types of occupations that are being continually eliminated by capitalism in its death agony. Furthermore, while it is true that the present composition of the proletariat has undergone certain changes, particularly in terms of the degradation of labor, those workers whom the Pabloites call "classical machinery operators" are still at the center of the class struggle against capitalism.

The implications of this revisionist and capitulationist ideology are clear. They point to an exclusive reliance on the ability of the productive forces to develop (when, in fact, they are being held back) without overturning the existing relations of production (which Marx, however, said constituted a productive force in themselves), as well as an underestimation of the revolutionary potential of the proletariat, substituting in its place the so-called new layers of "researchers, engineers, and economist-technicians." Burnham and Company's "technocratic" ideology is just one step away. In fact, a surrender to capitalism is involved. Contrary to the scientific analyses of Lenin and Trotsky, capitalism in the imperialist epoch—its final, rotten stage—has been endowed by the fuzzy-headed "theory" of the "third industrial revolution" with the capacity for further progress.

At a time when capitalism in its death agony is turning existing techniques into a greater and greater force for destruction—in confirmation of the Transitional Program—Pablo, Mandel and Krivine see historical progress in this!

2. With regard to the historic role of the Stalinist bureaucracy, Pabloism has abandoned the basic idea which gave scientific legitimacy to the need for the Fourth International: that the bureaucracy has definitively gone over to the side of bourgeois order. Pabloism entrusts the bureaucracy, instead of the proletariat, with the task of

establishing socialism—a complete revision and virtual liquidation of the Transitional Program.

The roots of the Pabloite capitulation on this question go right back to the position to be taken by Trotskyists at the time of the Kremlin bureaucracy's attacks on the Yugoslav Communist party in 1948. As stated in *Quelques enseignements de notre histoire*: "It was absolutely correct to take up the defense of the Yugoslav revolution." (*Quelques enseignements de notre histoire* ["Some Lessons From Our History"], p. 77.)

However, Pablo and Frank took a very peculiar position on this question.

"In September 1949, Frank wrote that the Yugoslav Communist party was in the process of rebuilding Trotskyism piece by piece, without an overall perspective, but in taking up more and more of the important questions.' This captures the very essence of Pabloite 'objectivity.' If a Communist party founded and structured in the framework of Stalinism can 'renew the organic bonds between the unfolding Yugoslav and world revolutions,' as stated in a resolution adopted in the spring of 1950 by the CEI (Comité Exécutif International) [IEC—International Executive Committee], then it is no longer necessary to build parties of the Fourth International in every country. The Stalinist Communist parties can be reformed from within, under the impact of the objective situation, and can rediscover their function as tools of the proletarian revolution. Therefore, while we might still proclaim the need for the Fourth International and for building national sections, these parties would be little more than dead-end 'pressure groups,' and as such would be justly deserving of the workers' hatred and contempt.

"Frank, Pablo, and Mandel later expanded more fully on this idea, which was still only taking shape at the time. They sought and found an objectively revolutionary instrument in the Stalinist bureaucracy. After discovering first Tito, then the Stalinist bureaucracy, to be 'naturally Trotskyist,' and describing Sekou Touré's Guinea as a workers state, Frank went on to find spontaneous Marxism in Guevarism. The Marxist method, a conscious and organized activity on the part of the proletarian vanguard, was no longer the conscious expression of unconscious processes. This false Marxism, this distortion of Trotskyism, reflected the blind workings of bourgeois society, of which the bureaucracy and the CPs are an expression." (*Quelques enseignements*. . . , p. 77.)

This document clearly demonstrates where abandoning the Transitional Program can lead, and in particular abandoning the basic necessity for a proletarian organization absolutely independent of the bourgeoisie and the bureaucracy.

In 1950 Pablo thought that "the Stalinist bureaucracy, under cold-war conditions, will be compelled to establish socialism after its own fashion." From Belgrade it is a short drift to Moscow, by way of claiming to be "fulfilling" and "updating" the Transitional Program.

While in 1953 the Pabloites had condemned in practice the workers' insurrection originating in the strike by the Stalin Allee workers of Berlin, and had followed the same method with respect to the 1956 Hungarian revolution marked by the appearance of workers' councils, they were obliged to use more moderate language in reference to the bureaucracy after the new eruptions of the political revolution. But their break with the Transitional Program had been consummated, and their capitulation to the

Stalinist apparatus continued.

3. Finally, with respect to understanding the political process in the neocolonial countries, Pabloism consists in "entrusting" the task of carrying out the permanent revolution to bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalist organizations. Worst of all, it consists in substituting a fragmentary view of blocs and separate continental zones for the Marxist conception of worldwide class struggle, following the Stalinist line on the "two-world" confrontation.

Echoing the bourgeois and Stalinist disparagement of the proletariat as being incapable from now on of making a revolution, Pabloism "invests" what it calls the "colonial revolution" with the responsibility of relaunching the world revolution, which is supposedly losing steam.

Accordingly, the Pabloites have successively trailed after Nasserism, Sekou Touré's petty-bourgeois party (to which they assigned a revolutionary role), the Algerian FLN (in opposition to the mass revolutionary movement in Algeria), and, of course, the Vietnamese Communist party. The Pabloites covered up the latter's bureaucratic nature, confusing the Vietnamese mass movement with the VCP's role in braking it, associating themselves with Kissinger and with the Moscow and Peking bureaucracies, and accepting the division of Vietnam and a "three-part" government which included the Thieu regime in South Vietnam.

The collapse of the Thieu regime—a regime with no real base of support in the country, held at arms' length by U.S. imperialism—meant that the common goal of Moscow, Peking, Washington, Hanoi, and the NLF could not be permanently achieved. Thus it was correct for *Informations Ouvrières* to run this headline on the American debacle: "U.S. imperialism beaten; Russian and Chinese bureaucracies defeated. A victory for the world revolution, not for the Vietnamese CP."

Concerning the Palestinian resistance movement, we are reprinting the following lines, taken from a pamphlet published in 1970 by the Pabloite Ligue:

"What the Palestinian resistance movement must grasp is that its real legacy is to be found outside the province of the Middle East. Its ability to grasp this legacy and pass it on is what will determine the future of the Palestinian movement. This legacy is made up of the recent history of the colonial revolution, of the anti-imperialist movements in the colonial and semi-colonial countries since World War II, and includes the high points of the world struggle. The Algerian revolution, in particular, deserves special mention. It is closely related to the Palestinian resistance movement, in more ways than one, even though Vietnam still represents the basic model." (*Proche-Orient: de la résistance palestinienne à la révolution socialiste* ["The Middle East: From the Palestinian Resistance Movement to the Socialist Revolution"] *Cahiers Rouge*, Maspéro, 1970, p. 16.)

Pathetically confusing the international class struggle and the world revolution with distributing awards, the above-mentioned Pabloite hands an honorable mention to Vietnam, where, however, the mass movement is in the grip of the bureaucratic apparatus, and gives Algeria the first prize—where the bourgeoisie temporarily derailed the revolution in order to install a comprador regime collaborating with imperialism. Last of all, the consolation prize goes to the Palestinian resistance movement, which is encouraged to go beyond itself ideologically, and to remain

within the camp of the "Arab nation" and the "rejection front" that includes Syria, while stamping out the Lebanese Palestinians for the joint benefit of imperialism and the bureaucracy. This "policy" of the Pabloites adds a stone to the counterrevolutionary edifice which, under "progressive" Syria's leadership, is threatening to crush the Palestinian resistance.

Nowhere, of course, is anything said about the permanent revolution and the task of building the international revolutionary workers party. Pabloism has been revealed here as a rejection of Trotskyism in practice, as a form of centrism, that is, as an attempt to occupy an intermediate position between the role of the apparatuses and that of the revolutionary vanguard as expressed through Trotskyism.

Through the process of capitalist decay, and the more and more open support given to imperialism by the Stalinist apparatus, *such centrism is compelled to be purely and simply reactionary*, that it, to mislead some of the young people who today are in search of proletarian revolution and its expression—Trotskyism—into the rut of Stalinism and the petty bourgeoisie.

Today, the massacre of the Palestinians and the so-called left in Lebanon is being jointly carried out by imperialism, which arms and supports the fascist Lebanese Phalange, and by the Kremlin bureaucracy through the intermediary of the Syrian state, which, we repeat, was endowed by the Pabloites with revolutionary qualities not too long ago. Thus, the Pabloite schemas, the schemas of liquidationist revisionism, are disintegrating under the hammer blows of the world class struggle.

The fact remains, however, that these "schemas" have played a decisive role in the crisis of the Fourth International:

"These are the ideas which permeate the documents submitted for a vote at the Third World Congress in August 1951. Because the majority of the French section would not submit to the dictates of the 'International Secretariat,' they were bureaucratically expelled from the ranks of the Fourth International after the Eighth Congress of the PCI in July 1952, in favor of the Frank-Privas minority.

"Nevertheless, the majority of the PCI continued to fight for the line of reorienting the Fourth International until June 1953. The position of the 'International Secretariat' on the workers' uprising in East Berlin, as confirmed by the treacherous leaflet put out by the Frank clique in September 1953, soon made an altogether different strategy necessary—that of reconstructing the Fourth International." (*Quelques enseignements de notre histoire*, p. 85.)

Thus, the deadly revisionist-liquidationist sickness of Pabloism has destroyed the Fourth International as an organization. However, simultaneously, Trotskyism is pursuing its historic course against Pabloite liquidationism. It was in France, from the outset, that the resistance to revisionism was the strongest, and led, step by step, to its logical conclusions. Out of this defense of Trotskyism, the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste emerged in December 1965.

Relative to the Pabloite crisis of the Fourth International, *Quelques enseignements de notre histoire* has this to say:

"To sum up, it suffices to say that, from 1952 to 1958, two political lines coexisted in the ranks of Trotskyism, a

fact of which the membership was far from being fully aware.

"One of these lines was the correct one, the one that Trotskyists had begun to work out in the first years of the war and following the war, and which has its living expression particularly in the defeat of Pabloism and in the intervention that was carried out into the class struggle in France.

"The other line perpetuated the weaknesses inherited from a 'petty-bourgeois' past: the inability to develop a definite organizational policy, particularly in the area of finances; the lackadaisical attitude, lack of method, and partial surrender to the spontaneous process (typically, in the case of the Algerian revolution). On this last point, it was as though, to all appearances, the spontaneous movement had acquired the power to somehow mechanically produce the revolutionary party under the pressure of objective conditions." (*Quelques enseignements*, p. 100.)

2. From the 'Lambert Grouping' to the OCI

At the core of the ex-PCI majority that had rejected Pabloism was, in particular, the party's trade-union commission, which played the part of a real workers commission even though, as its name implied, it was insufficiently developed. In fact, a division developed between most of the petty-bourgeois intellectual elements, who were vulnerable to liquidationist revisionism, and the worker militants, those who had continued to intervene in the class struggle and who, after the 1952 split, constituted what was called the "Lambert grouping"—by the very same people, for that matter, who had capitulated at the time that we formed the PCI majority.

"While the Pabloites dropped out of the class struggle completely, the Trotskyist faction maintained ongoing revolutionary activity. It pursued its aims in the unions indefatigably, strengthening its alliances and forming new ones." (*Ibid.*, p. 95.)

From the split in 1952 until the founding of the OCI in 1965, the "Lambert grouping" insured the continuity of the revolutionary vanguard on the basis of the Transitional Program through their rejection and criticism of Pabloism. However, throughout this difficult period the group remained small, beset by the lack of resources that such a situation implies:

"Maintaining a class line was not always an easy task, for the counterweight that the rank and file constitute in an organization that is stronger and more deeply rooted in the proletariat was missing in this instance. More than ever, it was impossible to do without the most uncompromising rigorousness in action." (*Ibid.*, p. 95)

This uncompromising attitude on the part of the "Lambertists," this determination to remain faithful to the Marxist principles of the Transitional Program, did not arise out of the sectarianism of which they were accused by the Pabloites and their bourgeois and Stalinist accomplices. It was a defensive reflex of Trotskyism, which was being challenged by liquidationist revisionism. This uncompromising attitude served to carry out the historic tasks of the Fourth International as they had been outlined in the Transitional Program; its later consequences were to make possible the formation and development of the OCI.

In fact, the process that led from 1958 to 1965, from the "Lambert grouping" faithful to Trotskyism to the OCI, a

Trotskyist organization that has become capable of active participation in the reconstruction of the Fourth International on an international scale, cannot be separated from the working-class movement in this period.

In 1956, French and British imperialism succeeded in their operation against the Suez Canal, at the same time that the Kremlin bureaucracy was crushing the Hungarian revolution. In 1958 de Gaulle took power. In 1963, however, the strike of the French miners sounded the working-class cry of alarm against Gaullist Bonapartism, which was based on collaboration with the apparatuses. The new upsurge of the working class, particularly in Europe, went hand in hand with the consolidation of Trotskyism, of which the OCI was the most important historical manifestation:

“Beginning in February 1964, the mimeographed bulletin *Informations Ouvrières* became a monthly printed publication defining itself as a “free forum for the class struggle.” From then on, it devoted its efforts, through widening its readership, and planning and systematizing its distribution, to becoming the organizing center of a vanguard layer which, while it might not be convinced initially of the validity of the Transitional Program, the program of the Fourth International, would still be willing to take part in a common effort to establish a workers united front. Through discussion, intervention, and joint efforts in common with the Trotskyists, the rough outlines of a political force struggling consistently for the proletarian revolution, for the conquest of power, would be drawn.” (*Ibid.*, p. 107.)

Here we see the continuation of the Bolshevik tradition of the press as the “organizer and agitator of the masses.”

During the crisis of 1968, the OCI demonstrated both its unusual ability to grasp the meaning of events and its still insufficient capacity to translate that understanding into practical work in the class struggle. It directed its efforts, through its work in the FER (Fédération des étudiants révolutionnaires [Federation of Revolutionary Students]) at pushing the student movement as far as it would go in the direction of the working class.

The Seventeenth Congress of the OCI in 1971 analyzed this situation and our intervention as follows:

“Clearly, from May 3 to May 10, we could be held responsible for our intervention and for the forms of struggle we promoted. During the night of May 10, *we could not be held responsible for the barricades*. Not in any sense. . . .

“May-June 1968 shows that along with Stalinism, as its consequence and its flip-side, decomposed leftism has become the worst enemy of the revolution. The reason for this is simple. The fundamental question of the proletarian revolution is that of centralizing power in the workers councils. Stalinism, the agent of the bourgeoisie in the ranks of the working class, blocks the objective course of the class toward power. Decomposed ultraleftism—with its thoroughly backward, petty-bourgeois ‘theories’ of power in the streets, power to the Sorbonne, student power, power in the factories, self-management—has totally adapted to the dismemberment of the general strike into so-called ‘power bases,’ thereby assuring the bourgeoisie that the proletariat’s struggle for centralized power would not be pitched around a national central committee of strike committees. Stalinism has dismembered the general strike; decomposed ultraleftism, which has adapted to Stalinism, has justified this dismemberment with revolutionary

rhetoric. Stalinism and decomposed ultraleftism in all of its guises—not to mention, of course, reformism—PSU, Ligue Communiste, AMR [Alliance Marxiste Révolutionnaire—Revolutionary Marxist Alliance], Mouvement du 22 Mars [March 22 Movement], Lutte Ouvrière, anarcho-Maoists, etc.—have lined up with the bourgeoisie on the basic question of every revolution, which is, we repeat, the question of power.” (*La Vérité* [Truth], No. 561, p. 45 and pp. 46-47.)

While Trotskyists may have been “disarmed” by some of the developments in the class struggle during May 1968, and while they may have had some trouble understanding that, in the initial phase of a revolutionary movement, the apparatuses, and particularly the Stalinist apparatus, would inevitably make some gains, it is nonetheless a fact that the OCI was the only organization that had a Marxist analysis of the working-class movement, which in this period took the form of the most powerful general strike that the French proletariat had so far undertaken.

In contrast to this, the Pabloites were incapable of carrying out independent actions, and instead wallowed in this decomposed ultraleftism, that was to enable the Stalinist apparatus to save the bourgeois order once again.

On a broader scale, only the OCI was capable of understanding that, in the spring of 1968, unity of the international class struggle took the form of an upsurge of the *social* revolution in France, and simultaneously, of an upsurge of the *political* revolution in Czechoslovakia.

It was in 1968 that the previously mentioned Pabloite “theories” were decisively plowed under by the objective course of history.

1. The general strike in France showed that the so-called “third industrial revolution” was an aberration, and that capitalism is totally incapable of stifling the revolutionary mass movement precisely because it is in no position to set in motion a real overall expansion of the productive forces. All the evidence, therefore, points to the correctness of the Transitional Program as against the speculations of Pablo, Mandel, and Frank with respect to so-called “neocapitalism.”

2. The revolutionary movement of the Czech masses, and the inability of the Czechoslovak Communist party, despite its break with the Kremlin, to be transformed into a revolutionary party, have proved to the world that the bureaucratic states are carrying within them the seeds of political revolution. Thus the Pabloites’ “analysis” of the Stalinist bureaucracy’s ability to establish socialism “in its own way” has been proven false once again—by the 1953 uprising in East Berlin, the Polish revolts and the 1956 Hungarian uprising.

3. As for the neocolonial countries, various developments in the class struggle have shown that the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties in power (the Algerian FLN, Nasser, Sekou Touré and others) are totally powerless to “bestow” socialism on the popular masses. The resolution of the Seventeenth Congress of the OCI stated in this regard:

“As an alternative to the organically unified but diversified process of the world class struggle, first Pablo and his International Secretariat, and then the United Secretariat of Mandel, Frank and Maitan have proposed dividing it into three sectors: the colonial revolution, the political revolution and the proletarian revolution in the imperialist countries. Far from constituting dialectic unity, as Mandel the camouflage expert would have us believe,

these sectors are evolving into separate, independent entities.

"For Marxists, there is no such thing as the 'colonial revolution'; there is, rather, the proletarian revolution in the colonial and semicolonial countries, which has the task of solving the problems of the permanent revolution. As opposed to this, Mandel adopts the Menshevik and Stalinist theory of the revolution by stages. Making a distinction between the colonial revolution and the proletarian revolution in and of itself implies that the motor force of the revolution in the colonial countries is not the proletariat.

"For the United Secretariat, a center of revisionism and liquidationism, the struggle of the proletariat in those countries where capitalism has been expropriated is separated from the struggle of the proletariat in the capitalist countries. They never grasp the fact that in those countries where capitalism has been expropriated, but where a parasitic bureaucracy has usurped power, political revolution is the reflection of the international socialist revolution. They deny its organic relationship to the social revolution.

"The Pabloite United Secretariat presents its 'dissection' of so-called 'objective reality' as an alternative to the unity of the world class struggle. Accordingly, in the capitalist countries as well as in the USSR and Eastern Europe, the proletariat has been definitively dispossessed of its historic mission in favor of the 'new vanguard,' and, in the last analysis, of the bureaucracy." (*La Vérité*, No. 561, pp. 65-66.)

In contrast to Pabloism and its liquidationist revisionism, the OCI looks to the objective course of the mass movement. We analyze the period that opened in 1968 as the materialization and reflection of the convergence between the crisis of the bourgeoisie and that of the bureaucracy. Particularly in Europe, this means the convergence of the social and political revolutions. (See Stéphane Just, *Défense du trotskysme* (1), *La Vérité* [In Defense of Trotskyism, Part I], September 1965, and *Révisionnisme liquidateur contre trotskysme. Défense du trotskysme* (2) [Liquidationist Revisionism Versus Trotskyism. In Defense of Trotskyism, Part II], Selio, 1971, 335 pages.)

In relation to the Alliance Ouvrière [Workers' Alliance], a meeting-ground for Trotskyists and non-Trotskyists on the basis of the needs of the workers united front, and the Alliance des Jeunes Pour le Socialisme [Alliance of Youth for Socialism], an independent youth organization where Trotskyists and non-Trotskyists discuss opposing points of view and struggle together for the proletarian revolution, the OCI has continually, from 1968 to the present, and with great difficulty furthered its own party-building efforts, within the perspective of reconstructing the Fourth International. A growing number of workers and young people aspire to the taking of power by the proletariat and the proletarian revolution. Some of them have discovered that the social democratic and Stalinist apparatuses are obstacles to the realization of these aspirations. The potential exists for them to find their way to Trotskyism and to the OCI, the only organizational expression of Trotskyism in France.

However, between them (workers and youth) and the

OCI there are illusions, the false perspectives of decomposed leftism and within this decomposed leftism present-day Pabloism is usurping the "label" of Trotskyism, with the complicity of the bourgeoisie and its apparatuses.

Once again, according to a Marxist analysis, the dominant ideology of any society is that of the ruling class. Therefore, it is not surprising that workers and youth, whose goal is to abolish the capitalist system and the apparatuses that serve its interests, can be led to believe that the mass movement in its spontaneous form can achieve this goal. The result of this is that this spontaneity wears itself out in "rebellions" that the bourgeoisie is able to "coopt," without solving the decisive problem, the question of power. In this way, workers and youth are misled into decomposed leftism, which makes this spontaneity into a kind of religion—whether consciously or unconsciously is of little importance—serving the interests of the ruling class.

As for the LCR's Pabloism, whose revisionist-liquidationist and reactionary centrist character we have established, it uses precisely the "label" of Trotskyism to lead a certain number of youth into the swamp of decomposed leftism and "popular front" Stalinism.

The function of Pabloism hereafter consists of a mission as flank-guards for the Stalinist apparatus. To those who feel a justified revulsion for this apparatus, Pabloism offers a certain image of Trotskyism, giving the impression that it fights for the proletarian revolution because of its relationship to the Fourth International, whose banner it has usurped. But this impression is in fact a mirage. From Pablo, who at one time entrusted Stalinism with the task of "establishing socialism in its own way," to Krivine, Bensaïd and Weber who today project themselves as "left critics of the Popular Front" of tomorrow, the game has been played with loaded dice.

In contrast to Trotsky, who stated clearly that Bolshevik-Leninists had no place in any popular front because the popular front, a class-collaborationist tactic, has been and still is, along with fascism, one of the bourgeoisie's last two resorts against the proletarian revolution, the Pabloites see in it only a still "inadequate" governmental slogan, that the masses must "go beyond." This is a deceitful illusion, or rather, a plain lie that results in neutralizing a section of the proletariat and youth aspiring to the proletarian revolution for the sake of the popular front.

In the face of the imminence and inevitability of a popular front, the OCI, which is the only organization fighting to prevent it, is preparing the working class for this fight, and trying to help it overcome the counterrevolutionary effects of the popular front by means of the workers united front, breaking with the bourgeoisie and its representatives.

The liquidation of Pabloism and the reconstruction of the Fourth International cannot be achieved by ideological debate alone. They will in fact grow out of militant activity in the class struggle, based particularly on the working class itself establishing a workers united front, and on the emergence of a vanguard capable of building the international revolutionary party. The OCI is applying itself to this task through its own party-building efforts.

Appendix II

Excerpts from 'Resolution on the Current Stage of the Struggle for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International'

[Adopted by the International Bureau of the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International at its plenary meeting in Paris April 20-23, 1973.]

19. The previous points have briefly summarized the development of the crisis in the International Committee, which was formed in 1953 to fight Pabloism on the basis of Cannon's open letter. We must now take up the analysis of the present situation, in order to deduce from it our political and practical perspectives for carrying out the task of reconstructing the Fourth International.

The crisis in the Pabloite United Secretariat has reached its limit. The splits which have already taken place (in Spain, Argentina, etc.) have laid the basis for a split at the international level. The Hansen faction, which is seeking to prevent this split, cannot limit the discussion to guerrillaism.

While the differences on the question of guerrillaism are of paramount importance, Mandel-Krivine-Frank-Maitan's adaptation to petty-bourgeois nationalist organizations in Latin America and the Middle East stems from their entire revisionist political line, manifested recently in their support to the Paris Peace Accords, and also by the French Ligue leadership's going over to support for Popular Fronts. However, this in itself is a reflection of Mandel-Krivine's theories about the "new vanguard," which, starting from the "petty-bourgeois periphery," would "win the proletariat." These revisionist theories flow from the Pabloite theory of "sectors," which replaces the worldwide unity of the class struggle, which is the basic content of the epoch of imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism. According to Mandel, capitalism has been successfully surpassed by neocapitalism, opening up a new era for humanity in which the productive forces will develop further within the boundaries of private property and national states. The Hansen faction is trying to avoid a balance sheet and discussion of all these basic questions.

20. The crisis in the world working-class movement (see the clandestine Fourteenth Congress of the Czechoslovak Communist party) has brought out, and will increasingly bring out currents, factions, and tendencies, all more or less confusedly trying to express the revolutionary processes taking place in the working class, which is beginning to emerge from the treacherous grip of the apparatuses—not only in the political and trade-union organizations controlled by the Kremlin apparatus, but also in the Social Democratic organizations.

The objective situation in which Social Democracy finds itself in the bourgeois state is changing. While some layers of the Social Democratic apparatus are moving toward corporatist Bonapartism (such as the New Socialist party in France, formed by the fusion of Mitterrand's bourgeois wing and a Christian corporatist wing), others are seeking to group together in order to express working-class

aspirations. Thus, at the recent congress of the German SPD [Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands—Social Democratic party of Germany], an opposition led by the Jusos [Jungsozialisten—Young Socialists] was organized to counter the strictly bourgeois positions adopted by the Willy Brandt leadership at the Bade-Godesburg Congress in 1959. This attests to the fact that the Social Democratic party has not been transformed into a bourgeois party. In the course of the class struggle, the revolutionary movement of the German working class will initially manifest itself in an attempt to reclaim the SPD as a workers party. A correct understanding of this situation on the part of the German Trotskyists will open the door to building the revolutionary party of the Fourth International.

The political crime of "transforming" the SLL [Socialist Labour League] by decree into a "revolutionary party," turning the SLL into a dead-end sect and disregarding the teachings of Lenin and Trotsky with regard to the Labour party, consists precisely in this: that in turning its back on the living process of the mass radicalization, the leadership of the SLL is deceiving itself and deceiving the British vanguard about the way in which a real revolutionary party will be built in England.

21. The field of action of those large organizations, groupings, factions, and tendencies which have broken or are in the process of breaking with reformism and Stalinism will tend to widen. Making a correct evaluation, as we have done under the previous point, of the significance of this movement is absolutely necessary; so is a correct evaluation of the crisis in the United Secretariat.

The United Secretariat has been and remains the core of a revisionist faction which is proving to be an obstacle to the Fourth International. However, the organizations adhering to the United Secretariat cannot be characterized solely on that basis. Marxist criteria must be applied in characterizing organizations, as in everything else. Have the Stalinist and Social Democratic parties "definitively gone over to the side of bourgeois order"? Marxists do not draw the conclusion that these parties, any more than their Social Democratic counterparts which Lenin characterized as "bourgeois workers' parties," have become bourgeois parties. The decisive criterion, for Marxists, is the role of these parties and organizations in the class struggle. Organizations controlled by "labor lieutenants of the bourgeoisie" are nevertheless still workers organizations, in the historic sense, even though it is not these organizations which are leading the revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat.

We must therefore consider the characterization of the organizations adhering to the United Secretariat from this principled standpoint, looking at each case individually.

The SWP's role in the class struggle is not entirely comparable to that of the Ligue "Communiste." We reject

Healy-Wohlforth's characterization of the SWP as having become centrist.

In the USA, where there are no parties representing the working class, the SWP has almost singlehandedly played the role of a workers party in the class struggle. To be more precise: this is not to say that we consider the SWP to be the party leading the struggles of the American working class; it never has been. The perspective remains that of building a revolutionary party by way of a labor party based on the unions. However, the insignificance of both the Social Democracy and the CP (which nevertheless has gained a foothold in the unions, although a modest one), has enabled the SWP to play this role in the American labor movement.

Has this role changed as a result of the policy of adaptation to petty-bourgeois attitudes in the U.S.—backed by a section of the leadership—or as a result of its stand on the war in Vietnam, its ambiguous statements on popular fronts, or numerous other questions, foremost among which is the unprincipled reunification with Pablo it carried out in 1963?

The political battle waged by the Hansen faction against the Mandel-Maitan-Krivine faction provides us with a decisive criterion for evaluating the SWP. This political battle against guerrillaism is a fight for self-preservation. In the context of U.S. politics, adopting a guerrillaist line would result purely and simply in the SWP's liquidation and complete assimilation into the petty-bourgeois political formations whose pressure it comes under. This political fight, despite its wavering and incompleteness, has nevertheless joined together with the struggle for the class independence of the American proletariat.

The Ligue "Communiste" does not play a similar role. Krivine's organization, which Mandel, Maitan and Frank rely on, is the motor force of revisionism. The fact that the Krivine leadership has openly gone over to a popular-front-type defense of French imperialism, the open support to the Paris peace accords which were signed under the auspices of U.S. imperialism, the direct support to all forms of decaying petty-bourgeois radicalism, and many other examples point to the profound petty-bourgeois corruption of the Ligue. The Ligue's role in the class struggle is that of an organization which is trying to set itself up in direct opposition to the class independence of the proletariat, and thus in opposition to the Fourth International and its program.

Nevertheless, the link with the Fourth International—burdensome for Krivine but no less necessary to a continued existence as a counterrevolutionary smokescreen—leads mainly young people, in their search for a way to build the revolutionary party, to consider the Ligue a Trotskyist organization. This fact, while not altering our characterization of the Ligue, is not unimportant, insofar as it is at the root of the numerous crises (splits and factional struggles) which dominate the Ligue's political life.

22. Under these circumstances, what must be the role of the Organizing Committee, which continues to affirm the validity of the fight for the continuity of the Fourth International and the highest respect for the Transitional Program? The main objection which might be raised among us is this: we are too weak to take on the job of reconstructing the Fourth International. Our political base is insufficient for carrying out this work. These objections

are out of place, because it is not a matter of struggling to build revolutionary parties in each country apart from the struggle for the International. In fact, this would be a demonstration of a total lack of understanding of the historical materialist method, which unites theory and practice, resulting in the working class constituting itself as a class by means of an organization. We must remember that the International is not just the sum total of the national sections. Each national section can only be the national representation of the Fourth International, defining itself as the party of the Fourth International in a given country.

This is why we must not have any illusions. The Fourth International has entered a period of confusion and splits which began a long time ago. It is certainly true that at this stage of our work in common, the Organizing Committee could not claim to play a central leading role. But in our political fight, we aim to make it into an independent pole of attraction, around which all those elements emerging from the traditional organizations, including the organizations adhering to the United Secretariat, and seeking the way to a new revolutionary party and International, can crystallize. Once again, we have no illusions: this new process of crystallization is extremely drawn-out and painful. But we must begin.

What we must fully absorb is this: it is not a matter of the prognoses of Pabloism, nor of our theoretical criticisms. Rather, it is the great political events (such as capitulation to the petty bourgeoisie, support to the Nixon-PRG agreements, going over to support for popular fronts, and so forth) which will more and more deeply penetrate the consciousness of Trotskyists and militants who mistakenly view the United Secretariat as "the Fourth International." All of our work must be based on the inevitable consequences of these political events rather than on secondary considerations.

The perspective for our work must be based on beginning a discussion with the best elements, those who are becoming aware of the betrayals of Stalinism, Social Democracy, petty-bourgeois nationalism and Pabloism. This is how we should formulate our perspective for an Open Conference, which the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International must take up the fight for:

a) The basis for this already exists. Our activity must aim at developing it, so that the question of the need for the International—which the Organizing Committee thinks can only be the Fourth International along with its program—can be discussed on a broader basis internationally. This basis exists in the international workers movement, including the organizations adhering to the United Secretariat and the International Committee set up by the SLL, with whom the Organizing Committee has proposed opening a discussion on all the questions that concern us: popular fronts, our attitude toward guerrillaism, etc.

b) We declare that the International can only be built on the basis of the Transitional Program. But we are not making this into an ultimatum.

c) We state our readiness to collaborate with all organizations, groups and factions who see the need to fight for the International, and in that context to discuss the problems posed by this fight. Along with this, we declare our fundamental agreement with the program of

the Fourth International.

d) Our flexible tactics toward all of the currents which declare for the International seek to dissociate the groups orienting or capable of orienting to the program of the Fourth International from reformism, Stalinism, and all forms of capitulationism.

e) The International Bureau believes that the work of reconstructing the Fourth International cannot be undertaken without practical participation in solving the political and practical problems that it poses. It would be wrong, of course, to counterpose programmatic discussion to practical revolutionary activity, but to counterpose practical activity to programmatic discussion would be wrong as well. It is necessary to combine the two.

24. The International Bureau has assigned a commission to draft a letter, incorporating the above points, calling for the holding of an Open Conference and addressed to all groups, organizations, tendencies, and factions agreeing to open a discussion on the International

al, with the prior understanding of the need for all to agree to recognize:

a) the struggle for the class independence of the proletariat;

b) the unconditional defense of the USSR, China and all those countries where imperialism has been expropriated;

c) independence from Stalinism.

It has been decided that the discussion on this draft letter to be submitted to all the organizations, groups and militants adhering to the Organizing Committee will take place under the first point on the agenda of the next meeting of the International Bureau.

25. In connection with this resolution, the International Bureau thinks that the organizations adhering to the Organizing Committee can and should provide for the constant exchange of information, articles, and so forth. In this way the Open Conference can be prepared for, while making political work easier whenever possible and seeing to it that the discussion is carried on.

Motion and Statement by Jones at United Secretariat Meeting of December 20-21, 1976

[This proposal was introduced at the December 1976 United Secretariat meeting as a counter-motion to the "Letter of the United Secretariat to Comrades Barnes, Hansen, Sheppard, and M.A. Waters." It was defeated.]

1. The United Secretariat withdraws the November 14, 1976, letter.

2. The United Secretariat considers that the OCRFI statement sent on October 27 meets the conditions for the opening of a discussion as decided upon at the October 16-17, 1976, United Secretariat meeting. The United Secretariat therefore decides to issue a public statement to be published parallel with the statement of the OCRFI. The

text of the United Secretariat statement will be that of the resolution adopted at the October 16-17, 1976 meeting, edited for public use.

3. The United Secretariat will open regular meetings with representatives of the OCRFI to remove questions that have arisen in working to improve relations.

4. The United Secretariat will nominate an official United Secretariat delegation to observe the December international conference of the OCRFI.

5. The delegation will be mandated to explain the United Secretariat decisions above.

6. The United Secretariat will hear a report from the delegation to the OCRFI conference at the January United Secretariat meeting and will then discuss the modalities to propose for the discussion with the OCRFI.

Statement by Jones

The form of discussion with the OCRFI and the extent of the United Secretariat public declaration to accompany that of the OCRFI are in my opinion tactical questions. Compromise to get agreement on these points could be correct provided three conditions are fulfilled.

i. It is accepted that a characterization by the OCRFI that the Fourth International is a revolutionary organization is a basis for starting a discussion and that the statement of October 19, 1976, satisfies this. A subsequent orientation of the OCRFI inconsistent with this would of

course overturn the basis of this discussion.

ii. The declarations are made public.

iii. There is organization of a serious exchange in discussion. The present resolutions of the United Secretariat are an advance over the November meeting but do not unequivocally meet these three conditions. For this reason it is not possible to arrive at a compromise on the practical questions which would allow the Secretariat to go forward in a united fashion. Therefore, I support the Jones motion as the most correct way of going forward and clarifying the differences.

**Message Read by the Delegation from the United Secretariat
of the Fourth International to the Meeting of the
International Bureau of the OCRFI, held in Paris December 26-30, 1976**

The Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International proposed to the United Secretariat of the Fourth International that a discussion be opened. The United Secretariat responded by proposing a meeting to the OCRFI. This meeting was held on October 19, 1976. During the meeting between the two delegations, the United Secretariat asked the OCRFI to clarify its positions, publicly and in writing, as to the objectives it set for such a discussion, and as to its characterization of the Fourth International and its sections. The OCRFI sent this statement to the United Secretariat on October 27, 1976. After a discussion of the content of this statement, the United Secretariat, having judged that it did not totally correspond to its October 19 request and left open many ambiguities, wrote to the OCRFI on November 14 to ask it to clarify its assertions, which exist alongside other, contradictory assertions. The OCRFI replied on December 10, reiterating its previous positions.

On December 10, the OCRFI replied to the United Secretariat's letter of November 14. It reiterated its previous positions and emphasized their *continuity*.

It is by virtue of these facts, therefore, that the United Secretariat now takes a position on the OCRFI proposal.

I. The OCRFI Proposal

The fact that the OCRFI proposal exists is positive. A proposal, even if we have serious doubts about its motives, is preferable to the succession of slanders, insults and deliberate distortions of the political positions of the Fourth International which have been hurled at us for many years, and which have even been repeated as if by reflex by one after another of the participants here. We take this positive fact into account and note that, on this level, it represents a change in the traditional attitude of the OCRFI.

1) This already constitutes a first lesson. It is fortunate that the OCRFI is beginning to understand that slanders, insults, deliberate distortions of political positions, and indeed, physical assaults, are useless. They can only serve to bar the way to any political discussion between revolutionary organizations which claim to be, and are, part of the workers movement. Moreover, they isolate and discredit those organizations, like the OCRFI, which are responsible for them. You yourselves recognize to a certain extent the disastrous impact on the "International Committee" of the "inability to initiate a broad discussion in the ranks." This inability cannot be separated from the methods you have employed in political relations with the Fourth International and its leadership, the United Secretariat.

2) This proposal contradicts the position you have maintained come-hell-or-high-water, which is that the Fourth International does not exist. This is because the reunification of the great majority of Trotskyists in 1963—which you bitterly denounced—and the continued presence and implantation of the Fourth International, which you

have tried to ignore for a long time, are facts which can no longer be denied.

Since 1968, the forces of the Fourth International have increased tenfold. In many countries, the Trotskyist organizations are playing a significant role in the class struggle and in the reconstitution of the workers movement resulting from it.

3) For that matter, we note that this truth has also become apparent to other currents in the workers and revolutionary movement who, on the eve of the great confrontations which are brewing, especially in Europe, have asked to open discussions with the Fourth International. We know our limitations and weaknesses as no one else does, but we interpret this situation as one of the signs of the continued presence and strengthening of revolutionary Marxism, of Trotskyism, which alone is capable of giving adequate answers to the many questions being raised today by the revolutionary upsurge. This puts the problem of building revolutionary communist parties capable of leading the proletariat to the conquest of power on the agenda in the most urgent way.

For our part, we will approach this new situation resulting from a new political period with an open mind, firmly united, faithful to our orientation in this process of profound restructuring of the forces of the workers movement, without, however, falling into the destructive trap of unprincipled maneuvers and losing sight of our immediate goal: namely, building national organizations and an international organization which can serve as the decisive lever for accomplishing this indispensable historic task.

II. Building the Revolutionary Organization

As a matter of principle, our relations with another revolutionary organization—however deep our differences with its positions and despite even our assessment of the symptoms of degeneration which may develop within it—must be dictated by the exploration of possibilities for common action, whatever the difficulties, and by discussions which can lead to a fusion under the right conditions. Thus we congratulate ourselves, for example, on the relations recently established between the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire and Lutte Ouvrière, as well as between the Fourth International and this current. This is made easier by the candor and lack of ambiguity in the assessments these two organizations make of one another, without, of course, settling the question of major political disagreements, which continue to exist.

The situation with the OCRFI is quite different. What goal, in fact, have you set for yourselves in proposing these discussions to us?

Is it to work toward building a common international organization? In that case, both your political documents and your whole attitude, including your own refusal to envision such a prospect, militate against it.

Is it, on the other hand, to work toward destroying the organization with whom you propose to have discussions, by any and all means and maneuvers? Your attitude toward the Fourth International and its sections, and the political and class characterizations to be found in your documents, do not permit us to rule out this type of judgment.

We hope that in the course of this meeting your contributions to the discussion will help shed light on your real objectives.

In the final analysis, of course, your practice, the way you educate your membership, your explicit characterizations of the Fourth International and its sections in the next period will give us a decisive answer. Rest assured that we will pay close attention.

For the moment—while waiting to be convinced by facts, not just some diplomatic formulations concocted on demand, or some careful language—we have serious doubts. These have a dual basis, as we explained in our November 14 letter to the OCRFI.

III. The necessary clarifications

1.) Written positions

a) You are proposing a discussion for discussion's sake, with neither a precise aim nor focus, which obviously does not interest us in the least. We much prefer to devote our priorities to developing a substantial political debate which can help concretize united political activity with an organization, and bring a real weight to bear on the course of the national and international class struggle, if possible. And it is possible right now with some organizations.

Now in your reply of December 10, you assert that there is no break in the continuity of your previous positions and those you are putting forward today. We are taking your assertion literally, and would like to utilize it here to clarify an important point.

We have never asked the OCRFI to make amends by repudiating its past positions; it is useless to recall them here, insofar as they still, as you yourselves say, guide your actions. We had, of course, asked for a clarification of the *current* positions of the OCRFI, in order to judge to what extent they were continuous with preceding ones.

You responded to us by firmly reasserting the continuity of your positions, and thus your actions. The consequences of this are obvious.

We cannot discuss fusion, unification, or even closer ties with an organization which continues to declare that the Fourth International must be "reconstructed" (because we supposedly destroyed it), and that the "revisionist" positions which *dominate* it—according to you—must be "eliminated."

Please understand us. We do not deny that, in any revolutionary organization, there may be revisionist positions on particular questions. Historical precedents are numerous; we need only cite Rosa Luxemburg's position on the national question to realize this.

However, all of your texts, including the most recent ones; the training you give your membership (without their knowing anything about the real positions and activity of the Fourth International); all of your statements, including those made at this very meeting; all of your documents;

your December 10 letter to the United Secretariat—make "revisionism" the *main criterion* by which you characterize the Fourth International.

Thus, if revisionism is the essential characteristic of the Fourth International, and if, as you say, the reconstruction of the Fourth International comes about by eliminating "revisionism" from its ranks, the conclusion is clear: the goal of reconstructing it must logically lead to the goal of breaking up the Fourth International. This can only serve to remove all credibility from your formulation, which you would like us to think is sincere: "Let's open the discussion in order to *overcome* the differences!"

The success of this undertaking has been slight up until now; it will remain so.

b) This raises another problem. You make systematic class characterizations of the Fourth International as an organization which is "*petty bourgeois*," "*the flank-guard of Stalinism*," "*decaying leftist*," or "*reactionary centrist*"—when you don't say outright that it "*supports popular frontism*," or, better yet, carrying it to grotesque extremes, the bourgeois government itself.

Now, a revolutionary organization is one which, despite possible errors on one question or another, defends the historic interests of the proletariat.

Conversely, an organization which is petty bourgeois, or deserving of the epithets that you cover us with, defends the interests of a social layer which is alien or hostile to the historic interests of the proletariat, or those of a social group (the Stalinist or social democratic bureaucracy) equally alien and hostile to these historic interests.

We are giving you credit for logic, at least.

Otherwise, how are we to understand the fact that you denounced the candidacy of our comrade Alain Krivine in the 1969 presidential elections, and the candidacies of Krivine and Arlette Laguiller in the 1974 elections, characterizing them at the time as "crypto-Stalinist, propelled by the bourgeoisie"?

More recently, you refused to call for a vote for our comrades in the GMR in the Québec elections last November. At the same time, the platform of the GSTQ, which is affiliated with the OCRFI, called for a vote for "*independent workers candidates against all the bourgeois candidates*." If we correctly understand the GSTQ, this means that the candidates of the Québécois GMR were neither workers nor independent. What were they then, bourgeois? This is a good example of the famous "continuity" you refer to, which *explicitly* contradicts your October 27 statement. This is where the real internal contradiction of your current posture lies.

On the one hand, your way of addressing the Fourth International has undeniably changed in tone and in form. This is positive. But on the other hand, you essentially maintain the political characterizations of the Fourth International which, as such, totally contradict the objective which point 1 of the United Secretariat statement of October 16-17, 1976, assigns to a discussion. Under these conditions, therefore, your approach can only be seen by the workers as a maneuver.

Such a discussion, in order to be meaningful, should take up the political differences existing between revolutionary organizations, not positions which reflect different class interests, as your characterizations up until now would indicate. It is up to you, therefore, to clarify this point, so as not to confirm our opinion that all of this is nothing but a unprincipled maneuver.

2.) Practice

The same point has been reached on the level of practical activity.

a) Unity in action between the OCI, the organization most representative of the OCRFI, and the French action of the Fourth International, the LCR, is practically nonexistent. This is due not only to your political orientation in France, which we disagree with, but also to your characterization of the LCR. You have gone so far as to say that the LCR's politics "*stand on the ground of national defense*" and of "support to the government." Now, any real strengthening of ties between two organizations must at least be tested by means of actual practical convergences in the living class struggle, if not always stemming directly from them. Nothing in the present state of affairs would indicate that this situation might change in the foreseeable future—just the opposite. For that matter, this attitude exists in countries other than France: in Mexico, Argentina, and Peru, for example. This only demonstrates what we know already.

There are not only serious differences between us, often of a fundamental nature; there is also an almost complete lack of practical convergence, which might be able to stimulate or concretize a real process of strengthening political ties and leading to a fusion.

b) Finally, we wish to make a formal condemnation of some of your methods, which have taken you to extremes in the use of slander, to the point of using violence in the workers movement. We ourselves have been the victims of it on several occasions in the past. Just a few weeks ago, some LCR militants were assaulted by militants of the OCI in Amiens, outside a meeting sponsored by your organization. For an organization which still claims to adhere to Trotskyism and the Left Opposition, this is more than a disgrace. It is the use of Stalinist methods by militants who claim to adhere to Trotskyism—those methods of which Trotskyism was the victim after the Kremlin bureaucracy's Thermidor. In and of itself, it calls the Trotskyist program into question, by trampling underfoot the Trotskyist tradition of the fight for workers democracy, in our own organizations and in the entire workers movement.

This is why the United Secretariat of the Fourth International totally approves the LCR's decision to refuse to take part in any bilateral contacts with the OCI until the OCI has publicly condemned this outrageous assault.

If the OCRFI has any authority whatsoever, or even a modicum of revolutionary integrity, it should intervene immediately to see to it that such practices be stopped, and that they be publicly condemned by the OCI.

IV. Conclusion

In our opinion, there are three types of criteria which make it possible to project a strengthening of political ties with a view to a possible process of unification between revolutionary organizations.

a) Programmatic agreement based on revolutionary Marxism, that is, the first four congresses of the Communist International, the documents of the Left Opposition, the texts of the Fourth International, and above all, the Transitional Program.

b) Agreement that international democratic centralism must govern the functioning of the international organization, which also constitutes part of our program, insofar as it expresses the objectively necessary function of a revolutionary International.

c) The possibility of actual practical convergence in the ongoing class struggle.

The first criterion is far from being met. Our substantial differences on how to carry out the Trotskyist program, and even on its content, have already been shown on a number of political questions. A public debate between the United Secretariat of the Fourth International and the OCRFI will provide an opportunity to test this criterion.

The second criterion, regarding the functioning of a unified organization, has been rejected by the OCRFI, particularly in its letter of December 10.

As for the third criterion, as we have already seen, it cannot be applied at this stage, either in France or in the majority of cases.

That is why we cannot at this time agree to have the kind of relations with you that we would have with an organization that actually wanted to become closer to us at the national and international level.

In the present state of affairs, the only type of discussion which we can project having with the OCRFI is a public debate between the United Secretariat and your leadership, which cannot therefore be placed in the framework of point 1 of the United Secretariat resolution, which you referred to in the statement accompanying your letter of October 27. It remains to be seen whether this framework can be modified.

Under the impact of the rise of the class struggle and the crisis facing the traditional organizations in the workers movement, which place a heavier burden of responsibility on revolutionists, the rejection of sectarianism and the clear recognition of the revolutionary character of the Fourth International—with all of the political and practical consequences flowing from it—will perhaps lead you to make this possible. We hope so. We will be happy if that is the case. In the meantime, of course, we are ready to work out with you the means by which a public debate of this type could take place. We are ready to conduct it before the whole working class, in order to clarify our political differences.

Statement to the United Secretariat From the International Bureau of the OCRFI

The seventh session of the International Bureau for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International, meeting December 26-30, 1976, in the presence of a delegation from the United Secretariat which had been invited to participate in its deliberations, discussed at length the problems currently posed in the struggle for the reconstruction of the unified Fourth International. We are sending you the attached resolution, which was adopted unanimously.

The International Bureau took note of the message read by the delegation from the United Secretariat. The main point, for the International Bureau, was that, in the opinion of the United Secretariat:

"In the present state of affairs, the only type of discussion which we can project having with the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International is a public debate between the United Secretariat and your leadership. . . . We are ready to work out with you the means by which a public debate of this type could take place."

We accept this proposal, and suggest that we meet immediately "to work out the procedures for this public debate."

Nevertheless, we fully maintain our previous proposals for a discussion organized by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International and the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International, involving the member organizations, with the conditions and topics to be determined.

We recall that in 1952 the majority of the PCI asked for recognition as an international tendency in the Fourth International; this was refused by the International Secretariat. This resulted in a split; hence, the discussions today between the United Secretariat and the Organizing Committee must take place in a responsible way, from organization to organization.

Incidentally, the International Bureau thinks that a number of the questions raised in the message from the United Secretariat should form part of the discussion between our organizations. However, the International Bureau would like to make the following observations:

1) The International Bureau holds that a split which has lasted for nearly a quarter of a century could not be motivated simply by considerations of a personal nature. You accuse us of "slanders." We do not deny that polemics can lead to excesses. But to attribute them to the Organizing Committee alone would not conform to reality. By way of proof, we read in your message:

"If the OCRFI has any authority whatsoever, or even a modicum of revolutionary integrity, it should intervene immediately to see to it that such practices be stopped and that they be publicly condemned by the OCI."

How are we to characterize this raising of doubts, even

in the conditional, about the "revolutionary integrity" of the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International? How should we respond to such an assertion? Especially since the references to the alleged violence or violence allegedly perpetrated "by militants of the OCI against militants of the LCR" rests entirely on a fiction. The OCI published all the facts in *Informations Ouvrières*, reducing the assertions of *Rouge* to nothing. Nearly all of the participants at the meeting called by the OCI signed a statement attesting to the fact that there was never any violence at Amiens. Two former members of the LCR, who disagreed with the OCI, sent a correction to *Rouge* and to *Informations Ouvrières*.

2) Once again, this is not the main point as far as the International Bureau is concerned. The main point is that the discussion is opening up. That is why we are convinced that your delegation, who attended our discussions—for which we are very glad—and who were offered the opportunity to take part in the discussion under all the points on the agenda (which, unfortunately, they were not authorized to do), will bring back a report that will show we are not proposing "a discussion for discussion's sake, with neither a precise aim nor focus."

We are certain that the report from your delegation will show that our discussions took place (to quote the conclusion of your message) "under the impact of the rise of the class struggle and the crisis facing the traditional organizations in the workers movement, which place a heavier burden of responsibility on revolutionists."

And that is why we declare, as you do: "We are ready to conduct a public debate before the whole working class, in order to clarify our political differences."

As the first example of our willingness to do this, we propose the publication of a joint Bulletin, to be published under the joint authority of the United Secretariat and the International Bureau, where all of the questions raised by the new stage in the class struggle and the problems of building revolutionary parties in Latin America would be discussed. The International Bureau, for our part, would like to inform you of our intention to publish, in a preliminary Bulletin for the membership, the different documents which our organizations have adopted concerning "foquismo," such as the self-criticism by the United Secretariat which we consider to be a positive step. We will of course add our comments and differences with this document.

This is not, of course, an exclusive proposal. In conclusion, we say to you: a delegation from the International Bureau is ready to meet at any time with a delegation from the United Secretariat, to work out the procedures for the public debate which you are proposing.

December 30, 1976

Letter to OCRFI Approved by the United Secretariat Meeting of February 5-7, 1977

Brussels
8 February 1977

United Secretariat of the Fourth International
to the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction
of the Fourth International

Comrades,

During its meeting of 6-7-8 February, 1977, the United Secretariat heard a report from its delegation, which was present with observer status at your Paris meeting of 26-30 December, 1976. The US has also been informed of your response to the statement of the US read during this meeting.

The US takes note that the International Bureau of the OCRFI accepts the proposal, formulated in the statement of the US, for a public discussion between the US and the OCRFI. In order to examine the modalities and themes of such a discussion, we propose that we meet after the next meeting of the US.

The US delegation will come to this meeting with written proposals and we suggest that you do the same.

In addition, the US has learned that during a conversation with Comrades Michaloux, Horowitz, and Olivier at the conclusion of the meeting of the International Bureau, Pierre Lambert stated, in the presence of Claude Chisserey and Stephane Just, that there were members of the OCI in the LCR. This serious assertion requires an indispensable explanation from you: What is the justification for such a political orientation? How does the leadership of the OCI motivate the political reasons for this "entryism sui generis" in an organization of which the OCI has said: "The links with the Fourth International and the assertion of the validity of its program characterize (this) organization as revolutionary."

Obviously, we hope for a rapid and clear written response on this important subject.

Communist greetings,
United Secretariat of the Fourth International

Statement by Atwood, Galois, Johnson, and Thérèse at February 5-7, 1977, United Secretariat Meeting

We strongly object to the presence of OCI members in the LCR. Our objective should be to get the OCI to stop this practice.

We did not vote for this motion [printed above] because we consider the procedure it proposes to deal with the problem is not the most effective, for the following two reasons:

1. Rather than demanding a written response from the OCI prior to the next meeting, this problem should be raised in the next discussion between the delegations of the USFI and the OCRFI.

2. Rather than demanding an explanation from the OCI concerning this practice, we should insist that the OCI live up to the commitment made by Pierre Lambert, in the presence of Claude Chisserey, Stephane Just, Gus Horowitz, Charles Michaloux, and Olivier, to remove all OCI members inside the LCR.

The procedure proposed in the letter that was adopted seems to us to be designed to erect further obstacles to the discussion already agreed to between the USFI and the OCRFI, rather than to solve the problem.

Letter of March 7, 1977, from OCRFI to United Secretariat

Paris
March 7, 1977

United Secretariat of the Fourth International

Dear Comrades:

This is to confirm that we are prepared to organize a public discussion between the United Secretariat of the Fourth International and the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International, and that we of course agree to the meeting you have suggested. We are only waiting for you to set the date.

As for the other point you raise in your letter: Comrade Lambert in no way denies having said that the OCI had found ways of following the political discussion in the

LCR—given the type of relations that existed between the LCR and the OCI, no other solution was possible. The LCR, for that matter, has not hesitated to resort to the same method—Comrade Carasso from Clermont-Ferrand is a case in point. It seems to us that this is inevitable.

These are problems we think will take care of themselves once the political discussion, which we are looking forward to, really gets under way.

F. de Massot
For the International Bureau
of the Organizing Committee
for the Reconstruction of the
Fourth International

Motion on OCRFI adopted Unanimously at the March 22-23, 1977, Meeting of United Secretariat

In accordance with the motions previously adopted on relations with the OCRFI, and after receiving the OCRFI's response to these proposals, the USFI decides:

1. To hold a meeting with an OCRFI delegation as soon as possible to consider the modalities of the public discussion between the latter and the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.

2. To establish as the first topic in this discussion: The Crisis of Stalinism.

3. To proceed to prepare this public, written discussion in the following way:

a. The presentation of the positions of the Fourth International in this discussion must take place under the control of the United Secretariat;

b. The Bureau of the USFI is mandated to prepare a draft document for this public discussion to present to the USFI;

c. In order to avoid beginning the discussion from preestablished positions, this document should be the result of a process of real discussion within the leadership bodies of the International. In this way the basic positions of the International can be determined, as well as any

disagreements that may arise in this or that area;

d. In the framework of carrying out this procedure the USFI will allow the public expression of differences that might exist within it;

e. After a balance sheet of *both* the public discussion and possible common actions is drawn the USFI will decide on the forms for continuing the discussion.

4. In order to consider the problems related to the practical realization of this public, written discussion, a meeting will be held between the Bureau of the United Secretariat, the Secretariat of the Political Bureau of the LCR, and representatives of the SWP leadership.

5. In its letter of March 7, 1977, addressed to the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, the OCRFI asserts: "Comrade Lambert in no way denies having said that the OCI had found ways of following the political discussion in the LCR—given the type of relations that existed between the LCR and the OCI, no other solution was possible." The USFI decides to publish this letter in the International Internal Discussion Bulletin, accompanied by a response from the Political Bureau of the LCR. The USFI delegation is mandated to take this point up at its next meeting with the OCRFI delegation.

Statement by Galois and Johnson at March 22-23, 1977, United Secretariat Meeting

We voted for the motion on the OCRFI, because it represents a step forward towards opening up a process of discussion between the USFI and the OCRFI. We still think it would have been preferable to have initiated an internal discussion rather than a public one. We also think

it would have been preferable to have suggested a few more topics to initiate the discussion, such as women's liberation and the Latin American revolution, in addition to the crisis of Stalinism.

Motion Concerning SWP Convention Adopted by Central Committee of French LCR in August 1976

The French section of the Fourth International decided not to attend the SWP convention not because of political differences with the (LTF) leadership of the SWP, but because of the political meaning this convention took on with regard to the International. The fact is that the SWP invited organizations without asking the advice or consulting the sections of the corresponding countries: LO and the OCRFI in France, for example, *in flagrant violation* of a previous decision by the United Secretariat, the decision itself being a sequel to previous contacts made by the SWP with the Lambertists. What is more serious is that for the first time, the SWP invited the OCRFI, the international appendage of the Lambertists, as such. Is it necessary to recall that the Lambertists and the OCRFI consider the Fourth International to have been "destroyed" by the present leadership of the United Secretariat, that the organizations of the Fourth International do not deserve to be called either Trotskyist or revolutionary, that the Fourth International is nothing but a flankguard for Stalinism, and that, consequently, the OCRFI's politics are limited solely to its publicly proclaimed aim of splitting the Fourth International? The invitation to the OCRFI as such, without even asking for agreement from the United Secretariat, thus represents a factional bonus for the Lambertist maneuver. What is even clearer, as noted in the resolution passed by the United Secretariat on July 3 and 4, is that the invitations constitute "a political act as it does not merely not invite but excludes Spartacists, Healyites, and others who are political attackers of the SWP. . . . The United Secretariat further notes that in this political act the SWP chooses not to invite an organization such as the RMOC, which politically attacks the SWP, but does choose to invite forces such as the OCRFI who attack the majority of the sections of the International as counterrevolutionary. . . ." In other words, the politically *selective* nature of

these invitations is apparent. What is involved here is a reaffirmation of the intention to act as an open faction in practice, together with the refusal to contribute to the resources of the center, the nondistribution in practice of *Inprecor*—the official organ of the United Secretariat—in the United States, a unity policy with various organizations that is as much a violation "of the right of national sections to determine tactics as it is of the rights of international leading bodies" (United Secretariat resolution, July 3, 1976), as well as sending a representative to France not under the control of either the United Secretariat or the leadership of the French section up to now.

In the face of such a factional policy, we must help advance the ideological debate while struggling against all factional maneuvers within the Fourth International. Moreover, the political discussion can only go forward on the condition that all individuals and sections help to build the International.

It is for this reason that the Political Bureau had decided that the French section would not attend the SWP convention. What was involved was not a general policy, but a conjunctural decision that applied only to the SWP convention, considered as a political act harmful to the International. The Political Bureau, of course, left and still leaves comrades free to visit the United States, to meet the members and leaders of the SWP there, to take part in meetings with them, etc., while requesting that the Political Bureau be informed beforehand.

On the basis of these considerations, the Central Committee has ratified the decision of the Political Bureau not to send a delegation from the French section of the Fourth International to the SWP convention, but considers it possible for LCR members now in the United States to attend the convention as individual observers.

November 14, 1976, Letter From United Secretariat to Lutte Ouvrière

Brussels
November 14, 1976

TO: Lutte Ouvrière
FROM: The United Secretariat of the Fourth International

Dear Comrades,

At its November 13-14, 1976, session, the United Secretariat discussed the results of the October 22 meeting between our respective delegations. We also took note of the report of our observer at the international meeting you had called.

The United Secretariat finds that:

a) our views concerning the usefulness of linking all

proposals for ongoing discussions between various revolutionary organizations to a binding framework for action appear closer than was previously thought;

b) the participation, as well as the course of the international meeting on October 31, 1976, has confirmed that it is unrealistic to try to bring together *all* groups claiming to be Trotskyist, even for purposes of discussion, at least at the present stage. The unproductiveness of this type of discussion, to which a whole series of sects seem to give priority, has also been confirmed.

Therefore, the United Secretariat considers it useful to move forward right now with bilateral exchanges between your current and ours, in order to explore in a practical

manner the possibility of combining a discussion with instances of joint action. The results of these experiences should show whether a process leading to fusion between our two currents is possible in the medium term.

With this aim, the United Secretariat makes the following proposals with regard to France, in agreement with the LCR leadership:

1. That LO and the LCR immediately begin discussions with a view toward the joint publication of a four-page weekly supplement to *Rouge* and *Lutte Ouvrière*.

2. That discussions get under way with regard to a joint electoral campaign in 1977, and in particular with regard to the joint publication of propaganda and agitational material for the 1977 municipal elections.

3. That a joint LO/LCR workers conference in France be organized by the end of summer 1977.

4. That the United Secretariat and your international current immediately establish a parity commission to discuss the platform and practical modalities of a campaign of solidarity with the laboring masses of color in

South Africa, a campaign that will undoubtedly be a long one, given the importance of South Africa to imperialism and the probable duration of the liberation struggle in that country. One of the primary goals of this campaign must be to aid in the reconstitution of a Trotskyist organization in South Africa itself.

5. To examine the possibility of a similar effort in support of the rising Spanish revolution.

6. To discuss and work out together, or failing that, for your current to prepare several articles to be published in one out of every four issues of *Inprecor*.

We await your response to these proposals, as well as any counter proposals or additional proposals you may make. We are, of course, ready to meet with you as soon as possible to discuss them.

Fraternal communist
greetings,
United Secretariat of the
Fourth International

December 9, 1976, Letter from Lutte Ouvrière to United Secretariat

Paris
December 9, 1976

Dear Comrades,

We have learned of your proposals and have conveyed them to our comrades in Combat Ouvrier, Spark and the UATCI. For now, however, we are replying to you in this letter only in the name of Lutte Ouvrière.

We see your proposals as a whole as a positive step, since we have long felt that it would be desirable to establish relations between our two currents, both on the international level and in France, and that it is very necessary to consider carrying out activities in common wherever possible.

We would prefer, however, to formulate the proposals on the basis of which we can begin collaboration as follows:

1) LO and the LCR should immediately begin discussions aimed at publishing a common four-page weekly supplement to *Rouge* and *Lutte Ouvrière*. This supplement should not be conceived of as a forum for debate between LO and the LCR, but rather as a reflection of the ability of our organizations to work out a common viewpoint on some, if not all, political questions.

For example, the publication of this kind of supplement should neither be subordinated to a possible united front agreement or a united campaign in the upcoming municipal or legislative elections, nor dependent upon such an agreement. Consequently, it would be good for the supplement to discuss different aspects of day-to-day politics that the revolutionary movement is confronted with.

The publication of a common four-page supplement in our respective papers is a starting point. As the areas of politics in which a common viewpoint has been worked out extend further and further, the supplement should increasingly occupy a greater proportion of the space, compared to the diverging viewpoints of the two organizations—the ultimate aim being a common publication, where only

those positions on which real differences exist would be published in their own names.

2) Concerning the 1977 municipal elections, in which, because of our small forces, we could expect to run separate candidates in only a few municipalities, LO and the LCR should make every effort to run common candidates, making it possible for revolutionaries to be present in a larger number of cities.

To the extent that such an agreement can be reached, LO and the LCR will collaborate first on a political platform, and then on common propaganda materials. But even in the event that our efforts to publish campaign material completely in common do not succeed, and we have to conduct campaigns in support of these common slates partly or totally independently, the fact of having established common slates, making it possible for revolutionaries to run candidates and defend their politics in a larger number of cities, would still be positive and is worth seeking.

Along the same lines, there is the question of the legislative elections projected for 1978. Given the current state of our forces, neither of our organizations could consider running candidates in all the districts. On the other hand, if we joined forces, it would be possible for there to be a Trotskyist candidate in each of the 470 districts by the time of the elections. LO and the LCR will therefore begin negotiations in order to arrive either at an agreement on how to distribute our candidates similar in conception to the 1973 agreement but covering all the districts—or, preferably, at the same agreement, this time supplemented by a common campaign around a platform worked out in common with the same campaign material.

3) A workers conference in which both our organizations will participate will take place before the end of this summer. The preparatory discussions leading up to this conference, as well as the conference itself when it is held, will enable us to confront each other's politics and

methods in the workplace.

While bearing in mind that there has been no meeting of our international tendency since your letter was received, and that we are replying only in the name of Lutte Ouvrière, we would like you to know that, as far as we are concerned, there is agreement on the following points:

4) Our two currents will launch a campaign of solidarity with the nonwhite laboring masses in southern Africa, one of whose "primary aims must be to aid the reconstitution of a Trotskyist organization in South Africa itself."

5) Our two currents will launch a campaign of solidarity with the Spanish working class and its organizations, struggling, under the new conditions created by the "political reforms" of the Juan Carlos regime, to win democratic freedoms and legalization of workers parties and trade unions. The growth of the Spanish Trotskyist movement could be a decisive factor enabling the working

class to take advantage of all the openings provided by the situation, to become organized and educated, and to prepare for future revolutionary battles.

6) Articles will be published, either written jointly by our two tendencies or by our current alone, in every four issues of *Inprecor*, in other words, once every two months. Similarly, we are offering you an opportunity to publish equally regular articles in our magazine *Lutte de Classe-Class Struggle*; these may be either jointly written, or simply express your viewpoint.

Communist greetings,
Executive Committee
Lutte Ouvrière

cc: Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire

36