

International Internal Discussion Bulletin

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

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Fraction

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Dissolve the International Factions!

By Barry Sheppard

[The general line of the following world movement report and summary was adopted by the Twenty-Ninth National Convention of the Socialist Workers Party on August 12, 1977.]

At the 1973 convention of the SWP, the delegates adopted a report that took a position on the internal situation in the Fourth International. The position was that the Leninist Trotskyist Tendency should convert itself into a faction, and the International Majority Tendency should constitute itself as an openly declared faction. This proposal was necessitated by the revelation of a split wing in the International Majority Tendency and the need to bring any prosplit elements under control in open, disciplined factions. [See "Secret Factionalism—A Threat to the Unity of the Fourth International," by Jack Barnes, SWP Internal Information Bulletin (IIB), No. 7 in 1974, August.]

Today the Political Committee is placing before you a proposal that the SWP once again take a position on the internal situation in the Fourth International, this time to propose to both the IMT and LTF that they immediately dissolve.

A factional situation has existed in the Fourth International for almost nine years. It originated in the turn, codified at the 1969 world congress, that set the strategic orientation for our movement in Latin America as guerrilla warfare. Following the 1969 world congress, this strategic orientation was tested in practice in Bolivia and Argentina. That experience resulted in a political and organizational disaster for our movement in both of those countries.

At the 1969 world congress a minority, including the leadership of the Socialist Workers Party, was opposed to that turn. We warned that unless this turn was corrected, it would lead to further errors. Against the strategy of guerrilla warfare, we counterposed our movement's traditional position of the Leninist strategy of party building based on the method of the Transitional Program.

This debate over strategy took place not only inside the Fourth International. Our debate reflected a debate that was unfolding among broader layers of revolutionists, especially those in Latin America inspired by the Cuban revolution. The Cuban leadership itself advocated the guerrilla strategy as against the strategy of building Leninist parties.

For almost four years the minority that we were part of was not structured into a tendency or a faction. We wrote documents and presented our arguments on why the turn should be corrected. We were confident that the test of practice would be able to resolve the question.

By the time of the December 1972 meeting of the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International, the verdict of history was already in. And at that IEC, therefore, it was necessary to draw a balance sheet of how the line that had previously been decided on actually worked out in the heat of the class struggle itself. However, at that IEC, the majority comrades failed to correct their

course even after the disasters in Bolivia and Argentina. Instead, they deepened the error.

It is one thing to make a mistake, including a grave mistake—and the strategy of guerrilla war was a grave one in terms of the loss of cadres and disorientation it led to. But it is an even graver error to fail to correct a mistake when practice itself has shown the line adopted was erroneous. Then you have a far more serious situation. The error is likely to become generalized and extended. Because of that political default by the IEC majority, the minority in the spring of 1973 formed the Leninist Trotskyist Tendency (LTT), to fight to reverse the turn taken on Latin America.

The political error made in 1969 was accompanied by the development of deepening factionalism. This began at the 1969 world congress itself, as the majority more and more felt that the minority was merely an obstacle to carrying out the new course. We were looked upon as the "old Trotskyists" stuck in a sectarian, dogmatic framework, unable to take advantage of the openings that this new guerrilla strategy would provide. As one delegate put it, we couldn't see that the next world congress would be held in La Paz.

As the majority continued on its erroneous course and failed to correct it, the factionalism was accelerated. And as the test of practice began to reveal the failure of the guerrilla line, there was an increasing tendency on the part of the majority not to discuss with the minority what was really happening to the sections in Bolivia and Argentina.

The majority faction leadership increasingly substituted itself for the elected leadership bodies of the Fourth International in dealing with the sections in Bolivia and Argentina. This came to light in two secret factional letters written by leading majority comrades. One, the Letter of the Six, attempted to correct some errors of the Argentine comrades engaged in the guerrilla strategy, but within the framework of supporting that strategy; the other, the Domingo Letter, launched a factional attack against those Argentine comrades who supported the minority and were opposed to the 1969 world congress turn. [See "Letter to the PRT (Combatiente)," International Internal Discussion Bulletin (IIDB), Vol. 10, No. 7, June 1973; and the "Domingo Letter," SWP IIB No. 7 in 1974, August.]

By the summer of 1973, further information on the direction taken by the majority was provided, especially through what became known as the Barzman Letter, because it was a report by Comrade John Barzman to his co-thinkers in the United States in the form of a letter. This letter revealed the existence of a split wing in the majority—a wing that desired to exclude the LTT from the international, that viewed the majority, in their own words, as the "real international" within which the "real" discussion occurred. This helped explain the reluctance to engage in a real discussion with the minority, as the international prepared for the upcoming 1974 world congress. It likewise explained why we had such difficulty in

getting the contributions of the minority comrades to the discussion translated into French. And it looked as though we were heading toward an undemocratic world congress that would consummate a split.

Therefore, in the summer of 1973, the LTF decided to convert itself into a faction in order to fight against a split and for a democratic and authoritative world congress. The LTF expressed willingness to bloc with anyone in what was by then the International Majority Tendency (IMT), or with those who were not in either tendency and were opposed to the split course. [See "A New Situation in the Fourth International," A Statement by the Leninist Trotskyist Faction, IIDB, Vol. X, No. 15, October 1973.] And we did succeed in preventing a split, and in meeting the minimal conditions for holding a 1974 world congress democratic enough to be authoritative.

That world congress was held in the beginning of 1974. There the majority adopted three important resolutions. The resolutions on Bolivia and on Argentina reaffirmed the basic guerrillaist course the sections in those countries had followed. They made some corrections, but reiterated the essential elements of the 1969 world congress line.

Most importantly, a resolution on armed struggle in Latin America was adopted. This resolution, which had not even been presented for discussion in most sections before the congress, generalized and systematized the strategic error of the 1969 world congress. And although this third resolution retracted some aspects of the 1969 document, it maintained the same basic line, elevating the error into an explicit revision of our program.

Meeting immediately following the 1974 world congress, the LTF decided that if the course that was indicated by the resolution on armed struggle was implemented, this would lead to an extremely explosive situation in the international. For that reason, the LTF voted to maintain itself as a faction to help ward off that danger. [See "Preliminary Report to New York Caucus of the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction on Fourth World Congress Since Reunification (Tenth World Congress)," by Joseph Hansen, SWP IIB No. 4 in 1974, April.]

As we had warned, the turn of the 1969 world congress led to other errors of both opportunistic and adventurist varieties. At the 1969 world congress itself, the first casualty of the turn was the dumping of a resolution on the youth radicalization, which had been unanimously adopted by the United Secretariat a few weeks before the congress. That was one sign of the beginning of a new orientation for our sections, especially in Europe.

The new orientation was marked by political adaptation to the so-called far left, or what later came to be called the "new mass vanguard." This then became another important subject of debate. One orientation, defended by the IMT, was the attempt to unite the "far left" into an "adequate instrument" that would "outflank" the mass reformist-led parties and unions by projecting campaigns around the "concerns" of this "vanguard." The other, defended by the LTF, was to begin with the objective needs of the masses, determine our line in the various movements and struggles of the masses on the basis of those needs, and then seek to win vanguard elements to that correct line.

Those divergent orientations became the subject of a debate that reached its sharpest expression in the testing ground of the Portuguese revolution in 1975. In our opinion, the experience of the Portuguese revolution, and

the disastrous results of applying the IMT line in Portugal, started a process of rethinking on this question among various comrades in the IMT around the world.

Other differences emerged in the course of the factional struggle. There were differences over the Angolan civil war, for example. Others were carry-overs of differences in the international that predated the 1969 world congress, such as the political and theoretical disagreements on Vietnam and China.

'Self-Criticism on Latin America'

An important development in a correct direction occurred last December. The IMT published a "Self-Criticism on Latin America." This document corrected many of the points we thought were most important in the wrong turn taken in 1969. It resolved many of the fundamental errors of the 1969 turn as it related to Latin America.

At the January 1977 plenum of the National Committee of the SWP, we welcomed this development. We noted the areas of agreement and the questions that were now resolved, even though not every question in dispute was disposed of. And we said this step opened the way to rescind the 1969 and 1974 world congress resolutions on Latin America that had codified the turn. [See "The Meaning of the IMT Steering Committee's Self-Criticism on Latin America," by Jack Barnes, IIDB, Vol. XIV, No. 5, May 1977.]

Shortly after the January 1977 SWP National Committee plenum, the IMT Steering Committee met and adopted a declaration containing a new platform. We noted that in their declaration the IMT comrades rejected including the 1974 world congress documents on Latin America as part of their new platform, and instead included only the "Self-Criticism on Latin America" document. We believed this rejection strengthened the "Self-Criticism" document and increased the possibility that a large majority in the international now agrees to rescind the 1969 and 1974 resolutions that codified that disastrous turn.

At the January NC plenum the SWP leadership made a proposal to both the LTF and to the IMT. We proposed, in view of the IMT criticism of the policies that underlay the development of the whole factional situation, that the factions be mutually dissolved. The SWP held that the factions had been superseded by the march of events and that they now served to deter the preparation of the discussion leading up to the next world congress.

I'm not going to discuss the new IMT declaration as a whole. We took it up at the April 1977 plenum of our National Committee. The IMT declaration and our analysis of it appear in SWP International Internal Information Bulletin (IIB), No. 1 in 1977, July.

The IMT declaration amounted to a rejection of our proposal to dissolve the factions. The purpose of the declaration was to justify maintaining the IMT, although on a new platform. The declaration designated the IMT as merely a tendency, and not a faction. However, it is clear from reading the declaration that this "redefinition" does not express the real nature of the formation. The IMT has been reorganized to fight the alleged violations of democratic centralism and political degeneration of the LTF, which the declaration details at some length. It will meet separately from the normal bodies to discuss tactics in

carrying out its organizational as well as political fight. In Leninist terms, such a fighting formation is a faction and should be so called.

So that's the situation as it presently stands. We made a proposal to dissolve the factions, and the initial stance of the IMT comrades was to reject it. What the Political Committee is proposing to you, the delegates at this convention today, is that you take the lead to help break this logjam. *Our proposal is that this convention of the SWP adopt the position that the Steering Committee of the LTF, which is going to meet following our convention, should unilaterally dissolve the LTF, completely and unconditionally, and that the IMT should follow suit as rapidly as it is able.*

The Meaning of Dissolution

What would this step entail? First of all, the two formations would cease meeting. They would cease to have any right to draft resolutions, amendments, correspondence, or mailings not available to the entire international leadership. They would not prepare their own documents for the next world congress in their own separate meetings, and then bring these into the leadership bodies of the international. The documents for the next world congress would be prepared through collective discussions in the leadership bodies themselves, in full collaboration with the elected leaderships of the national sections, without prior discussions and lining up of comrades within factions. Everyone on the leadership bodies would be free—and obliged—to present their own positions without first discussing these in a faction or tendency, and through discussion begin to work to prepare the resolutions which would be presented to the pre-world-congress discussion.

The documents of the IMT and of the LTF would be relegated to the status of historical material. That is, they would not be submitted for adoption at the next world congress. They would be available to anyone for studies in the history of our movement.

This does not mean that we will have achieved complete agreement or that anyone on either side has to automatically give up their ideas. For example, the majority of the LTF believes that the past LTF documents are correct. We assume that except where they have made explicit alterations in their positions—for example, in regard to Latin America—the majority of the IMT comrades will continue to believe their documents are correct.

But from our point of view, there has been substantial progress toward resolving the fundamental point on which the LTT and the LTF—and in reality, the IMT also—were founded. The IMT side now stands on a platform greatly altered from the one on which it was founded. The IMT "Self-Criticism on Latin America" constitutes a fundamental and decisive alteration in the platform that the IMT was established to defend.

Although many differences remain, we do not need to continue the faction formations in order to discuss these differences. In fact we think it would be detrimental to the discussion of remaining and possible future differences to maintain the organized faction formations.

In the new situation opened by the IMT "Self-Criticism on Latin America," we must explore in a nonfactional atmosphere the extent of the political convergences and the extent of the remaining differences.

This is especially true as we begin to discuss the new

questions which our world movement must come to grips with before the next world congress. The class struggle moves ahead. Its rhythm is not determined by debates in the Fourth International. There are many new questions that we have only begun to grapple with. There is no reason to assume beforehand, and it would be wrong to do so, that a single difference on the documents for the next world congress will necessarily follow the old faction lines.

We are not for covering up differences. We are dead against that. We are not for writing any vague ambiguous documents with "elliptical phrases" designed to cover up real differences. Our goal is political clarity. But we can't assume beforehand that differences that may arise will follow the old lineups, or that the lineups on some questions will be the same as the lineups on others. We can't tell beforehand how deep the differences, if any, will be. Or whether it will be necessary, as differences are clarified, for new tendencies to be formed.

The only responsible way to proceed now is on the opposite assumption. That is for the entire leadership to thoroughly explore the extent of the differences, if any, in drafting the documents for the next world congress. Any future differences would then fall along the lines of actual divergences held by individuals and sections, and not artificially along the lines of the old factions.

Against Permanent Factionalism

If we don't follow this course, we run the danger of falling into permanent factionalism. A permanent faction is a grouping that stays together regardless of significant political changes. It assumes that on any and every new question there will be differences along the old lineups. It first discusses every new question within the permanent faction before taking it into leadership bodies. It works out its whole position first, submerging any disagreements that may divide it internally. This maximizes the likelihood of continuing differences along old faction lines.

A permanent faction stays together after the original reasons for its formation have been superseded. It really becomes a gang or a clique, not a faction organized for specific and therefore temporary purposes. It is a gang of people who consider themselves "like-minded," who are comfortable with one another, who are *against* someone else. A permanent faction breeds unprincipled combinationism. That is, if any differences emerge within the permanent faction, it seeks to contain them within itself, and to keep the formation together in spite of such political and ideological differences. Maintaining the grouping takes precedence over honestly presenting all political positions before the party or the international as a whole. That means placing the interests of the gang above the interests of the party or of the international.

Such a formation runs the danger of converting the movement into a sect, since it places its special interests in maintaining itself, regardless of circumstances, above the interests of the international, and that means above the interests of the working class in general.

A permanent faction serves as a breeding ground for cultism. Since it is not based on principled political agreement, an arbiter must emerge within the group to settle any differences—the leader exercising veto power to preserve a common front against the factional adversary. Obviously, permanent factionalism leads to unprincipled maneuvering and perpetual factional warfare running the

danger of a split. It turns the party or the international into a factional jungle, organized vertically. It is the factions, organized from the top down, which have the *real* discussions on all matters that count. The elected leadership bodies lose their general authority, forfeit the role they were elected to play, and are reduced to meeting grounds for the heads of warring factions. When the elected leadership bodies cease to function, democracy is undermined. The ranks lose the right to elect the real leadership. The membership has no control over the faction-gangs.

Permanent factionalism destroys any possibility of building a collective team leadership. It destroys the possibility of leadership collaboration and the search for clarity and consensus even on secondary issues. It destroys democratic centralism.

In their newest declaration, the IMT Steering Committee "redefines" the platform that the IMT stands on. They now stand on three documents, not a single one of which is from the platform they adhered to before. The mistake in such "redefinition" is that it breeds permanent factionalism. What they have done as a grouping, previously organized around a particular line defined by a set of documents, is get together to decide what their new positions are. They made a fundamental change in their platform. With this method of repeated "redefinitions," the IMT could be kept together indefinitely. Their adherents could produce self-criticisms and redefinitions of the IMT endlessly. We want to bring the danger of that practice to the attention of the comrades in the IMT. We think that it is not what most of them want.

The LTF has remained a principled faction. When serious differences, both organizational and political, developed within it with the comrades led by the Argentine PST [Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores—Socialist Workers Party] and with a section of the leaders of the Spanish LC [Liga Comunista—Communist League], we parted company with them. We did not attempt to make an accommodation with them to keep them in the faction. When serious political and organizational differences emerged, the LTF remained a principled formation by parting company with comrades who no longer stood on the LTF's documents.

But the LTF would also be subject to developing into a permanent faction if it "redefined" itself instead of seizing the opportunity opened by the IMT "Self-Criticism," taking the initiative, and leading the international to break out of the old obsolete framework.

The length of time that the faction formations have existed creates a danger. The pace of discussion on the international level is slow, necessarily slow. We're talking about an interval of almost nine years' duration, not nine years of organized formations, but nine years of a factional situation. Meanwhile, differences of various kinds have developed among comrades who once agreed on the specific platform of reversing the turn of the 1969 world congress.

For example, in the recent Spanish elections, some comrades of the LTF in Spain and in France supported the call for a boycott of the elections. A majority of LTF comrades found themselves in agreement on this question with the IMT comrades in Spain, that is, they opposed the boycott, and were for intervening in the elections. The leadership of the Socialist Workers Party, for example, opposed the boycott position. If the LTF were to stay

together, it would be obligated to take a political position on that question. (Today, the big majority of the Spanish comrades who support the LTF also think the boycott position was an error.)

Many comrades in this room who are members of the SWP don't support either the IMT or the LTF. I wouldn't be surprised if a good number of delegates here have not declared their support for one or the other of the factions. For someone to join the LTF now, do you know what you have to read? You must read a stack of LTF documents that adds up to about four books, and in order to understand what's involved, you've got to read the equivalent on the IMT side. Then you've got to go back and read Lenin and Trotsky on the 1905 revolution and its aftermath and many other things related to the debate to fully comprehend the political positions of either the LTF or the IMT. The lengthy existence of the factional situation, therefore, makes the decision of a new comrade to join the LTF or the IMT somewhat artificial.

We don't think we can approach and settle this question of the dissolution of the factional structures by stages. First, we can't be paralyzed by those in the IMT who resist the process of dissolution of the factions. And we don't think it would be correct to say that we should wait until we've disposed of all the remaining political and theoretical differences. In fact, the best way to conduct these discussions now is outside any factional framework.

We also believe that we don't have to wait until we get agreement from the Bolshevik Tendency to dissolve. That is the tendency led by the leaders of the Argentine PST, who split with the LTF. Those who have followed developments in the international through the bulletins know that the Bolshevik Tendency is misnamed. It's neither a tendency nor a principled faction but a clique which has carried out a series of marauding operations, destructive raids, and unprincipled interventions in sections and sympathizing groups around the world. This conduct presents a problem that the whole international must deal with.

We don't think that a counterfaction is necessary to handle this problem. It can best be dealt with by the leadership bodies of the international instead of by the factions. We can build collective leadership bodies capable of handling this and other leadership tasks only if we dissolve the IMT and the LTF, work to reestablish the moral authority of the highest bodies of the international, and seek to incorporate the comrades of the BT in this process, too.

Some Political Convergences

Differences remain on many questions and we will discuss them. But there are also indications that, while there are differences, there are also some convergences. Not definitive agreements, but convergences.

Recently, by a large majority vote, the United Secretariat passed a common document on the extension of democracy under a workers state, "Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," which was published in the July 25, 1977, issue of *Intercontinental Press* (Vol. 15, No. 28). A majority consisting of members of both factions supported the line of that document.

On the issue of women's liberation, around which sharp differences were expressed prior to the 1974 world congress, there has been progress. There is not yet complete

agreement, but there is a convergence. At its Steering Committee meeting in August 1976 the LTF decided to adopt the general line of the women's liberation resolution that had been written on request of the United Secretariat in 1973. Last fall comrades from the IMT on the United Secretariat said to us, now wait a minute. We don't think that there are differences in line on this question. It would be much better if, instead of submitting this as an LTF resolution, you could submit it as a contribution to the discussion. We will see through discussion how much we really agree on, whether or not we could adopt this resolution by a large majority. To promote this, we propose to have a free discussion without the previous lining up that presentation of your document as an LTF resolution would imply.

The LTF accepted that reasonable proposal. It goes in the direction that we're trying to go in the international. So that's what the LTF did. The resolution was submitted as a contribution under the name of its principal author, Comrade Mary-Alice Waters. [See "Socialist Revolution and the Struggle for Women's Liberation," by Mary-Alice Waters, IIDB, Vol. XIII, No. 9, December 1976.] Some comrades who were active in this work and who supported the IMT submitted another discussion article. [See "For an Intervention by Sections of the Fourth International Against the Oppression of Women," submitted by Allio, Darmelle, Ellis, Nina, IIDB, Vol. XIV, No. 4, May 1977.] We are now having discussions to see whether or not it is possible to agree on the resolution—with some reformulations in light of the discussion—as the women's liberation resolution to be presented to the world congress.

All readers of the *Militant* know about the trip that Caroline Lund and José Pérez made to Spain, reporting on the election campaign and on the campaign of the Spanish LCR [Liga Comunista Revolucionaria—Revolutionary Communist League]. As in Canada, Mexico, and Australia, the Spanish movement had been split along the lines of the IMT-LTF positions in the past years. The LCR is led by comrades who support the IMT. The leadership of the SWP noted some convergence with the comrades of the IMT in Spain, for example, on the importance of democratic demands, and on participation in the election, even though there wasn't agreement with the LCR leadership on all questions in relation to the election campaign.

There has been convergence on the question of so-called Eurocommunism and what it signifies. That's one of the subjects we have to have further collective discussion on because it presents opportunities for political intervention by our movement. At its June meeting the United Secretariat unanimously decided to draft a document on Eurocommunism to submit to the discussion with the OCRFI, the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International. This document is to be based on Jack Barnes's report adopted by the SWP National Committee on April 29, 1976 [see "Europe vs. America and the Erosion of World Stalinism," SWP Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 34, No. 4, June 1976] and Ernest Mandel's article "Three Facets of 'Euro-Communism,'" [see the May 23, 1977, issue of *Intercontinental Press* (Vol. 15, No. 19)].

We were particularly interested in two recent articles on Portugal by Comrade Charles Michaloux. We have printed them in the SWP IIB No. 1 in 1977, July, for the information of the comrades. We noted in these articles some convergence on fact and analysis in regard to the

workers commissions and trade-union movement in Portugal.

The IMT declaration that I referred to before also took a step toward clarification of the concept of the "new mass vanguard," a step we think goes toward a correction of the previous position held by the IMT. We need to explore how far this correction goes. We don't yet know.

There have been other convergences we've noticed. One is on the question of concretizing the governmental slogan for a workers government in the countries of Europe. Another is on revolutionists participating in the New Democratic Party in Canada and the fight for independence of Québec.

We can't say at this point that we'll resolve all the past differences around the 1972 IMT European resolution. But we can say that we need to explore what differences remain.

On the antinuclear movement, we've noticed a common approach.

There seems to be general agreement on championing the demands of gays and lesbians for equal rights. The discussions we've had in the SWP on this question have taken place in other sympathizing organizations and sections, and differences cut across the faction lines in the international.

The comrades remember from past SWP conventions that there have been some pretty sharp organizational differences between the IMT and LTF. One of them was around the question of how to respond to the initiative of the OCRFI, which approached the United Secretariat for political discussions as far back as 1973. We had many disagreements, some of them pretty sharp, on whether or not to respond positively to this offer. But we have finally been able to come to agreement to begin the discussion with the OCRFI. The Canadian comrades of both factions have agreed on the necessity to press forward the discussion with the GSTQ [Groupe Socialiste des Travailleurs du Québec—Québec Socialist Workers Group], the Canadian supporters of the OCRFI, to seek areas of common work, and have raised the desirability of fusion with the GSTQ.

We know that some of the questions we are discussing are also being debated within the OCRFI. For example, it appears that the majority of comrades in the OCRFI supported a boycott of the elections in Spain. But some of the OCRFI comrades in Britain disagreed with that position. We hope to publish the different points of view within the OCRFI on the Spanish elections in an SWP International Internal Information Bulletin.

Last October, the United Secretariat arrived at a unanimous agreement on how to organize the world congress, on translation of documents, on the length of time that major documents have to be out and in the hands of the rank and file before the congress, etc. [See "Report on October 16-17, 1976, Meeting of the United Secretariat," by Jack Barnes and Joseph Hansen, SWP IIB No. 15 in 1976, December.] If we collectively live up to these agreements, we will have a democratic and thus authoritative world congress.

It's not that all such organizational problems have been resolved or that, for example, there is complete agreement on how to approach the OCRFI. Other organizational problems remain, including questions related to the functioning of the center, international publications, and others. But there is agreement to resolve these questions over time in a nonconfrontational manner, in a collaborative spirit. And that's important.

Fusions

But the most important development is that in those countries where the movement has been split—Canada, Mexico, Australia, and Spain—fusions of supporters of the Fourth International have either been consummated or are on the way.

The Canadian comrades are in the vanguard of this process and in a sense are in the vanguard of the process of dissolution of the factions that is occurring in the international as a whole. The first thing that struck all of the SWP comrades was the political maturity of the Canadian comrades on both sides in achieving this fusion and overcoming the difficulties in carrying it out.

The significance of these fusions goes deeper. In the early 1970s, in seeking to apply the lines of the IMT and the LTF, as they understood them, to their own countries, comrades on both sides believed they saw widening and unbridgeable divergences in regard to national politics. In the countries in question, this led to splits. Now we see the opposite process. The comrades who at this point adhere to the positions of the IMT and the LTF do not see these positions as they are applied to their countries as necessarily leading to divergence, but rather to greater political convergence. In Canada, for example, they've achieved wide-ranging political agreement by a large majority.

To maintain the IMT and the LTF would be a body blow to these fusions, which must now be consolidated. Comrades coming from the two directions, of course, have differences that remain, even though they have broad political agreement. They have differences in methods of functioning that grew up in the separate organizations. They must now learn to work together in common leadership bodies. The last thing they need is separate faction meetings. That could corrode and jeopardize the fusion. They need to talk things out together and without regard to the lineups in the old organizations. They've got to be free to take positions without being thought of as traitors to their comrades of the old groupings.

It would be a big disservice to these comrades if the international factions remained, forcing them to hold separate meetings. I was at the series of conventions in Toronto and Montréal that led up to the fusion. A comrade proposed at one of the conventions that if the IMT and LTF don't dissolve, they should be dissolved in Canada so that the comrades can get these structures off their backs.

But if they can carry out such a reunification in Canada where the factional situation had led to a split, to separate organizations, and therefore to separate organizational experiences, can't we do the same thing in the international? Isn't the leadership of the international up to the quality, capacity, and maturity of the leaderships of the groups in Canada? We believe it is.

The fusions and the growth of our forces around the world reflect the big opportunities that face the Fourth International. The *New York Times* published an article yesterday on the proposed new treaty between the United States and Panama regarding the canal. It begins, "Leftist and nationalist groups in Panama are planning to campaign against the new canal treaty with the United States on the ground that too many concessions have been made to Washington." The article goes on to talk about the different left groups. It says, ". . . the Communist Party of Panama has traditionally supported the Torrijos regime and is unlikely to break loose now." That's accurate.

"But the terms of the new treaty are seen as a direct challenge to the Marxist left," the article goes on, "and some groups have already begun mobilizing to campaign against the treaty.

"In a statement protesting that the Government had accepted a 'possible' treaty rather than a 'just' treaty, the Trotskyist Socialist Revolutionary League noted that there was probably no better time to take on the United States than now.

"There is no guarantee that the Americans will withdraw from our territory in the year 2000,' the league said. 'Today we have the eyes of the world on us, today we have international support, today imperialism has been weakened by Watergate and Vietnam.'"

This organization is one of the new groups coming toward the Fourth International in many different countries.

To have an irresponsible attitude toward further existence of the factions harms and weakens the development of such new groups. It is not in the interests of the Fourth International to maintain these structures any longer. They get in the way of building the international at this point.

Throughout this whole struggle, the SWP leaders and members have acted as leaders of the international, not as factionalists. We have always placed the interests of the international first. This was true when we fought the erroneous turn at the 1969 world congress. We were willing to be in a minority, because the issue was crucial for the international.

We, together with others, favored the formation of a tendency and then a faction when this became necessary. We propose that the convention delegates, the highest body of the SWP, once again take the lead in the best interests of the international. You've got to know when it's time to form a faction and when it's time to end it. And now it's time to end it—on both sides.

We place the following motion before you:

That the Twenty-Ninth National Convention of the Socialist Workers Party urges the leaderships of the IMT and LTF to dissolve their factions immediately and unconditionally.

Summary

I'm sure all the comrades were gratified with the declaration by the IMT leaders present that they agree the IMT and the LTF should dissolve and that they will fight for that position at the upcoming meeting of the IMT.

When I discussed the fact that the Communist League in Spain had a position of boycott in the last elections, I left out something important. After the elections, at a meeting of their National Committee, the majority reconsidered that position and voted that it had been an error and that they should have participated in the elections.

Comrade Duret from the United Secretariat pointed to the importance of the fact that through this whole long discussion the international was held together and did not split. I, too, would like to emphasize the importance of that. Tom Kerry passed me a note listing the major past differences in the international that led to splits. Every previous faction struggle of such scope, beginning with the Oehlerites in the United States and their co-thinkers in

Western Europe in 1934-35, who opposed Trotsky's position that some of our sections should orient toward leftward-moving developments in the Social Democracy, ended in splits. This time, although the questions involved were as important, we were able to avoid an international split. That is a great conquest for us all. And the result makes it much easier for us to move ahead together in the next period.

I'm glad that Comrade François from the OCRFI expressed his willingness, in spite of the long delays and obstacles—obstacles that were largely caused by our side and not theirs—to still pursue a discussion between the United Secretariat and the OCRFI.

I would like to state something else about the opinion of the SWP leadership. We think the comrades of the OCRFI should be inside the Fourth International, that they should be there now, today. We don't think that the differences they have should keep them out any longer. Many of the same positions they hold are being argued by comrades in the international, such as the question of popular frontism that Comrade François raised. Wouldn't it be better to have that exchange of views right inside, since it affects the cadres that are assembling in the Fourth International? Wouldn't it be better if we were all taking part together in the same pre-world-congress discussion, all committed to accepting the decisions of a democratic world congress? Yes!

Yesterday, the Coordinating Committee of the LTF, in view of the extraordinary agenda of the upcoming meeting of the LTF, decided to invite non-LTF leaders of the Fourth International, including the leaders from the IMT, to observe the LTF Steering Committee meeting. The Canadian leaders also made a unanimous request that the LTF invite the leaders of the GSTQ and the OCRFI to observe the LTF meeting. The LTF agreed to that, and the representatives of the United Secretariat and the French section here agreed that it is a good proposal. We have been assured by all the leading IMT comrades here that these invitations will be reciprocated and leaders of the ex-LTF will be invited to attend the next meeting of the IMT Steering Committee.

I would like to take up the amendment proposed by Comrade Barzman to strike out the words "their factions" from the motion before you. I believe we should reject that amendment. Let me explain why.

Comrade Barzman pointed to the unanimous good feeling comrades have about the gist of our proposal. But he added that the IMT doesn't consider itself to be a faction. Comrades do feel encouraged by these developments and what they open up for all of us. But also important is the question of political clarity. We're making this proposal not out of good feeling toward each other. The good feeling is a consequence, not the cause. We're making this proposal for political reasons and the explicit statement that the two *factions* should dissolve is an important part of our proposal.

In the first place, as Tom Leonard pointed out, it is obvious that the IMT is and has been a faction. We're trained in the method of calling things by their right name. We should designate the IMT as a faction as opposed to a tendency. Calling things by their right names helps achieve political clarity. And right now what we want to say loudly and unmistakably to the whole international is that in our judgment the *factions* and *factional-*

ism must come to an end without delay. We shouldn't blur over this proposal.

Of course, we'll accept the dissolution of the IMT no matter what they call themselves. That's not the point. It is to register clearly the opinion of the SWP that these factions should be dissolved and the factionalism ended in preparation for the next world congress.

We're pleased that Comrade Barzman has changed his mind on the question of dissolution and now favors that course. We also welcome his shift on some other political questions, too, such as reversing his opposition to affirmative action as presented by the Internationalist Tendency in its resolution at the 1973 convention of the SWP. This represents progress.

Comrade Barzman raised another point that is not so progressive. In fact, it seems to be in contradiction to his first statement. He said that when the next upsurge on the order of what occurred in Portugal takes place, we have to assume that the same differences that appeared in 1975 will be duplicated. He questioned if we shouldn't therefore hold on to the factional structures in anticipation of that event.

In the first place, it's wrong to maintain factions in anticipation of potential differences. But more fundamentally, the conception that the next major upsurge will see a reproduction of the previous differences is an erroneous assessment and we believe it will be disproved by the actual developments.

For example, in the Portuguese revolution we had a test, in the heat of revolution itself, of the line that the "far left" organizations could be welded into an "adequate instrument" to outflank the mass workers parties. The "far left" was put to the test in Portugal. The "far left" adherents around the world got swept up in the same process. It appeared as though the "far left" had something going for awhile, that they were pretty powerful and the wave of the future. But the "far left" line was proven to be an ignominious and total failure on November 25, 1975. This was a severe blow to the "far left" on a world scale. The lineup of forces is no longer the same.

A new upsurge is not going to see a repetition of the illusions in the centrist organizations of the "far left" such as we saw in Portugal. New questions are going to come to the fore that will create new alignments inside and outside the international.

We hope that when that happens we will already have achieved greater homogeneity in the Fourth International. That remains to be seen. But developments in each new upsurge of that scope are going to present all kinds of new questions for decision, and there is no reason to assume that the differences, if any, are going to crystallize along the old lines. In fact, the leaders of the international must assume the opposite.

In the history of the Bolshevik Party during Lenin's time, there were differences, disagreements, tendencies, and factions, but the further development of the class struggle and the test of events superseded all formations. When the questions involved became obsolete or practically insignificant, previous lineups were dissolved. Lenin never held on to a formation as a permanent faction. He never "redefined" one. Afterward he might be in a new bloc on a new question with some comrades whom he had previously opposed politically on this or that issue. That's the kind of normal functioning we want to go toward.

In about a week the LTF will be dissolved. I predict that will be the overwhelming majority vote in the LTF Steering Committee. That will come about as the culmination of a process that has accelerated over the past year, with initiatives that the LTF has taken to try to open up the discussion and press in this direction, including the women's liberation resolution and the response to the IMT "Self-Criticism on Latin America."

This is also manifest in the process of fusion in Canada, Mexico, Australia, and Spain. In driving through the fusion, the supporters of the LTF in Canada put the LTF aside all along the way, and rightly so. The same with the supporters of the IMT. The fusion was not approached as a factional question. So really the dissolution of the LTF is a culmination of a fast-moving process on several fronts.

Judging by statements from the IMT leaders here, we

can assume that the dissolution of the IMT will rapidly ensue. So basically we can proceed from the premise that the dissolution is accomplished. That poses the question: What next, what to do in that new context? That's the new challenge before all sides of the leadership of the international.

The key to this situation is to utilize the opening provided by the dissolution of the factions to reestablish collaboration and, in a measured way, to discuss the remaining differences, both organizational and political, in a nonconfrontationist way, in a collaborative spirit. Collaboration—that must become once again the dominant feature of the international leadership. That will best set the stage for serious preparation for the next world congress. Let's move forward energetically and deliberately along this course opened up by the new situation.

The Accomplishments of the Leninist Trotskyist Faction: A Balance Sheet

By Jack Barnes

[The following report was presented on August 15, 1977, to a meeting of the Leninist Trotskyist Faction Steering Committee, composed of the members of the International Executive Committee and Control Commission of the Fourth International adhering to the LTF. The general line of the report and summary was adopted by a vote of 17 for, 0 against, and 2 abstentions. A consultative vote was taken among LTF leaders formally replacing Steering Committee members, and leaders of organizations who joined the Fourth International after the 1974 world congress and thus are not members of the LTF Steering Committee. The consultative vote was 6 for, 0 against, and 1 abstention.]

It is difficult to present a balance sheet of the Leninist Trotskyist Faction (LTF) as the first point on the agenda, since it is only under the second point on the agenda that we will deal thoroughly with the current internal situation in the Fourth International. So I am going to assume that one of the things this meeting will do is decide in favor of the immediate, unilateral dissolution of the LTF. This act will complete the process that was accelerated one year ago with our proposal to move toward rapid dissolution of the factions if a critical balance sheet were drawn up on the turn adopted by the 1969 world congress on Latin America.

After some consideration and discussion, in December 1976 the IMT issued its "Self-Criticism on Latin America" [see International Internal Discussion Bulletin (IIDB), Vol. XIII, No. 8 in 1976, December], initiating a discussion on that question. We responded in January 1977 by calling for the immediate dissolution of the factions. [See "The Meaning of the IMT Steering Committee's Self-Criticism on Latin America," by Jack Barnes, IIDB, Vol. XIV, No. 5, May 1977.] We later received assurances from a number of the leaders of the IMT that they concurred on the need to rescind the 1974 world congress documents on Latin America at the next world congress.

A series of events followed. Two of the high points were the development leading to fusion of the Groupe Marxiste Révolutionnaire, the League for Socialist Action/Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière, and the Revolutionary Marxist Group in Canada, and the beginning of discussion to pave the way for eliminating factional methods of operation at the international center itself.

So, at the time of the April 30-May 2, 1977, meeting of the United Secretariat, the Coordinating Committee of the LTF decided by majority vote to approve the course of action outlined in Barry Sheppard's response to the IMT Steering Committee declaration. [See "A Reply to the 'Declaration of the International Majority Tendency,'" by Barry Sheppard, SWP International Internal Information Bulletin (IIIB) No. 1 in 1977, July.] We began to probe more systematically the possibility of immediate dissolution of the factions and the possibility of agreeing on a framework to begin working on the documents needed to clarify the various differences and agreements in the

international. These differences and agreements were more and more clearly beginning to cut across the existing factions.

Thus the proposal before this meeting of the LTF Steering Committee—to lead the international forward by dissolving the LTF—does not represent some new course, but culminates a process that was already well along.

In this report, I will not try to present a complete history or balance sheet of the LTF; this exists in the documents we have presented at each stage of our development. The documents that have been formally adopted as part of the platform of the LTF, together with the documents leaders of the LTF were assigned to write in the course of the debate, would probably fill four normal-size books.

Instead I would like to review the main accomplishments of the LTF and of its predecessors, the Leninist Trotskyist Tendency and the minority at the 1969 world congress that was defined by the vote on the resolution on Latin America. Secondly, I would like to consider the basic approach we followed and why we functioned as we did. And third, I would like to take up what we face at this turn in the road—the immediate internal tasks and problems before the international.

The main rule we followed from the beginning was to try to act as if we held responsibility for the leadership of the international, not merely of a faction. In fact, this is one of the tests of a principled faction. Errors will be made, but you must always consciously subordinate the needs of a faction to the needs of the international as a whole.

The accomplishments of the LTF can be grouped in three categories: (1) preservation and development of the programmatic continuity of the Fourth International, including opposition to the turn of the 1969 world congress toward the strategy of guerrilla warfare and its subsequent codification in the armed struggle resolution at the 1974 world congress; (2) preservation of the continuity of the organizational norms of the international; and (3) taking the initiative in dissolving the factions.

Programmatic Continuity

The central aim of the LTT and the LTF was to restore the course of the Fourth International to the Leninist strategy of party building and the method of the Transitional Program. We thought that a shift away from these fundamental aspects of the program of the Fourth International was shown by the turn at the 1969 world congress, the extension of the error to Europe and elsewhere, and the refusal to correct the error when the hard evidence of experience came in. That is, we considered that the guerrilla strategy embodied an adaptation to ultraleftism, which was then generalized on a broader scale with the concept of an orientation to the "new mass vanguard" and everything that flowed from this.

I will begin with our differences on Europe, not because they were the most important, or because the tendencies began over those differences. But I want to come back to

the question of Latin America and simultaneously take up the history of the Moreno current within the LTF.

Our reaction to the 1972 European resolution of the majority was presented in Mary-Alice Waters's article, "A Criticism of the United Secretariat Majority Draft Resolution on 'The Building of Revolutionary Parties in Capitalist Europe'—An Initial Contribution to the Discussion" [see IIDB, Vol. X, No. 3, March 1973], and in a section of Joe Hansen's article, "The Underlying Differences in Method" [see IIDB, Vol. X, No. 12, July 1973].

There were parts of the majority document on Europe that we could agree with; but in our opinion its incorrect sections represented an extension to Europe of the 1969 world congress turn. It appeared to us that the concepts of "minority violence," of "initiatives in action," of "out-flanking" the mass reformist parties, of the "new mass vanguard" and "far left," as originally defined, were precisely a generalization and further codification of the 1969 turn.

The June 21, 1973, events in France—in which the guiding concept was "crushing fascism in the egg" through physical confrontations between the small forces of the French Trotskyists and the fascists and their police protectors—were to come less than six months after the debate on the European resolution took place at the December 1972 meeting of the International Executive Committee.

We were also gravely concerned about the weakness of the European resolution in the area of trade-union work. The document and its supporters gave considerable attention to workers control, workers self-management, soviets, and dual power. But there was very little on the centrality of the task of carving out a class-struggle left wing in the trade unions, the existing mass organizations of the working class; the connection of this task to the obstacle presented by the mass Stalinist and Social Democratic parties and the fight for a workers government; and its political importance in the construction of the Fourth International. We thought this presented a danger to the proletarian orientation which the Fourth International has held since it was founded.

Our proletarian orientation has consisted of a correct strategic line toward the mass economic and political organizations of the workers movement, regardless of the character of their existing leaderships, in combination with a correct position on key social and political questions on which the proletariat must take the lead—for instance, the struggle of oppressed nations and nationalities, the struggle of the peasantry and agricultural proletariat, the struggle of women, and the struggle of youth. This combination should allow us to drive forward and deepen the proletarian orientation of our parties and of the international as a whole.

It was these weaknesses in their approach both to the trade unions and to the broad social and political questions of the class struggle that we singled out among other criticisms of the European resolution.

In addition, we were opposed to the concepts contained to some degree in the resolution and also in polemics by individual comrades of the majority concerning coalitionism—that is, class collaborationism on the governmental level. Only a few months after the December 1972 IEC meeting the French comrades decided to call for a vote on the second round for the Union of the Left, a class-collaborationist, popular-front-type formation. The

Political Committee of the Socialist Workers Party sent a letter to the Political Bureau of the French section expressing our opposition to this act. The leadership of the Spanish Liga Comunista did the same. This basic stand was then adopted by the LTF. [See "On the 1973 Legislative Elections in France: May 28, 1973, Letter to the Political Bureau of the Ligue Communiste from the Political Committee of the Socialist Workers Party, IIDB, Vol. X, No. 14, August 1973; "Regarding the Positions Taken by the Ligue Communiste in the Legislative Elections of March 1973," Letter to the Central Committee of the Ligue Communiste from the Central Committee of the Liga Comunista, SWP Internal Information Bulletin (IIB), No. 8 in 1973, December; and "The World Political Situation and the Immediate Tasks of the Fourth International," world political resolution submitted by the Leninist Trotskyist Faction, Section IV, Part 3, "Violent Repression and Class Collaborationism," reprinted in *Dynamics of World Revolution Today* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1974).]

Lastly, we were concerned about the prognosis that we had only three to five years to prepare for a decisive showdown with the class enemy. The implication of this view was that there was no time to build a mass party. This was an attempt to escape the reality that the organizations of the Fourth International still remain vanguard cadre organizations that have nowhere succeeded in winning a majority of the working masses. The LTF emphasized this point in the concluding part of its resolution on "The World Political Situation and the Immediate Tasks of the Fourth International." [See part on "The Stage Reached by the Fourth International," pp. 176-84.]

Well, we are at the end of the five years; the resolution was written in the summer of 1972, and this is late summer of 1977. Extremely important battles have been fought. But the *decisive* battles will not be fought without the chance for development of mass revolutionary parties in which we must play the vanguard role.

These were the disagreements over the European resolution and the axes of the criticisms made by the LTF.

Portugal: Concretization of the Differences

The major question around which these differences became fully concretized was the course of the revolution in Portugal. Portugal was the clearest test of the application of the "new mass vanguard" line in a living revolutionary upsurge. In our judgment the effort to apply the new mass vanguard line in Portugal amounted to an adaptation to the so-called far left. This adaptation included going along with the far left's adaptation to the Communist Party, to the fifth provisional government, and to wings of the Armed Forces Movement (MFA). The crowning experience was support of the Front for Revolutionary Unity (FUR) before its debacle in November 1975.

Applying the line of the European resolution to Portugal also resulted in grave errors and confusion on what stand to take toward the labor movement and the rise of workers commissions. The articles that have appeared recently by Comrade Michaloux have begun the task of sorting out and clarifying this question. [See SWP IIB No. 1 in 1977 and the May 30, 1977, and June 20, 1977, issues of *Intercontinental Press*.] But at the time, serious problems resulted.

Another difference arose over what we thought was a fundamental mistake concerning democratic rights in relation to the *República* affair. Support for the take-over of *República* was escalated into an international campaign of the "far left" throughout the world.

The greatest single weakness displayed by our movement in Portugal occurred in the hesitation to raise and concretize the call for a workers and peasants government. This hampered the struggle for class independence on all levels. Adaptation to the Portuguese Stalinists' sectarian stance toward the Socialist Party led the IMT to miss a tremendous opportunity to raise the demand for a Socialist Party-Communist Party government.

The difference here was not over the counterrevolutionary character of the Socialist Party *leadership*. On this there was not much disagreement. The difference was over the failure of the IMT to recognize the Socialist Party as a mass proletarian force and the resulting rejection of a course aimed at winning its leftward-moving ranks. A similar disagreement arose earlier over whether to defend the right of the Constituent Assembly to function, as against the moves by the capitalist MFA government to hamstring it.

It was this missed political opportunity to clarify the line of class independence that we thought was the worst result of the adaptation to the "new mass vanguard" in Portugal.

Other Important Questions

In addition to Europe and Portugal, the LTF made contributions on a number of other important questions. One was on the youth. A comrade of the 1969 world congress minority presented the resolution on the international youth radicalization at that world congress. In my opinion, work among the youth—especially in France—was the first casualty of the turn of the 1969 world congress in Europe. The minority did important work on this question—drafting the resolution, presenting it at the congress, and arguing for it.

A second contribution was the pathbreaking work we did on the national question, which was to become more and more decisive in subsequent years.

A third contribution was made in the area of women's liberation. The contribution of LTF leaders not only enriched our experience in this area but led to drafting the first major women's liberation resolution of the Fourth International, at the request of the United Secretariat.

In addition, we have made significant contributions in regard to the importance of democratic demands and their connection to such social questions as affirmative action and preferential hiring; on the centrality of the fight for a class-struggle left wing in the trade-union movement; and on understanding and applying the tactic of the united front and its relation to the call for a workers and peasants government.

This work of the LTF helped maintain and develop correct positions which we are confident will some day be considered by the majority of the international as part of its capital. But these positions also helped make possible the advances scored by sections that looked to the LTF for leadership. For example, without this work the Socialist Workers Party (USA) could never have projected and carried through its turn toward taking advantage of the new opportunities in the working class. The contributions of the LTF helped the work of the LSA/LSO in Canada

and politically paved the way for the fusion that has taken place there. It also helped guide the political development of the Socialist Workers Party of Australia, the Liga Socialista of Mexico, the Communist League of India, the Socialist Action League of New Zealand, and the Sattar League of Iran.

The Subjective Conditions for Revolution

The fourth major contribution of the LTF was codified in Section V of the 1974 LTF resolution, "The World Political Situation and the Immediate Tasks of the Fourth International." This section is entitled "Maturing of the Subjective Conditions for Revolution." It tries to grapple with the tasks of small cadre organizations in the midst of big revolutionary developments. As Trotsky said, the axis of the work of our organizations under such conditions has to be "agitation, propaganda and organization."

"The subjective conditions required for transcending the prerevolutionary period of agitation, propaganda and organization have not changed *qualitatively* since 1938," says this section of the resolution. "No party adhering to the Fourth International has as yet won a majority of the working class or of its militant vanguard. *The Fourth International still stands at the stage in which the primary task is the accumulation of cadres.*"

"As a consequence," it continues, "actions undertaken by sections or groups of the Fourth International are directed at facilitating the accumulation of cadres. The *aim* of these actions is propagandistic."

This was the approach to party building presented as an alternative to the line of those who followed the European resolution. It is the approach that we believe represents the continuity of what our movement learned from Trotsky on this problem. There are many other important sections of that LTF world political resolution. But to me this is the most important, because it deals with the question of questions: the development of our nucleus of cadres into mass revolutionary proletarian parties.

Areas of Convergence

After listing these differences with the IMT, I would like to note that there has been a convergence on many of them. I use the term "convergence" because it abstracts from the question of who is moving toward whom. That's not the important question today. The important fact is that on some of these questions we find ourselves closer together.

There has been an element of convergence on the "new mass vanguard" question. The new IMT declaration poses the problem of the "new mass vanguard" in a new way. It points to "vanguardist" errors that resulted from the application of this line in Europe, especially in France and Spain. These new formulations do not resolve any of the differences; only practice will accomplish that. But a more promising level of discussion has been opened up.

In that connection many comrades of the IMT now have a different evaluation of the June 21, 1973, events in France—an evaluation somewhat closer to ours than they held at the time of those events and immediately after.

The recent articles by Comrade Michaloux on Portugal show a convergence with our views. The degree of convergence can perhaps best be judged by comparing Michaloux's articles to the letter Pierre Frank wrote to two

American opponents of the Fourth International, Murry and Myra Tanner Weiss, in October of 1975. [See SWP IIB No. 3 in 1975, November.]

There has been a convergence in Spain, where the majority of both the LTF and IMT have found themselves in growing agreement on the course to follow, while the Spanish LCR [Liga Comunista Revolucionaria—Revolutionary Communist League] and LC [Liga Comunista—Communist League] are both grappling with errors of the past.

There has been a convergence on the national question. This was evident, for example, in the report to the SWP convention a few days ago by Yves Desjardins from the new pan-Canadian section [Revolutionary Workers League/Ligue Ouvrière Révolutionnaire]. But the convergence is not restricted to the question of Québec; it holds true for all the imperialist countries. We still do not have complete agreement, but there has been a significant if not a qualitative change from the degree of divergence between as prior to the last world congress.

The tasks and perspectives document of the new pan-Canadian section embodies a concept of party building that in my view shows a significant convergence.

There has been a convergence on the women's liberation struggle.

Comrades heard John Barzman's remarks at the SWP convention, in which he said that he and other IMT supporters in the SWP have reconsidered their former opposition to the demand for affirmative action—that is, for preferential treatment of women and oppressed nationalities in employment and job training to overcome the effects of past discrimination. IMT supporters in the United States were previously adamantly opposed to this demand. If what Comrade Barzman said represented a considered change of position, this is another important convergence.

In my view, this change of position announced by Comrade Barzman could mean the end of two basically different general lines on strategy in the United States as expressed in the two documents, "Prospects for Socialism in America," adopted by the 1975 and 1976 conventions of the SWP [see *Prospects for Socialism in America* (Pathfinder Press, 1976)], and "The Building of a Revolutionary Party in Capitalist America," put forward by IMT supporters in the SWP in 1973 [see SWP Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 31, No. 18]. The evidence is growing that we have a convergence around the "Prospects for Socialism" resolution.

Another area of convergence is on the concept of minority violence, which seems to have been abandoned by the IMT, or is at least being reconsidered. We dealt with the IMT's strategy of minority violence at some length in analyzing the political errors underlying the June 21, 1973, events in France. Mary-Alice gave a whole report on this to the August 1973 convention of the SWP, and Joe Hansen took it up in "The Underlying Differences in Method." At that time almost *all* IMT comrades agreed more with Pierre Frank's political defense of June 21 than with our criticisms. [See "Two Ways of Constructing the Revolutionary Party and Engaging It in Action," by Pierre Frank, IIBD, Vol. X, No. 14, August 1973.] This would not be true today.

I want to make clear that I am talking about convergence, not total clarity on all of these questions. Clarity can only be developed over time, as we formulate our ideas

more precisely and thoroughly and go through further experience.

Furthermore, what is decisive is not so much convergence in words but in practice. The convergences must be tested in practice, and this need cannot be overlooked in a euphoria over apparent agreements. But this truth does not diminish the importance of the convergences already appearing after so many years of such marked, and growing, divergences.

In addition to its contributions in areas of concrete work of the sections, the LTF has helped maintain the basic continuity of the Trotskyist program on a number of theoretical and historical questions: on Stalinism; on our understanding of the Chinese revolution; on our former common position on the theory of the Cuban revolution; on the essence of the workers and peasants government; and on the meaning of coalitionism, Millerandism, Kerenskyism, popular frontism, or whatever you wish to call it. On these questions the LTF has stood on the 1963 reunification documents and on all of the common documents of our movement from the first four congresses of the Communist International up to the 1969 world congress.

However, for us, most of these questions are of a different order from those directly concerning the day-to-day orientation of the sections. This is not at all to say that they are marginal; they are extremely important. But disagreements on theoretical and historical questions can normally be discussed patiently and calmly in a living, democratic movement. Differences on such questions should not in and of themselves necessitate the formation of groupings of a disciplined character such as we have today in the international.

A great number of historical questions remain unresolved. One of these, which the LTF has helped to clarify, is the meaning and result of "entryism *sui generis*" as practiced by the Fourth International in Europe during the 1950s and 1960s. Once again, the resolution of this question can be left to historians; unless someone proposes that we adopt this orientation again.

Latin America: The Guerrilla Plunge

The biggest contributions of the LTF were on strategy in Latin America. I would like to deal here with the political questions involved and with the evaluation of the current led by Comrade Moreno of Argentina.

I think most comrades are familiar with the report adopted by the SWP National Committee plenum in January 1977 on the meaning of the IMT's "Self-Criticism on Latin America," so I won't repeat those points here. [See IIBD, Vol. XIV, No. 5, May 1977.] What we summarized in that report was the history of our views on this question over the past ten years. I say ten years and not eight because it was just about ten years ago that Comrades Livio Maitan and Hugo González Moscoso visited New York and Comrade González informed us about the course they had begun following in Bolivia. From that day on, our opposition to the guerrilla course did not change.

The origins of the turn to the guerrilla strategy in the Fourth International go back to 1967. That is the year when Comrade Livio Maitan, as the representative of the United Secretariat, made a trip through Latin America to discuss strategy and tactics. At that time the Cuban leadership was continuing to train and arm guerrillaists from various tendencies—including Trotskyists from Boli-

via and elsewhere—who agreed with its course. That was also the year of Che Guevara's defeat and death, and the pressure—which is perhaps hard to grasp by new comrades today—to continue the course and the tasks set by him.

In our opinion, central to the error involved in the mistaken turn of the international toward guerrilla war was a misreading of the position of the Cuban leadership. The confusion arose over an assessment of the meaning of the Cubans' willingness to train a significant number of cadres for armed struggle, including, as we later learned, Trotskyist cadres of the Fourth International. The comrades did not see that the Cubans' willingness to train some cadres did *not* mean the Fourth International could link up with the resources of a state power; it did *not* indicate a path to solve the problem of winning leadership away from the Stalinists in various Latin American countries; and it did *not* advance building a political instrument that could take power away from the dictatorships of that continent. It was not an adequate alternative to the political task of winning over the masses and building a revolutionary political instrument—a Leninist party.

The offer by the Cubans to train some Trotskyist comrades was followed by the May 1968 events in France and the whole pro-Guevara mood that swept the campuses. So we had the convergence of views of the comrades in Latin America who were actually preparing to engage in guerrilla work, and the comrades in Europe who were enthused about the guerrilla line although most of them had had little experience in the workers movement.

But there should be no confusion about this history. The guerrilla line swept along not only inexperienced comrades, but comrades in both Latin America and Europe who had many years of experience. The guerrilla scheme swept up comrades from both sides of the split that occurred in the international in the 1950s—both from the International Committee and from the International Secretariat. Leaders from both sides came under real objective pressures and were affected by them.

Between 1967 and 1969 the Fourth International majority decided to take a gigantic plunge in the belief that the guerrilla line could lead to a historic breakthrough for our movement. Of course, we are all in favor of historic breakthroughs; the error was in misjudging the character of the openings before us and in putting all our chips on the wrong number.

The guerrilla turn was formalized in 1969. And this turn was then widened to include an erroneous view of the "new mass vanguard." As was pointed out in the IMT's "Self-Criticism on Latin America," the fundamental orientation was not toward the working class. The "Self-Criticism" document contains a very important paragraph that explains how the whole mode of operation of guerrilla warfare is alien to the needs and existence of the working class and the development of revolutionary working-class cadres. The document states: "Likewise, to suppose that thousands and thousands of workers will permanently enlist in a 'revolutionary army of the people' not only to defend their struggles but also to wage offensive actions against the forces of repression is to suppose not only that thousands of workers have understood the necessity of attacking the bourgeois state, but also that this type of organization is not foreign to their immediate needs and their very condition as workers."

Thus the turn to guerrilla war was not an orientation toward the working class but its opposite. It was an adaptation to a radical petty-bourgeois current that existed not only in Latin America but elsewhere.

Unfortunately the majority's turn toward the guerrilla schema and toward the layer that was swept up by it took place exactly at the same time that the Cubans, many guerrillas, and the pattern of world revolution were moving in another direction. History was unfolding away from the extension of the Cuban road as the road of revolution in Latin America; it was moving in the opposite direction, as symbolized by the upsurge in Santo Domingo in 1965 and the rise of struggles in the giant proletarian centers in other countries of Latin America. This made the guerrilla error that much worse.

The Moreno-Santucho Split in Argentina

Where did Comrade Moreno and the Argentine comrades he led fit into this picture? Although we still do not have all the details, it is clear that the 1968 split in the Argentine section took place because of disagreements over the guerrilla turn. Santucho and his guerrillaist allies were able to get an accidental majority at a Central Committee plenum in 1968. The exact circumstances remain obscure, but the organization was basically split down the middle. The comrades who were then in the leadership of the international and who are currently in the leadership of the IMT simply picked Santucho over Moreno. They staked all on Santucho's course in full knowledge of his past deviations and of the anti-Trotskyist political views of this leadership as expressed in the pamphlet entitled "The Only Road to Workers' Power and Socialism." [See IIDB collection *Discussion on Latin America (1968-1972)*.] They picked the wing of the Argentine movement that they thought was going to carry out the guerrilla line to the end, which was to become the PRT-ERP [Revolutionary Workers Party-Revolutionary People's Army]. And they broke with the other wing, later to become the PST [Socialist Workers Party], which, whatever its mistakes, basically represented the continuity of Argentine Trotskyism.

Comrade Moreno had been a guerrillaist himself; in fact I think he was one of the original Trotskyist guerrillaists. He and those around him had been ready to place themselves under the discipline and command of the Organization of Latin American Solidarity (OLAS). They carried out their convictions in practice and they suffered badly for it in the loss of qualified cadres.

But Comrade Moreno deserves credit for an important step. Once he got burned badly on the guerrilla line, he learned from it and drew some conclusions. He did not want to go along with Santucho because he had already drawn the correct lesson from that guerrillaist experience. Moreno was determined to go in a different direction, and this was fundamentally what was involved in the split with Santucho.

The error of those who later became leaders of the IMT was not only the political error of supporting the Santucho wing against the comrades around Moreno. It was also the systematic factional campaign they launched, which was designed, deliberately or semiconsciously, to drive the forces around Comrade Moreno out of the Fourth International.

One of the worst steps was taken at the 1969 world congress itself, when the Santucho wing was recognized as the section and Comrade Moreno was thrown off the International Executive Committee. No member of the Moreno current was placed on the IEC at that world congress. Every single representative from Argentina was from the PRT (Combatiente) wing, even though the Argentine organization had split down the middle. Imagine how comrades in your sections would feel if all of their leaders were removed from the official bodies of the international at a world congress because of political differences.

Ludicrous things were done in this campaign against Moreno. For example, in preparing this report I was reviewing the minutes of past IEC meetings, and I noticed that at the December 1972 IEC I am listed as the reporter on Argentina and Barry Sheppard as the reporter on Bolivia. This struck me as strange, since neither of us were the most qualified to report on Bolivia or Argentina. Then I remembered that we were forced to list ourselves as the reporters instead of the actual reporters, Comrade Moreno on Argentina and Comrade Lorenzo on Bolivia, because they had been thrown off the IEC at the last world congress and therefore couldn't be listed officially as the reporters for the minority!

I recall this in order to illustrate to comrades who weren't involved in the leadership of the international in that period how deepgoing and formalized this stance was and what we suffered by not having Comrade Moreno or his supporters on the IEC from 1969 to 1974. We suffered from lack of knowledge, from less richness in our debate, and from the adverse attitudes that were instilled in the Argentine comrades as a result of this factional campaign.

Their justified embitterment had a history stretching over almost a quarter century. We should remember that this was not the first time the international leadership in Europe had blundered by looking to forces in Argentina other than the cadres around Comrade Moreno. Before Santucho and his guerrilla course, there was the decision in 1951-52 by the international center headed by Pablo to back Posadas as against Moreno.

I'm trying to draw a balance sheet on the legitimacy of the suspicions and bitterness of the Argentine comrades and to what degree they also hold some responsibility for this. I'm talking about leadership decisions and the responsibility of the leadership of the international to give impartial treatment to all the cadres of our movement.

The Fight to Integrate the Argentine Trotskyists

The course of the LTT and the LTF was just the opposite.

The Argentine comrades and those who looked to them for leadership were always a distinct current within the minority, defined by positions that were outside the LTT and LTF platform, such as their ideas about "bonapartism *sui generis*" in Latin America. But they were in full agreement with, and helped draft important parts of, the LTF platform. This provided a clear and principled framework for collaboration with them in a common tendency and faction. LTF comrades who came from a different historical and political experience were always conscious that one of our responsibilities—thrust on our faction by the leadership default of the majority of the international—was to do everything possible to draw the PST leadership and ranks into the real life of the internat-

ional, to loyally collaborate and work with them as we would if we were the leadership of the international.

This was not a simple matter. Not only was there the resentment and bitterness of the Argentine comrades; the Argentine comrades also had a certain tradition of provincialism. They considered their "turf" to be the Southern Cone of South America. Only a few top leaders involved themselves in international responsibilities, gatherings, and exchanges. So we were fighting a double battle: a prolonged battle against a degree of provincialism in the attitude of a layer of cadres whose experience and resources should have been drawn upon by the international; and a suspiciousness that had just been reinforced by their exclusion from the leadership bodies of the Fourth International at the 1969 world congress.

The course of the LTF in relation to the comrades around Comrade Moreno was always the same: to press them to take more responsibility for the work of the Fourth International, to integrate them into the international at all levels, to ask them to throw more forces into involvement in the international. And they responded and did so.

The Argentine comrades made steps forward in assuming the other side of their responsibilities as well: that is, the need to place before the ranks of their party the views of all currents in the international. An important example of this was the PST's decision to invite the IMT to send representatives to tour Argentina and argue for their positions prior to the 1974 world congress. I think this was the first time in the history of Argentine Trotskyism that such a tour was organized to present the differing points of view in the international as a whole. They also translated and circulated a substantial number of documents from both sides in the dispute on Latin America.

This, then, was the fundamental view and course of the entire LTF. The Argentine comrades themselves agreed that we were fighting to establish them as an integral part of the international. We felt that no matter how deep the international majority's political differences were with Comrade Moreno, and no matter how many organizational grievances were raised against these comrades—some of them justified—the only correct course to follow was one of integrating them fully into the international. This course was in the interests of the international as a whole, in the interests of clarifying the political debate, and even in the interests of clarifying questions for the Argentine comrades in those areas where Comrade Moreno's ideas might be wrong. Without such an approach it would be impossible to influence the cadres and ranks in Argentina. They would never open up their minds to an international leadership that was crucifying their leaders. Because, correctly, that kind of international leadership would have no authority in their eyes.

The LTF was in agreement with the political course of the Argentine PST on a number of disputed questions, as documented in the founding political document of the tendency, "Argentina and Bolivia—The Balance Sheet." [See IIDB, Vol. X, No. 1, January 1973.]

We still stand on every paragraph of the document presented by the LTF to the January 1975 meeting of the International Executive Committee, "In Reply to the IMT's Open Letter Number 2" [see IIDB, Vol. XII, No. 4, October 1975], which dealt with the defense of democratic rights in the colonial and semicolonial world. The PST was also correct in the disputes over the campaign of Juan Carlos Coral and Nora Ciapponi for president and vice-

president and over the importance of work in the trade-union movement in Argentina.

I am not saying that the Argentine comrades always carried out this line correctly. There is a difference between taking a principled position and carrying out that line in practice without mistakes. But we were in agreement on the basic positions that were part of the platform documents of the LTF—on their orientation to the trade-union movement and their determination to intervene in the mass struggles that erupted under the pressures of the return and decline of Perón.

Sometimes we had disagreements with the Argentine comrades. For example, before the formation of tendencies in the international, we disagreed publicly with the position of the Uruguayan supporters of Comrade Moreno concerning electoral tactics toward the Frente Amplio [Broad Front], a popular-front-type formation. [See IIDB, Vol. X, No. 14, August 1973.] But these differences were no more profound than our public differences with the French section and its line to the Union of the Left. And our attitude was the same: to try to convince them to correct the error while collaborating with them as leaders of the international. This is the only way that the international as a whole can ever hope to promote the further development of Trotskyism—in Argentina or in France.

I believe there were hundreds of cadres, leadership cadres, who were victims of the IMT anti-Moreno factional excesses that resulted from the turn of the 1969 world congress.

Differences Inside the LTF

However, the bitterness of the comrades around Comrade Moreno—I'm not trying to personalize this, I use his name to refer to a current—led them to make extreme tactical proposals toward the international that the majority of the LTF disagreed with. From the very beginning, the Argentine comrades sought to press a line that was at the least premature both politically and organizationally. They also wanted to characterize the majority leaders in ways that tended to write them off.

This disagreement began at the 1969 world congress itself. The main difference in the minority caucus was over whether or not to organize a formal tendency. The Argentine comrades originally thought this was necessary. The other comrades were against it. We thought that the majority leadership elected by the world congress had to go through the experience of applying its line in practice, injurious as those experiences were going to be. This was all the more called for since we had achieved agreement with the majority that no group in Latin America would be obligated to carry out the guerrilla line if it did not agree with it.

We took this stand of not forming a tendency because it is only through experience that a line can be rectified, no matter how wrong. When a disagreement of this depth arises, the two sides can't give orders to each other. Experience must take precedence. It may be bad, it may be bloody, or it may be good. But then you can rectify the errors and move forward. This is the precondition to any functioning under democratic centralism.

We were confident that the comrades in the majority would rectify the error. The central leaders had been Trotskyists for decades and had never been guerrillaists.

We thought this was a passing aberration owing to the pressure of Guevarism.

The second conflict with Comrade Moreno came at the time we formed the Leninist Trotskyist Tendency. This was in the spring of 1973, after the failure of the December 1972 IEC to change the course in Latin America. Instead of drawing the lessons that are to a large degree noted in the recent IMT "Self-Criticism," the comrades of the majority reaffirmed the guerrilla course, adopted the Bolivia and Argentina reports, and began to prepare the resolution on the strategy of armed struggle for the next world congress. This was a turning point that signaled a qualitative deepening of the crisis and conflict in the international.

We met in Santiago, Chile, in March 1973 and issued the "Declaration of the Leninist Trotskyist Tendency." [See IIDB, Vol. X, No. 3, March 1973.] There we had, once again, basically the same disagreement with the comrades of the Moreno current. They thought we needed to form a faction immediately. They also felt it was time to draw a definitive balance sheet on the class character and potential of the majority leadership of the international.

We disagreed. We thought what was needed was a tendency, an organized tendency on a clear platform that would go beyond the leadership level and appeal to the ranks of the international to fight to reverse the basic errors on Latin America and their extension to Europe.

A similar conflict arose at the LTF meeting at the 1974 world congress, where the Argentine comrades argued that we should propose the formation of public factions that would publish their own organs.

Of course, such a step was worth considering. When the international is in a violent crisis, this is exactly what happens: public factions are formed. It happened in 1954. And some differences inevitably become public when factions themselves are formed.

But the Moreno current argued that we had to show through our own independent intervention in the class struggle that we were right and the majority was wrong. We had to put up our own independent pole of attraction, they said, and prove by example that our line was the way to build the Fourth International.

The rest of us said no. To form a public faction under these conditions would in essence mean jumping over the necessary struggle for clarification within the sections and sympathizing groups in every country in the world. It would ratify the splits that had occurred in country after country and would encourage more splits. It would definitively close the minds of the cadres on both sides to the arguments of the other side. It would mean in practice going back to where we were before the reunification in 1963.

We also had a difference over whether the majority leadership of the international was irredeemable—either that the whole of the IMT leadership was irredeemable, or that the IMT could be divided into two categories, some irredeemable, and others possibly redeemable.

The majority of the LTF said no to these characterizations. We knew from unambiguous evidence that the IMT was torn between a prosplit wing and a wing that was hesitant about a split. But this was different from dividing the majority leadership into redeemable and irredeemable political components. The latter view was wrong, not because it was not "diplomatic," but because we could be sure that history was going to bring a lot of surprises if we

succeeded in achieving a thoroughgoing discussion and further tests in practice.

In short, we argued that the course proposed by the Moreno current would tend toward ending the political discussion and taking the LTF outside of the Fourth International. It was a course that abandoned the fight for political clarification and in reality wrote off the majority of the international. I should add that by the end of this discussion following the 1974 world congress, the PST delegation was divided; about half the comrades had been convinced by the experience of the world congress and all the discussions surrounding it. They were comfortable with the course we proposed.

At each meeting these differences were argued out, a statement of the LTT or the LTF was drafted, and a vote was taken. Each time the comrades in Comrade Moreno's current voted for the statement. We accepted their votes at face value, as indicating that they had altered their views enough in the course of the discussion to vote for the statement in good faith. You can't psychoanalyze comrades; you have to accept their public stance on political platforms. And I am not questioning the integrity of these comrades. I really think that at the end of these discussions the comrades saw things differently than at the beginning. But it didn't take long for their views to slip back again into the old framework.

The conflict came to a head at the LTF Steering Committee meeting two years ago, August 1975. At that meeting it became clear that some comrades in the Moreno current had been carrying out in practice the line that we had been defeating in theory in the LTF meetings. That is, comrades from the elected leadership of this current were going around the world—to Britain, Spain, Colombia, Italy, Mexico—and counseling comrades to take a course that could place them outside the Fourth International.

At the end of that LTF meeting we held a closed session that was attended by members of the Steering Committee only, a session that had been requested by the comrades from Britain, Spain, Colombia, and Mexico. Each of these comrades explained how in their country comrades of the Moreno current had intervened behind the backs of the LTF. This impermissible conduct passed beyond the stage where we could settle things by voting for correct documents, since it appeared that these comrades could vote for correct documents on Monday and do the opposite on Tuesday.

We had quite a long and serious discussion, at the end of which Comrade Moreno took the floor and spoke at length. He stated unambiguously that all the things that had happened were wrong and that they were not in harmony with the norms of functioning of either the LTF or the Fourth International. But, he explained that they were not errors of policy—he said he personally was opposed to them—rather they were errors that had been committed by local leaders or emissaries of the PST leadership who had become excessively factional. He said he would give his personal guarantee that such interventions would not be repeated, and that he opposed any course that would split sections of the international.

However, we now know that at almost the same time as the LTF was meeting, gatherings of Latin American comrades were being organized at the SWP convention to explain the questionable class composition of the Yankees,

and the petty-bourgeois character of the leadership of the Mexican Liga Socialista. In this way the preparation was begun of what was to become the "liquidate Cristina" campaign, which surfaced with full intensity in the Liga Socialista leadership within days after the LTF meeting adjourned.

As always, we were naïve—which is not the same thing as being stupid. It is a considered policy stance that pays off in the long run. We did not know that these meetings were taking place almost simultaneously with the LTF meeting. We assumed that the comrades meant what they said.

Differences Over Portugal

At the same time a political debate began over Portugal. We had noticed before the LTF meeting that the line in the PST's *Revista de América* on Portugal seemed to be different from the approach of most LTF members. It was not clear whether the two lines were compatible or whether the formulations in *Revista de América* were subject to further consideration. Comrade Moreno and Comrade Hansen wrote each other on this question. That correspondence was published in the International Internal Discussion Bulletin. [See Vol. XIII, No. 1, January 1976.]

Prior to the August 1975 LTF meeting we had some informal discussion in New York with several of the leading comrades of the Moreno current, including Comrade Moreno himself. There appeared to be basic political agreement, and at the LTF meeting itself we voted unanimously for a statement on Portugal. Then we elected an editing commission consisting of Joe Hansen, Gerry Foley, Nahuel Moreno, and one of the Spanish comrades, in order to make sure that there would be no misunderstandings concerning the final version of the statement. The discussion had been crystal clear. We had adopted a line.

But immediately after the meeting, before any editing could commence, Comrade Moreno took off for London, where, we later learned, he wanted to meet with the Workers Socialist League (WSL). Then he went on to France, where he visited Comrade Lambert, who got the impression that Comrade Moreno was representing the LTF. We found out about this when Comrade Lambert wrote me in September 1975, saying he had just spoken to the LTF's representative in Paris. I wrote back, with a copy of the correspondence to the United Secretariat and to Comrade Moreno, explaining that just the opposite decision had been made by the LTF—that is, that the LTF would not have any relationships with the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International outside of the normal bodies of the Fourth International.

After London and Paris, Comrade Moreno went on to Portugal. There, in my opinion, he found himself basically in agreement with the line of the IMT comrades. He thought that there were incipient soviets everywhere, that the organs of dual power were already forming, and that the decisive showdown was imminent.

This was the moment when the differences became solidified on Portugal—not at the LTF meeting.

Comrade Moreno was obviously convinced that Portugal and Spain were the territories where the main action was taking place, and that great gains could be made if he raised an independent pole of attraction. That was when he broke politically with the Leninist Trotskyist Faction.

Then he sent up the smoke screen about whether the LTF document on Portugal was really the line that had been approved by the LTF meeting. That the line was what had been approved was confirmed through a poll of the LTF Steering Committee members and the results were published in the International Internal Discussion Bulletin. [See IIDB, Vol. XIII, No. 1, January 1976.] What was important was not this dispute over the authenticity of the stand taken in the document but the fact that two different lines had crystallized in the heat of the unfolding events.

'Liquidate Cristina' Campaign

Then came the events in Mexico. We believe that what happened in the Mexican Liga Socialista in the fall and winter of 1975 was the worst single event of its kind in the history of the Fourth International.

This was the campaign to eliminate an entire layer of Mexican Trotskyist cadres under the banner, "liquidate Cristina." We now know more about what happened there because some of the comrades involved in carrying it out subsequently changed their minds about it and have given the United Secretariat copies of secret correspondence with Comrade Moreno which describes how the campaign was organized.

The "liquidate Cristina" campaign—to use Comrade Moreno's words—was a deliberate, organized campaign to break and destroy a section of the leadership cadres that had developed in Mexico as a result of years of work. The organizers of this campaign, leaders of the Moreno current, took advantage of some bad errors of some of the LS leaders in raising questions about a particular comrade.

An internationally coordinated machine was operating inside the Liga Socialista, determined to destroy anyone in the leadership who did not accept Moreno's guidance. The LS comrades couldn't figure out exactly what the problem was. They started wondering who could be behind all the problems, and came up with the wrong answer. But they were correct to see that they were confronted with an organized, systematic, cold-blooded campaign to simply destroy cadres in Mexico.

The campaign was carefully orchestrated. It went from an accusation against Comrade Cristina, to the charge that some six or eight comrades of the LS leadership were unqualified to *ever* be part of the leadership, and then to an attempted purge of the entire membership of the Liga Socialista as "petty-bourgeois." This led to a split at the December 1975 convention of the LS.

One of the consequences was a definitive break between the LTF and Comrade Moreno. What his supporters did in Mexico was worse than anything anyone in or around the IMT ever did. Those we knew to be responsible were immediately expelled from the LTF.

We immediately explained to the entire international what had happened in Mexico, what was driving the PST leadership, and what it meant for the LTF. [See "World Movement Report," by Mary-Alice Waters, SWP IIB No. 2 in 1976, February, and "Documents Concerning the Split in the Liga Socialista," IIB No. 3 in 1976, March.]

Our disagreement with the IMT comrades in this instance was over their response to Moreno's split operation in Mexico. To our amazement, the immediate reaction of the Mexican IMT leaders was to publish a statement in their newspaper praising the LS congress as being thoroughly democratic. We could hardly believe it. And then

at the IEC meeting two months later, the IMT again refused to issue any condemnation of the split operation.

At this same time a new split was being prepared by the Moreno forces in Portugal. A group of young people—not LTF members—were driven out of the Portuguese PRT [Partido Revolucionário dos Trabalhadores—Revolutionary Workers Party] for simply daring to stand up to the leaders who had been sent in from Argentina to help the PRT.

Comrade Moreno's course is actually ironic. The running battle we had with him all along was to convince him that the real goal of the LTF should be the reversal of the turn of the 1969 world congress. He thought that we were naïve in our confidence that this could be done.

And then just at the time when the door was about to be opened to achieving this, Comrade Moreno went his own way.

I should reiterate one point so that there won't be any misunderstandings. During this entire period, we tried to act toward the leadership and membership of the PST in a way that would be a model for the international in showing how its leadership should act toward the sections and their ranks. We made this effort partly because we were in a common bloc with the Moreno forces fighting to reverse the wrong positions of the majority; but we acted in this way also because we were worried that the Argentine comrades could be lost to the international. It was and remains our view that the real integration of the Argentine comrades is one of the important tasks before the international.

Our experience with Comrade Moreno confirmed once again some basic lessons. One is that you must never judge a tendency or faction such as the LTF by the fact that it may attract some forces that later develop wrong ideas or do wrong things. There is a law of faction fights that minorities usually attract sectarians or elements who are heading out of the international. The danger is that this can become an obstacle to others listening objectively to the political ideas of a tendency or faction.

Majorities generally attract fewer sectarians and fewer people who are heading out of the movement. For opportunistic reasons, there is greater inclination to remain part of the gang or team of the existing majority leadership. But even majorities can attract such forces; two examples are Santucho and Bill Massey. If comrades took positions solely on the basis of the political course of Santucho and the organizational course of Bill Massey, the IMT would be considerably misjudged.

Another phenomenon is that a majority tendency or faction in the international can attract minorities in national sections. If you find yourself in a minority in your country, you might think that one of the easiest ways to gain a little more muscle is to join up with an international majority. It can appear to a fevered imagination that such a move will change the relationship of forces at home. But it doesn't work that way.

We went through such experiences in the faction fight. There is a lesson here, which the LTF tried to live up to in every one of our statements and documents. We always tried to abstract from the wilder elements and sectarians on both sides and deal with the political ideas and real organizational evolution of the international.

There is a toll in any faction fight, even a principled one. I looked back over the list of the comrades who signed the original declaration of the Leninist Trotskyist Tendency

and found that the majority of them are no longer in our faction. A layer of them have left the international—comrades such as Tony Roberts from Britain, Alain Beiner from Québec, Kailas Chandra from India, and L. David from Venezuela.

Another layer of the original signers, the Argentine comrades and some others, are now in a different faction.

The strength of a faction or tendency lies in its firmness in insisting that clarity is its goal, and not artificial unanimity or “redefinitions” of itself. It is always tempting to try to achieve unanimous decisions, but this must not be at the expense of clarity. The key thing is to clarify real views, not to achieve unanimity.

Continuity of the Organizational Norms of the International

The organizational side of the contribution by the LTF was important, too. Here we took as our starting point Trotsky’s basic concept of the central task in building the international: This is in the section of the Transitional Program which says that “the building of national revolutionary parties as sections of the Fourth International is the central task of the transitional epoch.”

This same concept is explained in the preamble to the statutes of the Fourth International, which states:

“An international, and the democratic centralism which governs it, are not created by mere decision, but develop dialectically with the advance of the national sections. If the primary base of the Fourth International is an international political program, its growth along democratic centralist lines remains nonetheless linked to the growth and reinforcement of the national sections, their revolutionary political experience and ideological homogeneity. The political and moral authority of the central leading bodies hinges on this as well as their own activity.”

We have based ourselves on Jim Cannon’s view that international collaboration among real leaders of national parties is the bedrock of any international functioning. [See “Internationalism and the SWP,” by James P. Cannon, IIB No. 7 in 1974, August.]

To us, the integrity of the international was our first concern. This is ultimately defined by the aid it offers to the construction of national revolutionary parties with genuinely representative, democratically elected, authoritative leaderships able to stand on their own feet.

We fought for democratic centralism against supercentralism in the international. We fought against any concepts of the federalism characteristic of the Social Democracy. We fought for the collaborative functioning of the elected leadership bodies of the international. We fought against the formation of international commissions with jurisdiction over territorial or political domains that would undermine the collaboration between the leaderships of national sections and the elected leading bodies of the international.

One of the key contributions of the LTF was our struggle to prevent splits in national sections. Here our conflict with the IMT came sharply to the fore on various occasions. It became part of the definition of our tendency and then faction.

Our contribution along these lines began with our response to the Domingo Letter. Perhaps some comrades think it strange that we seem to be always publishing

letters—the Domingo Letter, the Letter of the Six, the Barzman Letter, the Joanna Letter, etc. I hope there won’t be any more such letters to divulge.

What was important about these letters was not the secrets they revealed, but rather that they were unambiguous expressions of the organizational concepts of the comrades who wrote them. I believe the Domingo Letter, for example, was normal operating procedure for Livio. I’m not sure to this day that he thinks there was anything wrong with writing a letter like that.

Between the publication of the Domingo Letter and the Letter of the Six, IMT factionalism became so sharp in Britain that the danger of an imminent split became real. We stepped in to initiate a commission that helped prevent that split. [See “Report of the Fact-Finding Commission of the United Secretariat of the Internal Situation Within the International Marxist Group, British Section of the Fourth International,” SWP IIB No. 2 in 1972, May.]

Then, following the December 1972 IEC meeting, we got hold of the Letter of the Six to the leaders of the Santucho wing of the Argentine movement. The letter had been written in October 1972 by six members of the United Secretariat who were IMT leaders. But it was kept hidden from the LTF members of the United Secretariat and the IEC even though the very questions it dealt with were at the center of the discussion at the December IEC meeting. The official bodies of the international were being used as covers for factional bodies functioning secretly on both an organizational and political plane. The authority of the official bodies thereby dwindled to near zero and splitters and cynics were encouraged. [For the Domingo Letter and the Barzman Letter, see SWP IIB No. 7 in 1974, August. For the Letter of the Six, see IIB, Vol. X, No. 7, June 1973. For the Joanna Letter, see SWP IIB No. 2 in 1977, July.]

The formation of the IMT itself was an illustration of the factional organizational concepts that the LTF opposed. In reading over the minutes of the December 1972 IEC meeting, I discovered an interesting sentence in Pierre Frank’s formal call for the founding of the IMT. Pierre’s statement read: “All those who agree with the general line of the European document are invited to a caucus meeting tonight to discuss the next steps in the organization of a tendency counter to that called for by Blanco, Camejo, Hansen, Lorenzo and Moreno.”

That is, right from the beginning the IMT was formed on two bases: one was agreement with the IMT European resolution; and the second was to *counter* the other tendency that had been called. The first basis was correct and proper; but the second was not a correct foundation for a tendency. Yet to join the IMT, you had to agree with both. Not only *what* you were for, but *who* you were against.

The Barzman Letter convinced us that the IMT was operating neither as a tendency nor as a declared faction. At the time, we charged that the IMT was operating as a secret faction. We used this term to try to impress on the comrades that they had to take responsibility for the decisions and actions of their formation. But a secret faction operating in the way revealed by the Barzman Letter is better described as an unprincipled clique.

An unprincipled clique always tends to become dependent on someone who exercises veto power; a clique cannot function democratically and continue to present a common view. It goes by what the leader says. Many comrades

probably remember that at last year's SWP convention Comrade Joe Hansen spoke about this danger of cultism growing up in the IMT leadership. This probably sounded like a harsh warning to many comrades, but we believed it to be true—not because of the intentions or caliber of the comrades involved, but because of the laws governing the development of an unprincipled clique formation.

The existence of permanent factions in a party or in the international corrodes both democracy and centralism. Permanent factionalism is the polar opposite of the healthy and normal internal functioning of a Leninist organization. We learned some lessons from Jim Cannon on this, too. In his book *The First Ten Years of American Communism* [Pathfinder Press, 1973] Jim painted a vivid picture of the permanent factional warfare that corrupted the Communist Party in the second half of the 1920s. He told how the factions outlasted the political differences they were originally formed around, and eventually became nothing but gangs trying to hold or win power in the organization. Over time, loyalty to the party gave way to loyalty to the faction you were a member of. The situation became so stagnant that each faction had its own share of party posts, its own area of work, and so on. The lines were so hardened that when the break came in 1928, over the issue of "Trotskyism"—which cut across all the old lines and disputes—Jim and the other founders of our movement couldn't even talk to CP members who had been in other factions.

Fight for a Democratic World Congress

Another accomplishment of the LTF was its fight for a democratic world congress. Our primary concern was that the congress should be authoritative, and the only way to make it so was to make it democratic. If we went into the world congress with a section of the movement disputing its authority, the situation would be conducive to an immediate split.

In 1972 and 1973 we went through a series of splits in various sections and sympathizing groups. In 1974 the LTF fought to call a special world congress to deal with the complicity of the majority international leadership in the split of the Internationalist Tendency from the SWP in the United States. We went through the experience of direct intervention by elected leaders of the United Secretariat in the British section, who went so far as to write documents for that section and organize support for one tendency in the IMG against the others.

The situation in the international reached the point where the SWP leadership had to do something that was degrading for the whole international. We had to place a letter by Barry Sheppard, organization secretary of the SWP, in the internal bulletin explaining to the whole movement what the laws are in the United States and how we are prohibited by this reactionary legislation from giving money, directly or indirectly, to the Fourth International. Even this fact—that the SWP has to live under and conform to these laws—was finally used against us in the international faction fight. [See SWP IIB No. 8 in 1974, August.]

All these unprincipled, divisive methods of functioning were destructive to the international. The abuse of responsibility by the international center led to the disintegration of its authority. The greatest victim was not the LTF—although we suffered some blows—or the individual

sections that were abused; the greatest victim was the international itself, because its authority underwent total disintegration.

The LTF fought from the beginning against this. We even tried to carry out by our own efforts some of the routine functions an authoritative center is responsible for. We tried to translate the maximum number of documents from all sides to make them available to the ranks of the international. We published international bulletins in Spanish in addition to English. If we had had good relations with both Trotskyist organizations in Québec, we would have tried to publish bulletins in French as well, in view of the fact that the comrades in France were not publishing them. We had to keep minutes of United Secretariat meetings and send them out because the factionalism had reached the point that we could not even agree what had happened at a meeting. We began sending out mimeographed LTF mailings simply to make available at least to the faction members the kind of information that should have been coming out of the international center. I knew we were heading toward better times when I found out recently that in Britain and Australia, comrades were beginning to share these mailings with IMT comrades. The IMT members needed more information, too.

These efforts by the LTF were linked to an extremely important organizational principle; that is, that the integrity of the national sections and the integrity of the international are linked. This is the question of questions.

There is no higher body for a section than its own convention. It is only the democratically elected convention and other bodies of the national sections that can make decisions about the functioning of the sections, including decisions on how to interpret and apply decisions of the Fourth International.

When this principle begins to be abused, the authority of the international declines. When any section sees a group of "international leaders" acting as if the elected bodies of the section are *not* the highest bodies of the section, the authority of these leaders begins to disintegrate. The sections begin to hope they will be spared the destructive intervention of "the international."

The fact is that for a number of years now, the international has been in a situation similar to the one prior to the reunification of the international in 1963. That is, a large section of the international has not considered the official bodies of the international to have any real authority.

The Challenge and Opportunity Posed by the OCRFI

The final conflict that arose, in which the LTF can be proud of the role it played, concerned the response to the initiative of the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International. The 1973 request by the OCRFI for discussions with the Fourth International meant that an opportunity of major importance had opened up for us to strengthen the Fourth International by repairing an old split.

The OCRFI was one of the currents that had been part of the international during the split into two public factions in the 1950s, but it refused to join in the reunification in 1963. It remained thereafter in essence a public faction of the international. After a series of blows, a split with the Healyites, and failure to form a viable separate Fourth International current, this organization turned toward us and asked for discussions.

Their approach probably resulted from a combination of motivations. But at the bottom of their turn was an objective reality: forces that had refused to reunify in 1963 were being attracted to us—to our capacity to grow and develop, to our capacity to prevent a split while conducting an instructive debate over the key questions of revolutionary strategy today.

But the response by the majority of the Fourth International leadership to this opening was factional, provincial, and sectarian. In some ways this was the worst of all the organizational errors. It cost us dearly, in terms of potential cadres, and in terms of missing the chance to convert an organizational opponent of the Fourth International into the opposite.

The response of the Fourth International was factional because the comrades in the majority became preoccupied with calculating whether Comrade Lambert would like to see a split in the Fourth International and if so whether the SWP and other LTF forces would join him following this split.

The IMT comrades didn't seem to consider very seriously the fact that such a course would have been exactly the opposite of the antisplit orientation we had followed throughout the entire faction fight.

But the comrades of the majority made this mistake of allowing the possible factional repercussions of the move by the OCRFI to enter into the calculations of their response, rather than concentrating on the objective stakes for the international as a whole. The desires or temptations that might have been in Comrade Lambert's mind should have had nothing to do with our political response. The biggest mistake a politician can make is to decide upon a course on the basis of predictions about what will occur instead of on cold political facts. Because if either Comrade Lambert or the LTF comrades were engaged in a maneuver to split the international, the only way to find out, and to expose the maneuver before the whole movement, was to respond in a nonfactional manner.

The second problem was provincialism. For the majority of the French comrades and those who supported them on the United Secretariat, the whole OCRFI question revolved around one place: Paris. The OCRFI forces in Mexico didn't exist; Québec didn't exist; Israel didn't exist; Argentina didn't exist; Brazil didn't exist. The comrades of the majority refused to recognize the cadres who were part of the OCRFI as an international formation. And they refused to face up to the big challenge and opportunity posed by the existence of the OCI [Organisation Communiste Internationaliste—Internationalist Communist Organization] in France. The moment has to come someday when we must confront the unresolved question of the OCI. And we will suffer because we did not immediately make a positive move at the time when the OCRFI made its approach to the United Secretariat. We suffered in all of the countries where the OCRFI had organizations, most of them consisting of excellent cadres. We could have linked up with these forces and had a big impact on them if we had handled this opportunity correctly.

By permitting factional and provincial motives to guide us, we actually charted a political course that had an objectively sectarian character. What a historical default! What irony! One of the currents that took a sectarian stance against the 1963 reunification of the international was finally impelled to move in our direction, and in that

moment of truth, in the face of that opportunity to bring our political strength to bear, the majority leadership charted a sectarian course.

I think we can be quite proud of the course followed by the LTF on this question and the lessons we drew from it.

Splits Healed

After having looked back on this record, it is a pleasure to see what is happening in the international today and the new framework that can be established with the dissolution of the factions.

One of the deepest splits in the international—the split in Canada—has just been healed. The splits in Australia and Mexico are on the verge of being mended. In Belgium the supporters of the LTF have decided it is not necessary to maintain the tendency they had participated in, and they have dissolved it. The LTF members who are part of the Workers Tendency in the LCR of Spain report that they have been integrated, with full democratic rights, into that organization.

In the United States, for the first time in several years, every single person in this country who would be a member of the Fourth International if it were not for reactionary legislation is today a member of the Socialist Workers Party. Moreover, there appears to be growing political agreement over U.S. politics between IMT and LTF supporters, as registered by Comrade Barzman's remarks at the SWP convention on the IMT's errors on the question of affirmative action.

The leadership of the IMG in Britain asked us for extra copies of the 1972 report of the Fact-Finding Commission on Britain to circulate this year to their members to help them understand how bad things once were in that section and the lessons about correct norms of functioning.

At the October 1976 meeting of the United Secretariat we achieved unanimous agreement on the rules concerning translations, etc., necessary to organize a democratic world congress. [See SWP IIB No. 15 in 1976, December.]

In addition, we are beginning to take one or two hesitant steps to take advantage of the opening presented by the approach of the OCRFI forces.

Currents in the World Trotskyist Movement

In looking toward the future, it is useful to attempt to size up the existing currents in the world Trotskyist movement and where we stand in relation to them.

First, on the OCRFI. I have already dealt with the mistakes I feel we made in respect to them. But we should also look at how *they* are measuring up to the tests they are faced with.

I believe the leaders of the OCRFI are now up against a moment of truth. Because if their calculations included the estimate that there would be a split in the international, or that there would be an ever growing divergence between the LTF and IMT, then the developments over the past few months, and at the SWP convention and at this LTF meeting, have made it clear that their calculations were wrong. They now have a decision to make: Which way to move in relation to the international as a united body?

We should not give too much weight to their first official responses or to initial errors they might make. It is our responsibility to make a new advance toward them,

because the OCRFI now faces a situation they may not have been expecting.

We remain convinced that the correct course for the Fourth International to take is to say simply to the comrades of the OCRFI that they are invited to take part in the pre-world-congress discussion, on the basis of an unambiguous statement that they accept the democratic-centralist framework of the pre-congress discussion and accept the authority of a democratic world congress and its decisions.

Let's get the full thinking of all the currents within the OCRFI into the International Internal Discussion Bulletin. Let's find out what they think on *all* the big questions. Let their members see all the currents of thought within the United Secretariat. Let's get rid of these "special bulletins" and interminable foot-dragging negotiations.

We should say that we accept at face value their bid to open up fraternal relations. We believe they should be inside the united Fourth International. We should complete the reunification. It is true that this would pose a leadership challenge to us in some countries because of the relationship of forces. But it would be a grave default not to take the initiative in pressing these comrades to come into the international. It would be a setback, for example, if we do not succeed in fusing with the GSTQ [Groupe Socialiste des Travailleurs du Québec—Québec Socialist Workers Group] in Canada. They belong inside. But we'll never get these comrades and others if we approach it like a two-bit raiding operation.

This is the type of course we are obligated to take toward *any* forces that actually move toward the Fourth International. We would have the same responsibility in responding even to a current like Gerry Healy's if a wholly unexpected development were to occur and Healy began admitting that his entire slander campaign against the Fourth International had been wrong and that the Workers Revolutionary Party was changing its political course and moving in our direction.

There is a second current consisting primarily of Lutte Ouvrière in France, plus Combat Ouvrier in the Antilles, the African Union of Internationalist Communist Workers, and Spark in the United States. Since this organization requested discussions with the international and with the French section several years ago, we have made some progress in getting to know some of their leaders and more about the origins and positions of their organization. The door should remain open for closer collaboration and discussion with them.

The comrades led by Comrade Moreno represent another current. The task in regard to this current is above all one of political clarification. Their positions and accusations must be considered objectively in the continuing discussion in the international. Neither of the major factions in the international has adequately taken up their latest documents. Our response to the challenge of the Bolshevik Tendency must be above all political, not organizational.

It seems clear to me that the leaders of the Moreno current are developing growing differences with the international on current politics. For example, they have taken a position that adapts to General Torrijos of Panama. This corresponds to Comrade Moreno's theory about so-called bonapartist *sui generis* nationalist leaders. They have increasingly engaged in public attacks on the international—on the LCR of Spain, the LCR of France,

Ernie Harsch, Gus Horowitz, Ernest Mandel, Tony Thomas, and Judy White.

A fourth current is the sectarian current in the Liga Comunista of Spain. The full positions of this current are not yet clear because it has not submitted any documents to the international discussion. It is a current outside the LTF led by Comrade Roberto. He himself has undergone a rapid evolution away from Trotskyism toward anarchist positions, toward rejection of the Transitional Program, and toward Stalinophobia. I believe that elements of these sectarian views were codified in the documents of the Third Congress of the LC of Spain—a sectarian stance toward the Workers Commissions, resistance to fusion with the LCR, concepts that led the LC to boycott the June 15 elections, and the commission of other sectarian errors. This is a distinct current within the international, and its views should be brought out and confronted politically.

There is a fifth current that remains obscure to me, and that is the current led by Comrade Sakai. This claims to be an independent current, but for some reason it participates in IMT meetings that take place at world congresses or IEC gatherings.

This current takes the most extreme anti-LTF, anti-SWP positions, along the lines of IMT positions but going beyond them. We know that Comrade Sakai rejects the perspectives of the SWP for the coming American revolution. However, to my knowledge, Comrade Sakai has placed no documents before the world movement in his own name or in the name of the current he represents. Now that we are going to dissolve the factions in the international, Comrade Sakai will have even more responsibility of presenting his positions, and he should be encouraged to do so.

There is a sixth current represented by Comrade Livio. I'm sure all the comrades noticed Comrade Livio's statement in the bulletin explaining why he voted against the IMT Steering Committee's "Self-Criticism on Latin America." He said he voted against it "because I consider that the necessary self-criticism was made in the documents of the Tenth World Congress." [See IIDB, Vol. XIII, No. 8, December.]

Thus Comrade Livio is no longer a member of the IMT. The "Self-Criticism on Latin America" is one of the three documents that you have to agree with to be a member of the IMT, and Comrade Livio has placed himself outside that framework. He heads a current defined by disagreement with the "Self-Criticism" document and opposition to rescinding the documents of the 1974 world congress on armed struggle, Bolivia, and Argentina.

He also voted against the document on "Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat." [See *Intercontinental Press*, July 25, 1977 (Vol. 15, No. 28).] At the French cadre school this summer Livio argued strongly against the section of the document on democratic rights in a workers state. Some Canadian comrades expressed similar views at the fusion convention.

I look forward to reading the development of Comrade Livio's positions. I am sure his current will have an important contribution to make in clarifying the questions before us.

A seventh current in the world Trotskyist movement consists of the Workers Socialist League in Britain, the Union of Internationalist Communists in Greece, the Spark group and the Workers League in Israel, and other

groups that have broken from, or were thrown out of, either the Healyite international organization or the OCRFI. These groups come from a sectarian background and we cannot be sure about their future evolution, but they include important cadres. We should remain alert and continue to probe politically as to whether some of them are moving toward us. Another such group, the Marxist Workers League (LTF) of Mexico has fused with the Liga Socialista and will thereby join the fusion with the PRT [Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores—Revolutionary Workers Party].

The SWP in the United States plans to publish a special educational bulletin containing the key documents of the groups that have broken from Healy, together with an introduction by Tim Wohlforth and Nancy Fields.

Finally, we have an eighth current of a certain kind, and that is the current holding state capitalist views, consisting of the former members of the Revolutionary Marxist Committee who have just fused with the Socialist Workers Party and possibly others elsewhere. These comrades will have their own ideas to add to the discussions we will be having on Cuba, and on other questions that are directly affected by this one point of view on which they differ with the great majority of the international.

The comrades of the RMC came to us from backgrounds and traditions different from our own. They, like the comrades of the OCRFI, will be interested in discussing questions like the 1963 reunification of the international, our analysis of Stalinism, the nature of the state, and so forth. For our part, we should welcome discussion of such topics.

New Forces Are Coming Toward Us

The most important thing to remember in considering these currents and possibilities for strengthening our movement is that the Fourth International has never been and was never intended to be monolithic. Nor will it ever be as homogeneous as the stronger national parties. There will always be great unevenness of development in the international. Different parties and currents within it will march at different paces and will have different needs.

When we were going through Jim Cannon's archives after his death, we found some letters from Trotsky that bear on the question of handling forces that have differences with us but are moving in our direction and can strengthen the international if they are drawn in. One such tendency, a small one called the International Group, was headed by Ruth Fischer and Arkadi Maslow, who had been central leaders of the German Communist Party in the 1920s, and who began to gravitate toward us after we called for the formation of a new international. In 1934 Trotsky proposed that Fischer be co-opted onto the International Secretariat of the International Communist League, even though the International Group had refused up to that time to join the German section. The leaders of the German section were opposed to this proposal, but it was accepted, and Fischer became a member of the IS. Trotsky must have thought this worked well because later, early in 1935, he proposed that Fischer be co-opted onto the Plenum of the ICL, which was the equivalent of the present International Executive Committee, and this proposal was approved by a majority of the Plenum in March 1935, despite Fischer's differences with the ICL leadership

on a number of important questions. Still later that year, in August, Trotsky argued that Chen Tu-hsiu should be nominated for the highest international body of the movement at the next international conference (held in 1936) even though Chen Tu-hsiu held views that were marked by growing divergences with the majority of the Chinese section, as a result of which he had not even been elected to the Chinese Central Committee. In the same letter Trotsky said that the International Secretariat was going to nominate Maslow to the highest international body. [These letters will appear in the final volume of the *Writings of Leon Trotsky* series, scheduled for publication early in 1978.]

We are obligated to make such moves toward forces that evolve toward us. We have to be prepared at times to take steps that might even put the Trotskyists in a temporary minority in the international if the opportunity arises to win cadres and move forward politically. When such opportunities arise, a loss of political courage will lead to sectarian defeats. The way we handle initiatives like that of the OCRFI will affect how we handle even more important ones in the future.

I am convinced—and we're all starting to see this politically—that fresh forces are coming in our direction. The international is going to become more unified and stronger as the class struggle deepens. In this context, our stance toward these currents and the accompanying organizational questions become very important.

I am not talking about any mechanical concept of "Trotskyist regroupment." We don't agree with that perspective, although we should respond positively to any Trotskyist forces that move in our direction. But we are looking for forces with various backgrounds that come out of the mass movement, or are influenced by developments in the mass movement. That is how the Fourth International will be built over time.

Dissolution of Factions and Reunification of the International

Dissolution of the factions will open the door to ending factionalism, but it doesn't thereby end it.

Likewise, the "Self-Criticism on Latin America" opened the door to rescinding the resolutions on armed struggle, Bolivia, and Argentina adopted at the 1974 world congress. But this can only be done by the official bodies of the international. We have been given assurances by a number of leaders of the IMT that they agree we must rescind these resolutions. They are convinced that a majority of the IMT comrades feel this way. This indicates that there is already a large majority in the international that favors rescinding these documents and moving forward together in a new framework.

One of the dangers arises from the very act of dissolving the factions—if we were to think and act as if this measure means the end of factionalism. As leaders, we know that the two things are not identical and don't happen simultaneously.

We are fighting not only for dissolution of the factions; we are fighting for a de facto reunification. I choose the word carefully. We are struggling for the equivalent of the reunification of the Fourth International in 1963, and we can achieve this if we take the correct steps.

This time, we managed to avoid the big problem of

public factions that we had from 1954 to 1962, a period in which we ceased having any common international organizational framework. But our movement has been publicly split in country after country. And we did suffer a deep division, with loss of authority of the formal institutions of the international and loss of respect for each other as cadres to a large degree.

We have to learn from the lessons and measures that we applied in the 1963 reunification and that the Canadian comrades, we have been informed, are now trying to apply on a national level. We must dissolve our factions and end our prolonged isolation from one another.

This, of course, is the opposite of the Stalinist practice of outlawing factions and tendencies. The right to organize such formations is fundamental to democratic centralism, and that should be clearly reaffirmed as part of the organizational norms of the international. The statutes or organizational norms of sections that currently do not provide for the formation of factions, like those of the French section, should be changed to conform to the statutes of the international.

Step one is to dissolve the factions. We have been assured by IMT leaders that they are confident this will be done. We have also been assured that we will be invited to observe the IMT gathering where the proposal to dissolve will be debated and decided on, just as IMT leaders were invited to attend this gathering.

Dissolution of the factions will mean that we then consider our two platforms as historical material. This has nothing to do with whether or not we still agree with the ideas in them. I believe that the LTF in its great majority believes that its platform documents are all politically correct. But they should be historical documents in the sense that it will be the historians' task to analyze and debate them; and they should be made available to anyone inside or outside of our movement to read and study. This was probably one of the most educational political debates in the history of our movement, and the longest debate without a split.

We must go forward from here not by resubmitting old documents but by preparing new documents. At least initially some differences will fall along the old lines on various questions. But the platforms of the old formations should now be considered as superseded and we should begin writing new documents—on Europe or on the advanced capitalist countries, on Spain, on nuclear power, or whatever—in a new framework and through the normal channels of collaboration in the international.

Secondly, the reunified leadership must reestablish real collaboration and seek consensus on certain questions for a time to help the transition. I'm not talking about formally changing the right to make decisions by majority vote; that would be wrong. I'm talking about a leadership decision not to use confrontation tactics against one another and not to use majority votes to settle disputed questions that don't have to be settled at the moment, especially organizational questions.

If confrontation tactics are used, the dissolution of the factions will simply turn out to have been ineffectual, and the majority formation on the leadership level will be revived as a de facto clique. If we can't avoid confrontations and defer majority decisions to settle certain types of differences in the leadership, then it is best not to dissolve the formations. Because if we dissolve them and then

revert to the old situation, it will create bitterness and cynicism that we can't afford.

Third, we must probe the convergences and strive for political clarity. We must test the possibilities of documents supported by a large majority, not only on women's liberation but on topics such as Latin America, or Cuba, or the stage of the détente, the developing crisis of imperialism, and the stage of the political revolution. I am convinced that on these kinds of living political questions, the differences cut across the old formations. We must begin preparation for the world congress in the new framework, preparing new outlines and new documents, even if they incorporate a lot of ideas from past documents.

This is not to say that there is already agreement; that remains to be seen. These correct methods of preparation are necessary to attain the goal of clarity.

Fourth, we should agree that the timing of the next IEC meetings and then the next world congress must be based on the political and organizational progress that is made. That is, we should not pick a date for the world congress simply because someone feels we have to adhere strictly to the calendar. I think we may need to have one or two IEC meetings before the next world congress; we can't go too long without formal meetings of the international bodies. But the dates and preparations for the IEC meeting or meetings and for the world congress should flow from the rhythm of the process of political clarification and of the dismantling of the old factions.

The first IEC, for example, will of course have to deal with any major new world events that have happened; but also on the agenda should be two or three points on which positions have converged. So the timing has to involve a leadership judgment about the rate and significance of these convergences, our ability to agree on reporters, etc.

I should make it plain that this does not mean we should slow down our responses to political events as they occur in the world. If a sudden crisis explodes in Ethiopia, for example, and unanimous agreement cannot be reached on what attitude to take toward the various forces, we might have to put out a political statement of the international by majority vote.

Nor does it mean we should feel hamstrung in dealing with challenges to our organizational norms such as those that have been made by the Bolshevik Tendency. I mention this because unless the comrades of the Bolshevik Tendency change their methods of functioning, we are going to need to call them to order about practices that violate the organizational norms of the international.

But this should present no insuperable problems.

We had serious differences between 1965 and 1968, but we did not need to resort to factional formations because of them.

Nor did we need factions in the international following the reunification, when we had to deal with the organizational challenges made by Pablo. The reunification of the international after a ten-year hiatus was a difficult undertaking. But we recognized that historical differences could exist unclarified for a time without getting in the way of moving forward. We have never completely agreed on the differences of 1954-62. I don't think we ever have to agree. Those differences were superseded by fresh events.

This agreement to disagree on 1954-62 was symbolized in the arrangement made at the time of reunification on

numbering world congresses. To the comrades from the International Secretariat, the 1963 congress was the seventh world congress. To the comrades from the International Committee, it was the fourth. Both sides recognized that it would be incorrect to try to impose their political view of what had happened between 1954 and 1962 on the other. So it was agreed to call 1963 the reunification congress and number each one after that accordingly, i.e., second world congress after reunification, third, etc. We are now preparing the fifth world congress after reunification. Another way acceptable to everyone is to simply use the year, for example, 1969 world congress.

My impression is that with the growth of factionalism in the international after 1969, comrades who believed that the IS represented the continuity of the international reverted to the old numbering system. Probably many new comrades never knew what was involved politically. But the original compromise was correct and we should continue to live up to it.

Finally, we have reached agreement on the publication of materials. *Intercontinental Press* plans to continue to run a significant amount of material from *Inprecor* and from leaders of the international in Europe. *Inprecor* will reciprocate with articles in each issue by comrades of what will be the former LTF.

We will try to make available to each other the key documents registering major turns made by the sections and fraternal organizations of the international. For example, we have been assured now that, after a two-year wait because *Quatrième Internationale* was not published, "Prospects for Socialism in America" will be published in French.

Three Potentially Explosive Problems

I'd like to list three potential pitfalls as we move into this postdissolution period.

One could arise if the various assurances that have been given on both sides are reversed or can't be carried out—for example, if it turns out that a majority of the IMT actually agrees with Comrade Livio that the Latin America resolutions of the 1974 world congress should not be rescinded but reaffirmed. Or if there is a factional reversal of the course we have begun to take toward the OCRFI.

Such reversals, or any abuses or violations of majority rule on either side, would be explosive because the dissolution of the factions will be based not only on judgments of political evolution, but also partly on assurances from coleaders. We cannot avoid the leadership responsibility of accepting these assurances as part of the objective conditions and acting accordingly.

The second grave problem that could blow everything up is the Amador case. One of the leaders of the LTF, Comrade Amador, was urged by the United Secretariat to make a public statement to clear the record on some errors he had made in the past before he became a Trotskyist. He did so in a way he thought would be most useful, and his explanation was published and distributed. He felt that he had lived up to the Secretariat's request.

Then the Stalinists in Costa Rica opened up a public attack on Comrade Amador, dredging up his errors from the past, distorting what he had said, and trying to discredit him, discredit Trotskyism, and destroy one of the Fourth International groups in Costa Rica.

We understand that a question has been raised as to whether Comrade Amador's public explanation was adequate and whether he retains membership in the international.

One thing has to be said here. A leader of the LTF cannot be placed outside the Fourth International without blowing up the entire process of dissolution of factions and reestablishment of comradely attitudes. We couldn't live with that any more than the comrades of the IMT could live without publicly answering such an attack on one of their leaders.

I think that most comrades in the leadership of the international are seeking a way to solve this problem properly; but there appear to be some comrades in the international leadership who are campaigning to give this entire problem a public airing, thus playing into the hands of the Stalinists. We are deeply concerned about this question and want to make our views on it crystal clear.

The third area of potential blowup revolves around *Intercontinental Press*.

Intercontinental Press has played a historic role in the reunified Fourth International. Sustaining it has been one of the big responsibilities and contributions of the American movement. It began as a news service in Paris—a need the international still has—and then was transformed into a weekly printed magazine in New York.

During its first half-decade after being transferred to New York in 1965, there were no problems or objections whatsoever over the SWP's backing a weekly magazine that served the world movement. A high percentage of the articles were by leaders of the international who later became leaders of the IMT, not the LTF. The comrades contributed to *Intercontinental Press* and made no objections whatsoever to its character, until the faction fight began.

I'm not discussing here the general question of where we should go in terms of the publications program of the international—what kind of publications we need, what kinds of political literary work the center should be responsible for, how we can draw on the strengths of the sections in this area, who should be responsible for the publications financially, etc. These are matters we can discuss out and solve after a period of working together.

What I am pointing to is the problem that could arise if there were some kind of majority decision against *Intercontinental Press* or a move that in any way tried to pressure the SWP into withdrawing its support to *Intercontinental Press* or altering the character and function of the magazine. That would stir up a fresh fight.

The Fourth International cannot be moved forward by dumping one of its conquests. There were no problems posed by *Intercontinental Press* prior to the development of the faction fight, and we can expect that the existing problems will fade away if we succeed in eliminating the factionalism. [See IIDB, Vol. XII, No. 6, October 1975, pp. 39-40.]

What is needed now is to carry out our agreements to publish more material written by leaders of the former factions, collaborate more, and see whether some of the problems of the past can be solved and the bases laid for moving forward.

I list these three potential problems not because I think they will blow things up, but because of our responsibility to face these issues in the most conscious way possible. It

is therefore important to make sure that the IMT comrades know our thinking on them.

A Historical Decision

If we make the decision that I think we are going to make here, it will be a history-making move. This will be the first time in the history of the International Left Opposition, of the International Communist League, of the Movement for the Fourth International, and of the Fourth International itself that an organized faction struggle over basic questions did not end in a split of the international. I mentioned previously the analogy to the reunification of the international in 1963, but I think our situation now is even better than that. We are much further ahead in the game.

Our stance is quite simple. We reaffirm the basic correctness of the platform of the LTF, and, if two days from now the decision to dissolve is made, we will place the documents making up this platform on the shelf for the historians to study at their convenience. We put aside the documents of that platform, not the ideas and struggles they embody, but that platform as a political framework for discussion and action in the international.

From the beginning, the goal of the LTF has been to reverse the turn of the 1969 world congress and rescind the 1974 documents that programmatically codified the turn, to prevent a split of the Fourth International, and to open the door to collaborate once again in applying the Leninist strategy of party building and the method of the Transitional Program. We are convinced that that road is now at last open to us.

Summary

Following the 1974 world congress, the LTF Steering Committee met for several days. We again confirmed our goal as the simple one of winning a majority in the Fourth International to reverse the turn of the 1969 world congress and to rescind its codification at the 1974 world congress.

We had a difference in estimate with Comrade Moreno. He didn't think we could win a majority—the IMT would split the international rather than permit us to win a majority. I realize now after listening to the discussion here that maybe a considerable misunderstanding had arisen. Some comrades may have thought that what we meant was that we had to win a majority of the international to membership in the LTF in order to accomplish our goal. This was never our point of view. Our goal was to win a majority of the international to reverse the 1969 line. That is what I think we're on the threshold of accomplishing.

From this point of view it is worth noting Barry's remarks about the LTF's insistence on maintaining a principled faction. The splits from the LTF took place because we were not interested in keeping an unprincipled gang together for a power fight. That was never our goal. So some forces developed differences and left the LTF. Others have been won to agreement with us on the need to reverse the guerrilla turn and rescind the 1974 world congress documents codifying it. The indications are that the majority of the leadership of the IMT now agrees with

us on this question, which means a new majority is emerging in the Fourth International. That's what we were fighting to win.

From the beginning we understood that the faction was a temporary formation. There were only two possibilities. The day would come when the turn on Latin America would be reversed or clearly on the road to being reversed. The faction, having served its purpose, would then have to be dissolved. If the turn was not eventually reversed, there would be a split in the Fourth International. There was no third possibility. In the case of a split, the struggle would have gone on in a different framework—and for how long no one could predict.

If the comrades who are opposed to dissolving the LTF don't agree that reversing the turn was our objective, you face a difficulty. You're going to see our common victory as a defeat.

Why did we form and maintain the faction? Were the reasons organizational or political? They were both. The reason we transformed the tendency into a faction was organizational. The Barzman Letter confirmed that we had reached the stage where we were on the verge of a split in the international. We needed a tightly disciplined formation to fight against the split, in the hope that this would force the other side to do the same and rein in the would-be splitters.

At least if you have two disciplined armies, the general staffs can have meetings, and you can maintain discipline in the ranks. That's what happened at the 1974 world congress. There were actually four meetings going on simultaneously at the 1974 world congress—the congress itself, meetings of each of the factions, and consultation between the leaderships of the two factions. It was only during the last day of the congress, as votes were taken on the agreements worked out by these parity meetings of the faction leaderships, that we knew a split had been avoided—that those who favored a split had been held in.

The same thing happened at the February 1975 IEC plenum where we now know that almost half the IMT comrades present favored a course that would have split the international.

Why did we maintain the faction after the 1974 world congress? It's in writing in our platform. It was for a political reason. It was because of the adoption of the armed struggle resolution by the majority. If you take politics seriously, you have to assume that adopted resolutions will be applied. We said the strategy of armed struggle had been substituted—as the majority reporter explained explicitly—for the relevant section of the Transitional Program. This meant that we were again on the verge of a split, if in fact the majority applied that line. We were on the brink of a disaster. It is for that reason that we maintained the faction and for that reason only.

Following the congress there was once again an increase in factionalism by the IMT. The outstanding occurrences in this process were the complicity of the IMT leadership in the split in the SWP, the public attacks on the PST leadership, and the sectarian rejection of the overtures of the OCRFI. These raised two kinds of dangers, which we noted in the next two platform statements of the LTF.

On the OCRFI bid we have made progress, although not as much as we should have. I'm not yet convinced that we have a clear majority on the United Secretariat that approaches this question objectively. It's being approached formally and hesitantly, and we're still not doing

everything we should. But there has been a change. I'm convinced now that all of us who want to pull the OCRFI closer to us are going to have a de facto bloc with the comrades in Canada and with the comrades in other countries because of the openings there in relation to the OCRFI. In any case, the framework has changed with the agreement to open discussion with the OCRFI.

The American split has basically been healed. It was healed organizationally before last week's SWP convention in the sense that there is no one outside the SWP now who is considered to be a sympathizing member of the FI in the United States. And it may be being healed politically. Comrades who were at the SWP convention heard Comrade Barzman's remarks on affirmative action, reversing one of the positions he held in 1973 which was at the heart of the American IMT supporters' counterperspective for the American class struggle.

Concerning the armed struggle resolution, which was the reason we maintained the faction, we now think the door is open to rescinding it. This is a political deduction from reading the "Self-Criticism" document and the "redefined" IMT platform. It's not simply based on assurances from IMT leaders. The rescinding of that document is logically implied by the "Self-Criticism on Latin America."

Where do we stand today concerning the attitudes and activities revealed by the letters sent out by Domingo, the Six, Barzman, and Joanna? What about the opposition to translating the discussion into French; the resistance to holding any real debate outside the "real" international, the IMT; the suppression of documents; the abuse of "personal correspondence" and other methods of operating behind the backs of the leadership of sections, and so on?

Today, no one would advance the position that since a split is inevitable in the international, it's correct to organize a minority in various sections to split those sections in anticipation of an international split. The evidence is accumulating that the leadership of the IMT today opposes many of the destructive methods of operation that have been at issue in the organizational controversies.

By the way, do you know which LTF documents submitted for the pre-world-congress discussion in 1974 were never translated into French? Not even in that large stack of the bulletins published just before the world congress that were so late and so poorly translated no one even tried to read them. Three that have never been translated, even to this day, are the balance sheet on Ireland by Gerry Foley, the balance sheet on Britain by Alan Harris, and the document on the national question in Iran by Ahmad Heydari and Cyrus Paydar. These were three of the concrete, revealing tests of the two lines. [See IIDB, Vol. X, Nos. 17, 18, 23, and 26, October, November, and December 1973.]

No one would today defend the refusal to translate documents into French. Everyone agrees that the legitimacy of the next world congress is conditional on timely translations. In fact, we agreed last October that the authority of any congress is dependent on the prior timely translation of all the documents submitted for discussion in advance of the congress. This is an important change in the real life and democracy of the international.

A Split Wing in the LTF?

Comrade Riddell told us of a question that an IMT

comrade asked him after hearing my report—Was the current led by Comrade Moreno a split wing in the LTF? The answer is no. And the answer is important because it is a legitimate question. We have reaffirmed, as we end our faction, everything we said in the past about the meaning of the Barzman Letter, the Letter of the Six, and the Domingo Letter. We must now add the Joanna Letter. But if we did not similarly condemn any split wing in the LTF, and if we tried to cover up for it, it would show that either we were politically incompetent, or we were engaging in a gross maneuver.

What are the facts? Comrade Moreno comported himself in the faction in a manner that was in no way illegitimate. It was legitimate to argue for the formation of a tendency at the 1969 world congress. It was legitimate to argue for the formation of a faction in 1972 after the majority's refusal to draw the balance sheet on Bolivia and Argentina. It was legitimate to argue for proposing to the international the formation of public factions and requesting an internal discussion bulletin of the faction after the 1974 world congress. It was certainly legitimate to argue in meeting after meeting of the LTF that the Americans were a little soft. That's all that happened in practice.

We had an extremely important obligation, not to the IMT, but to the international. That is, when arguments like this took place, we had to write our faction declaration after such meetings in an unambiguous way. That is exactly what we did in each of the faction statements, as you can see if you go back and read them. After each faction meeting, in addition to our political documents, we issued a statement on organization. In each of these statements we defined the exact organizational stage, structure, responsibilities, and limits of the LTF. These statements were put to a vote at the end of the LTF meetings. All LTF members were bound to carry them out or leave the faction. They were made public for the whole international. Comrade Moreno voted for these statements each time, and up to the final months when he decided to break from the faction he carried out the line he voted for. That's exactly what happened.

In two instances we did have an immediate responsibility to place the facts before the international. The first was when we learned that Comrade Moreno had gone to see Pierre Lambert, leaving the impression he represented the LTF. This occurred in the final weeks just before Moreno left the faction. We took the letter from Comrade Lambert, together with a copy of our reply informing him that there must be a misunderstanding. We put both the letters in an envelop and mailed them to the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.

This doesn't mean, by the way, that I think there was anything wrong with Comrade Moreno's seeing Lambert. My personal opinion is that things became so uptight in the factional situation that foolish attitudes were taken against comrades probing around, talking to individuals, and finding out what's going on. I don't object at all to Nahuel Moreno seeing Pierre Lambert, assuming he would inform us of the results of the discussion.

But it would have been disloyal to have kept that letter hidden from the international leadership, as it was in the case of IMT leaders hiding the Domingo Letter or the Letter of the Six or the Joanna Letter from the leadership of the international.

The second instance was when the showdown with Comrade Moreno came in December 1975. Comrades who

were present as observers at the Liga Socialista convention in Mexico saw how Comrade Moreno's followers attempted to "liquidate" Comrade Cristina and those who agreed with her. We immediately placed all the facts before the leadership of the international and appealed to the IEC to condemn the grotesque violations of internal democracy organized by those who looked to Moreno for leadership. We expelled from the LTF the comrades directly responsible for the purge in Mexico. Comrade Moreno resigned from the LTF.

Then we ran into a problem. The Mexican group led by the IMT comrades published an article in their newspaper praising the LS convention as "democratic" and condemning Cristina and the others Moreno had slated for destruction for splitting the LS!

Political Clarity and Common Documents

On the question of common documents: I found the discussion a little strange, since the references seemed to be to my report, but I never used the words "common documents." I was extremely careful about that because I don't believe a search for common documents should be our starting point. I think that's a wrong axis.

Our perspective is not based on achieving common documents or promising that we will be able to do so. The decisive question is to put our past documents behind us, dissolve the factions, and attempt to work on the political questions through the normal channels of the international and in collaboration with the elected leaderships of the national sections. The goal is to achieve political clarity. Will this result in any common documents? Well, I think this will result in a large majority on some documents—and that is our collective goal—but not necessarily "common" IMT-LTF documents. And that is not what we should be after in the new postfaction framework. The large majority that adopted the "Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" document is a good example of what to shoot for.

What I think we should try to achieve is political clarity, and this can best be gained, in my opinion, by putting all the past platform documents of both factions into the historical category. We should begin to discuss the issues of the world class struggle, and start from scratch working up the documents for the next world congress. It's that approach which we are proposing. We are not under the gun to produce any common documents, or fast documents, to justify the dissolution of the factions.

If you start with the necessity of writing common documents, you fall into a factional framework. When we didn't have factions or tendencies, we didn't begin a pre-congress discussion by saying, "Well, let's see what 'common' documents we can write." No, we said, "What should be on the agenda? Well, let's start discussing these questions; let's start writing drafts, and we'll see what transpires."

The idea of centering our next steps on trying to achieve common documents arises because of the degree to which the international leadership bodies have been bypassed, the degree to which they have lost authority and are not seen as the place where the "real" discussion takes place.

Comrades want to see some progress in former members of the IMT and LTF working together. But centering everything on the necessity of writing common documents

will lead to the opposite result: It is a trap; it gets in the way of breaking out of the factional straitjacket, and therefore makes it even more difficult for documents supported by a large majority to be written.

We may find, through a discussion in the framework of the international, as opposed to the framework of the factions, that on many documents large majorities do exist. I think that will happen.

But dissolving the factions should not be made conditional on drafting one or more common documents between the ex-IMT and ex-LTF.

Should There Be a European Resolution?

One point made by the comrades who wish to continue the LTF in the form of a tendency is that they think the LTF should write a European resolution. What this really involves is the debate on strategy and tactics that centered on the IMT European resolution. Those of us who are for dissolving the LTF think this discussion should occur not in the LTF but in the leadership bodies of the international, including the leaderships of sections and groups—for example, both the Spanish LCR and LC, the leaders of currents like the Workers Tendency in Spain, and Comrade Matti's tendency in France.

The discussion should involve European and non-European leaders of the international. Because this debate is not primarily about Europe at all. It's my opinion that we shouldn't try to write a European document. I don't think we need one. I think a politically more valuable axis would be a document on the advanced capitalist countries. I think we have to deal with Europe versus America, with the new stage in the détente, with how the struggle for proletarian democracy in Eastern Europe is involved, with the interrelationship of the colonial revolution, with big social questions that are common to all the advanced capitalist countries like immigrant workers, the national question, women's liberation, and the role of students.

I think that is the proper framework for discussing the strategic questions facing our movement that were discussed under the "Europe" heading. In addition to this, we have to deal with those countries in Europe where the intensity of the class struggle has brought them to the verge of unstable situations. You have Spain, Portugal, and Italy. You have the developments bubbling in France. I have no particular concrete proposal, but these situations could be dealt with in a different way than in a European resolution.

I think a document that tries to cover Sweden and Germany down to Spain and Italy, but that does not include the other advanced capitalist countries, is wrong. The changes in the relations between the imperialist countries have vitiated the usefulness of a "European resolution." To deal with questions of strategy that encompass Sweden and Italy, you need the framework of world imperialism.

There is an exaggeration of the differences between the United States, Japan, and Europe. Of course there are big differences in the stage of the class struggle. That is true within Europe too. But the strategic line of march of labor and of the building of revolutionary parties has a great deal in common for all the imperialist countries. There's more to learn through working together on this than separately.

This has nothing to do with the factions. This kind of

discussion would cut across the factions and would clarify a number of questions.

Comrade Mélan said that he was opposed to us giving up our ideas on Latin America. But it is the *documents* that go into the historical category, not the ideas. No one is asked to give up their ideas.

There's absolutely no question what our goal is. Our goal is political clarity. No more equivocal Third World Congress documents. No more "synthetic and elliptical phrases." We've had enough of that.

On Convergences

Now what about convergences? In the balance sheet report, I also tried to deal carefully with this question. In the discussion comrades raised the question, Does the correction made by the IMT on the 1969 turn, which was at the root of many other errors, automatically lead to a correction of these errors made as the turn was extended?

No, it doesn't automatically do that. Rescinding the Latin American documents of 1969 and 1974 doesn't necessarily lead—at least automatically—to changing anything else. But that statement has nothing to do with politics. We have to have the confidence that with objective political comrades, once they have made a correction of such scope, this will logically lead to correcting other errors. This is a very interesting disagreement with the comrades who are opposed to dissolving the LTF. Maybe it comes down to the degree of confidence in the correctness of the ideas of the LTF.

I am convinced that if the 1969 and 1974 world congress documents on Latin America are rescinded for the basic reasons given in the "Self-Criticism on Latin America," and we work together on the strategic questions raised in the "Self-Criticism," and discuss it out in preparation for writing a document on Latin America, we'll be able to deal with other questions from a much more homogeneous framework than in the past.

Our whole fight would not make sense if we did not think that. It would mean that deep down you don't think that the comrades who aren't in the LTF are Trotskyists.

If we don't have to reconstruct the Fourth International, if the comrades on the other side are Trotskyists, if we agree with them on the political reasons they have put forward in the "Self-Criticism" for reversing the 1969 turn, including the class analysis of guerrillaism and the strategy of armed struggle contained in the "Self-Criticism," then working together to prepare a new document on Latin America is bound to make us more homogeneous. I'll leave aside who learns from whom—you have to acknowledge that changes will take place on both sides when you can work together instead of merely debate. That opens the door. It has nothing to do with an automatic process. But it qualitatively changes the framework.

Differences Over Nature of Stalinism

We should be cautious on another thing. One of the comrades listed the differences that originated in the turn of the 1969 world congress. This comrade included China, Stalinism, and Vietnam. But the differences over these questions did not originate at the 1969 world congress, they go back long before. The differences over the nature

of Stalinism originated in 1953. They were sharp differences, and resulted in quite a battle. They were never completely resolved in 1963.

The disagreement on China deepened in 1966, following the 1965 world congress, when the editing commission, which we were not part of, came in with a document on China defining the Maoist regime as "left centrist." Yes, in 1966 they described the Maoist regime as left centrist! Go back and read the Spring 1966 issue of *International Socialist Review* with all the documents of that world congress.

There was an exchange of several letters over this. A small portion of them is quoted by Tom Kerry in his article "The Anatomy of Stalinism" [*The Mao Myth* (Pathfinder Press, 1977), pp. 157-59]. I think we should make them all available.

Joe Hansen wrote the comrades in Europe on the SWP leadership's reactions to this document and the meaning of calling the Maoists—in 1966, when the Maoists were preparing to consolidate their wing of the bureaucracy in the purges of the "Cultural Revolution"—left centrist. We thought it was a blunder. We still think it's a blunder. It disoriented comrades politically. It still disorients some of them. It think it's the same kind of blunder involved in Vietnam. But we have to say it did not originate with the turn of the 1969 world congress. The theoretical and even political questions connected with Vietnam, China, and Stalinism have their roots elsewhere. Now there is a *connection* with the guerrilla strategy—the Maoist "people's war" concept. But the origin of the differences over these questions goes back before 1969.

On the theoretical differences over how China and Vietnam became deformed workers states, we have to include the case of Cuba. There are differences in evaluating the positions of the first four congresses of the Communist International and the Transitional Program concerning the possibility of workers and farmers governments—the meaning of the term, its limits, and where it applies.

This has to do with new differences concerning the process—on which we once agreed—through which Cuba became a workers state as well as our joint analysis of the Algerian workers and peasants government. [See "The Meaning of the IMT Steering Committee's Self-Criticism on Latin America," by Jack Barnes, IIDB, Vol. XIV, No. 5, May 1977; and "Two Interpretations of the Cuban Revolution," by Joseph Hansen, and "The Algerian Workers and Peasants Government (1963-1965), and Comrade Keil's Errors of Fact, Theory, and Method," by Fred Feldman, both in SWP Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 35, No. 16, July 1977.] I raise all these questions because they relate to the broad important questions the LTF comrades in France and Spain are raising about Stalinism, China, and Vietnam.

We did not need a faction to discuss these questions in the 1960s and we don't need a faction to discuss them now. We didn't need a tendency then, and we don't need a tendency now. Someone reported that a naïve American rank-and-filer said: "We don't need a tendency to discuss the China question." That naïve rank-and-filer is more correct politically than the person who thinks she or he is naïve. We have found it useful to discuss these questions publicly, in books and public exchanges. There is no reason why we shouldn't continue to do so—it makes the international more attractive.

The New Challenge in Canada

Some of the main problems that now face us have nothing to do with the 1969 world congress. For example, what are some of the problems that face the new fused Canadian section? I don't know for sure what they all are, but I know what two of them are.

One is the proletarian orientation of the Canadian section and its strategy toward the industrial working class. What is their judgment of the union movement there? Of the industrial section of the union movement? How does it relate to the New Democratic Party? What is the meaning of the events of the last year, and what kind of approach to the industrial working class do they have in mind? What about the depression and the employers' and government offensive? How does this offensive fit into deepening the proletarian orientation of the Canadian section? One of the things these comrades will want to read and study is Farrell Dobbs's four-volume work describing how Trotskyists led a revolutionary union. Everyone understands the value of these books for the American party, but their general value for the whole international will be seen more and more in the next couple of years, as we deepen our proletarian orientation.

I think the second big question they face in Canada is forging a new leadership. This leadership is not going to be like any of the past leaderships of the three organizations prior to the fusion. Those days are gone forever. The particular methods of the RMG and the GMR are out the window. The particular methods of the LSA/LSO are out the window, too. The new leadership has to be something new. It has to link up with the Bolshevik tradition on how to build a leadership. I've got some suggestions on where to look for that tradition but that's another thing.

Those are what I think the two big questions are before the new Canadian section.

And what's this got to do with the faction fight? Not much. Why would opinions on either one of these decisive questions run along IMT-LTF lines? Why would one think beforehand that Joe Hansen's opinion, my opinion, Robs's opinion, or Duret's opinion on these questions would fall along IMT-LTF lines?

A few months ago I spent a couple of evenings with leaders of the LSA/LSO. We talked about the fusion. At the end of the discussion we had come to agreement on two things. One was there was no longer any reason in the world to do anything but to drive forward in every way possible for the fusion in Canada. Every sign indicated that it would be principled and correct, and mark a turning point for Canada and the international.

The second conclusion we came to was that we would never again have the same relationships we'd had in the past. The old framework of our long-term political relationship came to an end at the end of that meeting. That is, we agreed that with the new fused organization, the SWP leadership would have a new relationship with the new fused leadership as a whole. And we began to put this into practice before the fusion. That's the way these questions must be approached. And it's hard because everyone became habituated to a different framework during the factional situation.

What Are Our Differences?

I don't agree with comrades who say that our differences

are over the united front, the popular front, the workers government, and Stalinism. Comrades, the international in its great majority agrees in general on the united front and its necessity; on the popular front and its heinousness; on the need for a workers government, on the need to call for it as our application of the united-front approach on the governmental level; and on Stalinism, its origins, its character, its thoroughly unreformable counterrevolutionary character. Will anyone present who doesn't think Stalinism is counterrevolutionary through and through please raise their hands? No takers. And the same would result if a poll were taken on the other questions.

OK. So what do you do about this? You can't clarify any questions on that level. You can't fight on that level unless you start by saying to the person you are discussing with, "You're a liar or an idiot." But if you're discussing with a liar or an idiot, you're the idiot. In the Fourth International we agree on these things. They are part of our common program. You have to begin with concrete politics and discuss how to apply the common program. That's when the important differences arise.

One of the best moments at the SWP convention was listening to Comrade Robs from the French LCR when he started talking about the Union of the Left. I wondered, "How's he going to explain the French section's policy to this audience?" I was fascinated. He started by explaining, correctly, what class collaborationism is, the political forms it takes, the need to call for a CP-SP government, and the danger the Union of the Left represents to the workers movement. He got a big ovation from the SWP delegates, all of whom thought he sounded just like them on this question. Because what he said was correct. It sounded to our members almost identical to the part on the Union of the Left from the section entitled "Violent Repression and Class Collaborationism" in the 1974 world political situation resolution of the LTF or from the SWP Political Committee's letter to the Political Bureau of the French section in 1973.

Now of course he didn't do one thing. He didn't tell us how they will urge the French workers to vote in the coming election. And we'll have to discuss that item. But shouldn't we start from our common positions on class collaborationism and discuss with him concretely the correct tactics in applying our common position? Isn't that how you have to discuss the question of voting for the Union of the Left, instead of the other way around?

I was also bowled over when Comrade Mercedes reported that there was agreement between the PRT and the LS to call for a labor party in Mexico in the resolutions for the upcoming fusion. I think this is a big conquest of the Mexican comrades. It closes a gap in the strategy of Mexican Trotskyism. So do you want to argue whether or not the IMT comrades who agreed to this point are soft on popular frontism? I would prefer taking this agreement and conquest and developing and applying it together with these comrades against the Mexican Stalinists and then see if there are differences.

This relates to the question one comrade raised, "What is the IMT?" There is no politically homogeneous formation called the IMT. I think that the IMT comrades are going to register this reality by dissolving.

Do you put the Canadian IMTers in the IMT? I guess so. They're members. But they just fused with LTFers on a program for an advanced capitalist country. Well maybe you're secretly suspicious of the Canadian LTFers. But

what does that tell you about what "the" IMT and "the" LTF are today? We know that many of the Canadian IMTers are partisans of rescinding the 1969 and 1974 Latin American documents and working up a new Latin American document. We know that the comrades from the LTF have the same opinion.

Would you have believed it last year if you were told that Livio would no longer be in the IMT? That Livio would have stated to the international that he does not agree with and cannot vote for one of the defining planks of the IMT platform? You're going to see some novel developments when we dissolve the factions and return to open political debate. And it's going to be healthy. You're going to find out you've misjudged a lot of people and put them in the wrong category.

Comrade Sarah said we must decide on whether the IMT is *really* changing. But if we concentrated on the question of whether or not the IMT is *really* changing, we would have a theological debate. I don't know if they're *really* changing. I don't think they *really* exist. I do think changes in the world have *really* changed the Fourth International, and I want to bring the discussion into a framework in which we can try to clarify political questions and advance our historical goals.

In my report, I discussed the signs of political convergence. Comrade Ahmad explained that what is important is not who is approaching whom, but the relative motion—we are moving closer. I agree with that.

There's another side to it. Comrades from both factions are learning from each other. The Canadian comrades have explained how this happened during their process of fusion. The same is true in the international as a whole. Everyone must beware of provincial arrogance, of the idea that even the best faction in the world can somehow do better than the international as a whole. It's a law that the best faction in the world can never do nearly as well politically as an international working together. *Never!* It may be a necessary instrument at a certain stage, but it can never do as well politically as a normally functioning international whose leadership is collaborating. In fact, it would be a mockery of the whole concept of the need for an international if we were not clear on that.

The comrades who are opposed to the dissolution of the LTF seem to start with what differences they still have with the IMT comrades. I don't start with that. I start with the convergences, which in some ways I find surprising. Maybe it is because I have lived through the whole process. I went through the pre-1969 period. I was at the world congress in 1969. I went through every meeting after that, and some of the convergences that comrades have talked about here are hard to believe. It was easy to drift into the feeling that the struggle could not be resolved short of a split.

The convergences on Ireland are mind-blowing. We were almost crossing swords on this question at one point. What if someone had told you three years ago that we'd be converging on politics in Ireland and that the Fourth International would have won Bernadette Devlin politically? Yet it happened. You heard her speech at the SWP rally.

The Canadian movement is fused. It was hard at one time to believe we would see that occur. The Mexican movement is within weeks of being fused on the basis of the program that you heard Comrade Mercedes explain. The Australian movement is within a few months of total

fusion, if things go the way they expect. The fusion is overdue in Spain and is on the agenda. That is symbolized by the fact that we have two Spanish LTF leaders here—one from the leadership of the LCR and one from the leadership of the LC.

The convergence in Spain since the assassination of Carrero Blanco is one of the most important. We were at the 1974 world congress. We listened to the LCR comrades express their views on the Carrero Blanco assassination, and saw the IMT comrades, some grudgingly, some enthusiastically, support the LCR position. If we had been told we would have the kind of convergence we have today with the LCR comrades, we would have found it hard to believe.

On Portugal, at least there is greater convergence on what the facts were, as Comrade Gerry Foley explained to the SWP convention. If there is a convergence just on the level of facts, then the discussion is placed on a new basis.

And there's a convergence on something else, the class character of guerrillaism and vanguardism as explained in the IMT "Self-Criticism." They explain what we explained earlier on this question. That convergence is one of the international's conquests.

There are regressions as well as convergences, by the way, and there are some new differences. I think the approach of the new paper *Socialist Challenge* in Britain is wrong. A step backwards. They were making some progress in Britain; then they launched *Socialist Challenge* not as an IMG paper but as some kind of "revolutionary left," regroupment paper. I hope that the comrades of the IMG read what Trotsky had to say on this question in the new book Pathfinder Press just published, *The Crisis of the French Section (1935-36)*.

I don't believe there is an LTF-IMT difference on *Socialist Challenge*. We've all been having the same arguments with the same British comrades on this question and we've been crossing faction lines. Even this is evidence that the factional framework is now an obstacle.

Finally, I'd like to go over the arguments of the comrades who are opposed to the dissolution of the LTF. Because we should be very clear in view of the fact we are ending an important chapter here.

They point to the differences we have had with the IMT on a number of questions. First, they say, the IMT's political error on the "new mass vanguard" is an error of substitutionism, a departure from the Transitional Program, and an adaptation to ultraleftism. OK. Let's assume that. Even so, that has nothing to do with the decision we're making to dissolve the LTF, or on the balance sheet of the LTF.

Second, they say many errors of the IMT are not by-products of the "new mass vanguard" line. For instance, on Stalinism. Let's agree. Errors like on China—we've got to be concrete—errors such as those on the Chinese regime and the Chinese Communist Party are examples of errors on the question of Stalinism. The fact is, as we have said already, these differences are by-products of the differences we had when there were no formations within the international, and not a single member of the Fourth International thought factions or tendencies were necessary to discuss this question.

Third, they point to the evolution of the class struggle in a series of countries, where the fight against coalitionism is central to our orientation. I totally agree. Class collaborationism versus class struggle constitutes a great divid-

ing line in the workers movement. But we also have a problem there. We have a series of countries where the LTF and IMT have come together in agreement on the main axes of a class-struggle approach against all forms of coalitionism.

The questions posed by the class struggle that these comrades listed are those around the "new mass vanguard," Stalinism, popular frontism, Angola, Portugal, China, and Vietnam. They made the point that the stakes in relation to these questions are immense. The stakes *are* immense. But the goal of the LTF was not to overcome the differences on these questions. The goal of the LTF has been to get a framework within the international so that we can gain political clarity on these questions. Gaining political clarity and eliminating the difference are two different things.

The comrades who favor maintaining a tendency also say they fear that a majority of the LTF believes that the "Self-Criticism on Latin America" ends all differences on Latin America. No, no one believes that. Our report on it said the opposite. But the LTF and LTT weren't formed because of *differences* on Latin America. There have been differences in the Fourth International on Latin America since 1938. You should live so long to see the day when there are no differences on Latin America. We were formed to reverse the guerrillaist turn and the strategy of armed struggle. That was what we were after. Not resolving the differences on Latin America. That's not the job of the faction. That's the job of the living international and its sections.

The comrades who are opposed to the dissolution of the LTF seem to fear that by dissolving we're moving away from political clarity. But that's not so. There's nothing in the history of the LTF to show that any of us have ever run away from political clarity. Having never done it in the past, why on earth do comrades assume we are going to start now? No. We're after clarity and we're after unity in the international because we believe that unity in the international is the best framework for reaching clarity and the correct positions. We are convinced we will have *better* positions working together with comrades who were not in the LTF, than we could possibly have on our own. That's what we're after.

Finally, what are we deciding when we vote for our balance sheet, which includes stating that we think the documents of the LTF are correct, and at the same time that the LTF should be dissolved? By stating our position clearly, openly, and aboveboard, we're saying there's no maneuver involved. There is no secret motivation for why we are dissolving. Nothing is hidden. Our reasons for dissolving are placed before the whole international in unambiguous terms. We know that we have said certain things that a number of the comrades outside the LTF disagree with. We've made our proposals, which may be controversial, on everything from the OCRFI to how we have to function after dissolution. It is all completely out in the open.

Our balance sheet on the LTF is a proud one. We made quite a few contributions. Most important, we accomplished what we set out to do, which does not always happen in life. And as we enter the stage in the life of the Fourth International when it's not necessary to have these factions, we are ready to act like Bolsheviks together with the growing majority who are ready to rescind the documents that turned the international away from its proper

axis, away from the programmatic guide that we all shared before, and that we will soon share again.

When we vote to dissolve the faction tomorrow, we will include in our balance sheet that we knew when to form a faction and we knew when to dissolve it at the proper moment.

* * *

Further Summary Remarks

[After the summary had been given to the discussion on the LTF balance sheet, and after the report by Barry Sheppard on the proposal to dissolve the faction, Comrade Mélan proposed an amendment to the balance sheet. The reporter was requested to reply to the proposed amendment before the votes were taken. The following remarks were an extension of the earlier summary.

[The amendment was rejected, 2 votes for and 17 against, by the members of the LTF Steering Committee. The consultative vote was 1 for and 6 against.]

Comrade Mélan has proposed amending our balance sheet of the LTF to include the statement that the central task the LTF faces today is "to correct the error of orienting to the new vanguard, including errors in electoral policy such as adaptation to popular frontism, and confusion about the character of Stalinism."

We should reject that amendment.

Comrades Mélan and Nemo referred to the August 1976 statement of the LTF Steering Committee, which says that the goal of the LTF has been the attempt "to attain clarity on the main political questions facing the Fourth International." It is to achieve that goal, they say, that we must continue the LTF as a tendency.

But continuing as a tendency is *not* the way today to continue attempting to attain clarity on questions of election policy, the character of Stalinism, and so forth. At this time the best way is to tackle the concrete manifestations of these problems country by country and in international leadership discussions. I've been fascinated by the contributions that we've heard right here at this meeting from places like Ireland, Sweden, Spain, and Britain. They reveal the degree to which the cadres *are* grappling with these questions and discussing them, country by country.

Having open discussion on such questions within the leadership bodies of the international, without prior discussions first in factional formations, should be a big aid to the comrades who are trying to sort out these questions in the various sections and sympathizing organizations. For example, the agreement between IMT and LTF leaders to set aside their draft documents on Europe and begin an open discussion on this question should accelerate the same process in the sections.

I might add that I think this new international framework will lead to a dissolution of certain tendencies in national sections as well. The Belgian tendency, most of whose members support the LTF on international questions, has already dissolved, and I would be surprised if the supporters of the LTF in Britain don't dissolve the tendency in which they participate in the IMG.

There are other problems with the proposal of Comrades

Nemo, Mélan, and Sarah. One is the continual broadening of the platform of the LTF. As time goes by, new positions have to be added because new events occur, while all the old positions remain. If a new member of the British section wished to join the LTF today that comrade would have to read and agree with the equivalent of about four books of documents.

When the platform of a tendency or faction becomes that broad it means you no longer have an effective instrument to fight for your ideas. The reason for forming a tendency or faction is to put up a better fight for clarity around one or a few points and to be able to recruit people to the formation on the basis of those few, basic ideas. When more and more issues are added, including historical and theoretical issues, this begins to blunt the faction or tendency as a combat instrument and turn it into something else. We reject the path of continually adding issues or, even worse, of "redefining" ourselves in order to simply keep the same gang of people together.

I agree with Comrades Nemo, Mélan, and Sarah that there are still real differences on current questions—for example, on the "new mass vanguard" and propaganda around "dual power is a comin'," as the comrade from Sweden explained, and certainly electoral policy as it relates to the centrist, Social Democratic, and Stalinist parties and popular-front-type coalitions. But you comrades still must face up to the problem that arises from maintaining a tendency around all of these questions. And you must explain why these questions can't be worked out in a different framework from the old faction framework.

Perhaps we should make one self-criticism. When Comrade Mary-Alice Waters was drafting her analysis of the first European resolution in 1973, she wrote an additional section entitled "Dual Power Is A Comin'." It dealt with the resolution's unbalanced projection of propagandizing for soviet power. After some debate among ourselves, Mary-Alice grudgingly agreed to leave out this section, because the "dual power" theme of the resolution had not yet been applied in practice in Europe, and its exact meaning was thus somewhat ambiguous. We thought a debate on this question was premature and would detract from the main questions of minority violence and the "new mass vanguard." Now I wish she had left it in.

Propagandizing for "dual power" remains a problem. But the comrade from Sweden explained how it is being discussed and grappled with in a concrete way in his section—questions of how to intervene in the labor movement, how to press forward mass struggles, how to explain what a class-struggle strategy consists of. Agreement has not yet been reached on these questions, but why can't we put aside the international tendency forms if this kind of discussion can take place in the sections, country by country? Why can't it be dealt with in international draft resolutions without prior faction discussions?

Popular Frontism

In regard to popular frontism, it is important to be very clear on what the LTF did and did not say. The 1976 LTF statement expressed concern not over "adaptation to popular frontism," but over "errors made in election policy, such as adaptation towards popular frontism, confusion about the character of Stalinism. . . ." It is important to make this distinction. We do not think there are incipient popular frontists or Stalinists in the leadership of the

Fourth International. Nor do we think the French section is looking for a cabinet post in a popular-front government.

I said before that I agreed with what Comrade Robs said in his greetings to the SWP convention regarding the dangers of class collaborationism. I understand that an informal debate began out in the hallway over whether what Comrade Robs said to our convention represented the *real* views of the French leadership. As far as I am concerned, it is all to the good if there is a spectrum of views in the French section on this question. And it's good if Comrade Robs got in the spirit of things and said what he really thinks. That increases the likelihood that the discussion will be a free one with a genuine exchange of opinions.

It is an important error by the French comrades to call for a vote for the electoral lists of the Union of the Left on the second round—under whatever guise. And every time the error is repeated, it is worse. The latest version of voting for the Union of the Left list as long as it was not headed by a Left Radical was the worst yet. It is a breach of principle that miseducates cadres and makes them susceptible to popular frontism.

We also consider the "far left" or "revolutionary" electoral bloc to be an erroneous orientation that only serves to hamper the presentation of a clear class-struggle line on all questions.

This is why the LTF put great stress on this question of electoral policy. At the LTF Steering Committee meeting a year ago we dealt with the IMT mistakes in electoral policy in Italy, in Portugal, and in Mexico. Since then we saw the comrades in Belgium try to organize an absurd front with the Communist Party. We also saw the errors of the Spanish LCR with the FUT [Frente por la Unidad de los Trabajadores—Front for Workers Unity].

But we have to be clear on the real character of these errors. They are errors in electoral policy which if not corrected would open us up to popular-frontist errors.

I think the Mexican comrades, in their majority, now believe their election bloc with the Communist Party was an error, both for its class-collaborationist side, and also because it objectively covered up for the Stalinists.

The comrades of the LCR of Spain now have growing doubts about the correctness of the FUT, in view of the way it brought confusion to the slogan of the workers government, to our line on trade-union work, and other questions involving mass work.

I don't know if any of the Italian comrades have doubts now about their election policy a year ago, but I know there are non-LTF comrades on the United Secretariat and on the IEC who now have doubts about this line. And in regard to Portugal, there was never unanimity in the IMT on supporting the Carvalho campaign or on trying to justify that line. The IMT was publicly divided on that question.

This is the framework we face in discussing election policy, and it doesn't require the formation of a tendency.

The same is true of the differences over China. There certainly are differences. They exploded when Mao Tse-tung dropped dead. If you read the Trotskyist press following Mao's death you might have found it hard to believe that we were all in the same international; the range of positions covered the map.

The only way we will find out whether the differences on China are narrowing is to discuss the current, living ques-

tions—for example, the program for the political revolution in China. I think we will find fundamental agreement among a big majority of the international on the program of a political revolution to overthrow the privileged caste that rules China. I leave aside whether we can agree that that ruling stratum is a caste. We'll call it a caste; they can call it what they want; and we'll argue this question and its theoretical implications; but hopefully we can agree on the program to march together to overthrow it. This is one of the many questions that can be discussed publicly to the advantage of the image of the international.

What about the differences over Vietnam? We do have historical differences over the coming to power of a non-Trotskyist party in Vietnam and over evaluations of the strategy of that party. These are not unimportant questions, since lack of understanding of them can lead to the repetition of errors.

But what are the current political questions posed in Vietnam? Again, the current questions concern the program for deepening the social revolution and for the political revolution. And here I think majority agreement can be reached. I hope there will be majority agreement in the Fourth International at the next world congress on a program to help the working masses of Vietnam accomplish their proletarian tasks, consolidate their power, and solve the democratic problems, the land question, and so on.

The other questions—as important as they may be—are historical questions and should not be taken as the basis for tendencies. For example, I would like to put aside the question of our evaluation of the Paris accords, and concentrate on working out a program for what is to be done today in Vietnam and against whom. That is the question that should be uppermost in your mind if you are most concerned about winning the Vietnamese communist cadres that we need rather than simply debating with each other. We all write in our press what we think about these broader questions—there is no discipline on these kinds of questions.

New Questions Facing the Fourth International

The stakes are high in this discussion that we are beginning. But the stakes are not exactly the ones that Comrades Nemo, Mélan, and Sarah have presented. The stakes flow from the growing social crisis in the advanced capitalist countries and the growing interpenetration of the three sectors of the world revolution.

We are convinced from our common analysis that this crisis of capitalism, while it will have ups and downs, is a deepening crisis. It is a crisis that will directly pose to growing sectors of the industrial proletariat the question of their future.

We have begun to see an important phenomenon not only in southern Europe, but in northern Europe, North America, and in Japan. That is the growing interlocking of the questions of economic and political organization of the industrial proletariat itself with the social and political questions of the socialist revolution, in which the proletariat will have to take the lead.

This poses new tasks for many sections of the Fourth International. It poses the urgent need for further steps in the proletarianization of our movement. Our parties must move toward becoming parties that lead the proletariat in thinking socially and acting politically, as Trotsky put it.

This involves, among other things, the proletarianization of our parties in the direct sense of composition. It involves having the political capacity not only to act and move our comrades into industry, but more importantly to recruit members from the industrial working class to a party that fights for the right of self-determination for oppressed nations, for affirmative action for women and oppressed nationalities, against the war plans of the imperialists and their mad nuclear arms drive, or on whatever key issues arise in the class struggle.

This also means the need to proletarianize the leaderships of the sections of the Fourth International, as explained in Trotsky's *In Defense of Marxism* and Cannon's *The Struggle for a Proletarian Party*. This does not mean throwing the leaderships of the sections into the factories. It means professionalization and organization of the leaderships along lines that will enable them to lead masses in the gigantic battles that are coming. It means getting rid of all vestiges of bohemianism, all vestiges of the petty-bourgeois desire to be "a leader" in the sense of holding posts or gaining honors, and all vestiges of the worst petty-bourgeois trait of all—the *fear* of acting as a leader and of taking full leadership responsibility. It means consciously bringing into the leadership bodies industrial workers and members of oppressed nationalities and women.

Unless we are wrong in our common social and political analysis of what is happening in the world capitalist economy, these are the key tasks we face. They can only be worked out country by country, learning from the rich, concrete experiences of our parties. The correct lessons cannot be imposed or simply copied, although we can learn important things from our teachers on these questions.

Politics First

So where does this bring us in this debate? My disagreement with Comrades Nemo, Mélan, and Sarah is that I believe they are making a political blunder.

Why would it be a mistake for us to convert to a tendency? There is one overriding reason. If we maintained a tendency, no one in the world would believe we had dissolved our faction. We've been in a faction war for years and the IMT still calls itself a tendency. Many of them still don't know the difference between a tendency and a faction. We say they are a faction. If we claimed to have transformed ourselves from a faction to a tendency, many of them would simply laugh at us, because they would read it merely as the adoption of a deceptive name. An opportunity for the international as a whole to bust out of the faction framework would be lost.

If we're going to make a move, we should go all the way. We shouldn't get out on the end of the diving board and just stand there jumping up and down.

Just because we went step by step from a minority caucus, to a tendency, to a faction, doesn't mean that at this point we can begin moving back again taking each step in reverse order. If we're going to dissolve, we've got to do it completely and do it right.

There is a wonderful letter written by Trotsky to Rose Karsner in the fall of 1938 that is printed in the second edition of the *Writings of Leon Trotsky, 1937-38* (p. 448). Trotsky tells Rose how much he appreciated Jim's most recent trip to Europe. He says, "I regret very much that we don't have a couple of Jims more. At least one for Europe."

At least one! He was referring to Jim's capacities as a politician, a revolutionary politician who could grasp possibilities in a timely way and apply our program effectively in real life.

This is the problem with the proposal from Comrades Nemo, Mélan, and Sarah. What they say is not necessarily sectarian. They are not unprincipled. They are simply misreading the internal situation in the international. They don't see how to grasp the favorable possibilities that are opening before us and how to take an initiative that can move everything forward.

Making this move to dissolve the LTF is going to help the entire international break out of sectarian pressures and a factional framework. So instead of adding a paragraph to our platform, reaffirming our judgment last year of the unresolved errors and problems in the international, we should reject that course. It's much better to affirm the balance sheet, to affirm the LTF platform, to affirm the additional documents that are part of our program—and dissolve unconditionally.

And when we do so it must be all the way, informally as well as formally. Jim Cannon made this point in his 1953 speech, "Factional Struggle and Party Leadership" [James P. Cannon, *Speeches to the Party* (Pathfinder Press, 1973)], announcing the dissolution of the majority faction after the split with the Cochranites. That speech is must reading in the international today. Jim explained that once the specific struggle the faction was organized to wage was completed, it would be the worst possible mistake to continue it. He explained why we don't have any informal "veterans organizations" in our movement, why we don't have permanent clubs of those who led a particular internal fight in the past, having a special relationship for old time's sake because they think they are better than those who joined the faction late or were on the other side in a past dispute.

One of the last contributions of the LTF can be to educate the entire international on how to really dissolve a faction.

For the Immediate Dissolution of the Leninist Trotskyist Faction

By Barry Sheppard

[The following report was presented on August 16, 1977, to a meeting of the Leninist Trotskyist Faction Steering Committee, composed of the members of the International Executive Committee and Control Commission of the Fourth International adhering to the LTF. The general line of the report and summary was adopted by a vote of 17 for and 2 against. A consultative vote was taken among the LTF leaders formally replacing Steering Committee members, and leaders of organizations who joined the Fourth International after the 1974 world congress and thus are not members of the LTF Steering Committee. The consultative vote was 6 for and 1 against.]

Two years ago at the August 1975 meeting of the LTF Steering Committee, at the height of the sharpest political differences in the Fourth International over Portugal, the LTF proposed that the factional structures be dissolved. The motion was the following:

"2. The Leninist Trotskyist Faction seeks to subordinate organizational obstacles to this goal of achieving political clarity. The two factions in the international have existed for a number of years. Regardless of intentions, such a situation tends to breed combinationism and cliques. It tends to confine the discussion of key political questions within each faction rather than opening it to the international as a whole. From the viewpoint of the LTF, if there are guarantees for full, free and democratic discussion, there is no need for a factional structure; in fact, it tends to impede such discussion. While ideological tendencies are still called for because of the political differences, there would be no objective need to maintain the factions in order to have the necessary discussion. Therefore, the Leninist Trotskyist Faction proposes that both of the organized factions dissolve themselves." [See "The Portuguese Revolution and the New Problems That Face the Fourth International," International Internal Discussion Bulletin (IIDB), Vol. XII, No. 6, October 1975.]

Thus the process we are culminating at this meeting and, we hope, at the upcoming International Majority Tendency meeting was initiated by us two years ago.

The IMT, shortly after our Steering Committee meeting in 1975, rejected our proposal. It listed a series of unresolved organizational disputes: the Internationalist Tendency (IT) split from the SWP, the alleged refusal by the LTF to support common projects, the alleged functioning of *Intercontinental Press* as a public faction organ, the invitation by the SWP (USA) to the OCRFI to observe the open sessions of the 1975 SWP convention, and other alleged instances of LTF violations of democratic centralism.

"Only if and when the minority faction corrects these violations of the norms of democratic centralism within the FI can organizational tensions be reduced, can the debate really center around the serious differences that have arisen around the problem of the Portuguese revolution, and can concrete steps for the actual dissolution of factions and structured tendencies be undertaken in prac-

tice, without endangering the organizational integrity of the FI," the IMT statement asserted.

That was the justification they gave for maintaining the IMT and the faction framework of functioning in the international.

In November 1975 a motion was adopted by the majority of the United Secretariat on the question of *IP*. The motion suggested to the editor a series of proposals, which were implemented. It also promised that the Bureau of the United Secretariat would "regularly submit editorials and background articles presenting the official line of the F.I. . . ." to *IP*. However, that decision was not implemented by the majority and *IP* never received a single article.

Last August at our Steering Committee meeting we again proposed the dissolution of the factions.

Following that, more progress was made than the year before. First came the October 1976 agreements on organizing a democratic discussion leading up to the next world congress. Agreement was reached on sending a United Secretariat delegation to observe and bring greetings to the December convention of the OCI [Organisation Communiste Internationaliste—Internationalist Communist Organization] in France, and concrete proposals were agreed upon to open discussion with the OCRFI.

Over time, all the former members of the Internationalist Tendency of the SWP in the United States who would be members of the Fourth International were it not for reactionary legislation rejoined the SWP.

In December came the IMT "Self-Criticism on Latin America." It is clear that there is agreement among us on the assessment of the "Self-Criticism" made by Jack Barnes in the report adopted by the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party at its January 1977 meeting.

The report pointed out that the "Self-Criticism" begins correcting some of the specific errors that caused us to found the Leninist Trotskyist Tendency; the same errors that were at the origin of the factionalism in the Fourth International. Fundamentally, it begins reversing the disastrous turn of the 1969 world congress. Thus, the IMT "Self-Criticism" put our proposal for the common dissolution of both the IMT and the LTF on a new basis. In light of this, the SWP National Committee plenum pressed again for both factions to immediately dissolve.

The IMT's initial answer to this was its declaration adopted at the end of February 1977. This was edited and revised over a period of several months, so it wasn't published until recently. That declaration rejected the proposal to dissolve. Instead, it "redefined" the IMT on the basis of the declaration itself and several other documents, some of which are still to be written or amended substantially. The statement declared the IMT will "henceforth act as an ideological tendency." But the declaration also defines the IMT as a fighting formation to struggle against the alleged violations of democratic centralism and supposed political deterioration of the LTF. Such a

fighting formation is known in our movement as a *faction*.

The characterizations of the LTF positions are extremely sharp and imply that the LTF is a politically degenerate formation, which takes reformist positions on some questions and is worthless in any revolutionary upsurge. We systematically violate democratic centralism to boot; therefore the IMT must be kept to combat us.

The Definition of 'Redefining' a Tendency

We must understand what is involved by the IMT comrades "redefining" themselves. The IMT previously stood on certain documents; it now stands on entirely new documents. One of those new documents, the "Self-Criticism on Latin America," negates the IMT's previous line. It is the polar opposite of the line put forward in several of the IMT's previous documents. Using this method, a grouping could continually "redefine" itself by making self-criticisms, adding new documents and dropping others in order to keep the same gang together as a hardened formation.

Such permanent factionalism, if gone unchecked, would turn the international into a factional jungle, destroying its political authority, reducing its effectiveness, politically and organizationally, and increasing the danger of splits. It would inevitably deepen unprincipled combinationism as differences within the permanent faction, or gang, were subordinated to the overriding need to maintain the grouping come what may. This generates cultism as the formation throws up an arbiter to settle its internal differences and present a common front against those comrades it considers its factional enemies.

We have not made these warnings and explained the dangers of permanent factionalism to the comrades of the IMT to be insulting or to score factional points. We are trying to draw attention to an objective danger arising from the course projected in the IMT declaration.

Immediate, Unilateral Dissolution

So that's the situation we face at this meeting. The IMT will not lead on this. What should we do about it? To act as responsible leaders, not of a faction primarily, but of the international, it is clearly necessary that we act as if we were the majority by taking the first step and move to break the stalemate by unilaterally dissolving the LTF.

We began taking up the basis for unilateral dissolution under the discussion on Jack [Barnes]'s report yesterday and today. The LTT and the LTF were founded and maintained to reverse the line on Latin America adopted by the 1969 world congress and reaffirmed at the 1974 world congress. Unless the IMT reverses the positions outlined in its "Self-Criticism," and does something like reaffirm the documents on Bolivia, Argentina, and armed struggle adopted at the 1974 world congress (and if it did something like that we would have to say that the "Self-Criticism on Latin America" was the greatest political hoax ever perpetrated in the Fourth International) we have basically achieved the original goals of the LTT and the LTF.

Enough progress has been made so that we no longer need a tendency or faction to press this discussion. In fact, the opposite is the case. What is needed now for that discussion on Latin America to proceed and be further clarified is to get rid of the factional situation, get rid of

the separate faction meetings, and allow the actual majority on all aspects of this question to assert itself.

During the discussion on the balance sheet of the LTF, the comrade from Sweden pointed out that IMT members there were for reversing the line on Latin America back in 1972. We've heard that from other quarters in the IMT, some of whom have told us: "Why are you so surprised about the 'Self-Criticism'? That's been my position for four years."

That's a pertinent example of what happens in a factional situation. Such basic political differences were kept bottled up inside the IMT faction. Dissolving the factions will increase the possibilities that the majority of former members of both the IMT and the LTF can get together along with comrades who were in neither faction and finish the process off neatly and cleanly by rescinding the Latin American resolutions of both the 1969 and 1974 world congresses, and drafting new documents to lead the way forward.

The substantial political agreement on reversing the turn on Latin America made at the 1969 world congress justifies in and of itself the dissolution of the LTF.

We believe it is also adequate justification for dissolution of the IMT. We think the IMT comrades made a mistake in changing such a major plank in their platform, and then "redefining" themselves. What they did knowingly or unknowingly, to be precise, was to form a new faction, utilizing the old name. This is not a secret faction—its programmatic basis is spelled out clearly in its declaration. Though they call themselves an ideological tendency and not a faction, the IMT comrades spell out exactly how they're going to fight, how they're going to be organized, what questions they're going to have faction discipline on, which tactical questions their members are going to be subjected to "moral" pressure to vote on as a bloc, how they're going to line their people up beforehand, and so on. That's all spelled out in their declaration, no matter what they choose to call themselves.

But it's a *new* faction. They assumed that all the same comrades who once stood on the previous documents, including the position on Latin America which they now no longer hold, would automatically belong to this new faction. They simply proceeded on this assumption without first having a discussion in the leadership bodies of the international to see what response there would be to the fact that they changed their minds on the most decisive question in the nine-year controversy.

I know from talking with some IMT comrades, and you can tell from their declaration or from Comrade Barzman's contribution to the SWP Discussion Bulletin this year, that some of them are trying to minimize and downplay the importance of the differences on Latin America. According to this view, the faction struggle really began in 1972. And they claim that the other differences, not the guerrilla turn, were really the most significant ones. We reject that view. Comrades who subscribe to it have a hard time explaining what was happening between 1969 and 1972.

The differences on Latin America were extended to questions of strategy in other countries and first codified by the 1972 IMT European resolution. The IMT comrades attempted to apply this document all over the world. For example, the IT's political resolution for the SWP's 1973 convention was entitled, "The Building of a Revolutionary Party in Capitalist America," a direct parallel to even the title of the IMT European resolution.

These differences on strategy and tactics became sharpest in Portugal culminating in the titanic upsurge during 1975.

Exploring the Convergences

As outlined in Jack's report, we've noted a set of convergences between the two sides. We are not saying that we've yet achieved agreement, but we do see convergences that have to be explored to determine what differences remain and what new differences have emerged.

A specific case is the reinterpretation of the "new mass vanguard" in the recent IMT declaration. The declaration defines the "mass vanguard" as a "social phenomenon and not an assemblage of the so-called far left organizations." Should we treat this reinterpretation as if it is of no importance at all? That would be an error. The statement is combined with changes we can see in the practice of some sections led by IMT comrades. It's not just a change in the concept. It's also an explicit admission of what the IMT calls "vanguardist" errors committed by the comrades of the IMT, especially in Spain and France. And everyone knows that the IMT comrades have looked to the French LCR as the model of how to apply the "new mass vanguard" line.

We should view this evolution in light of a correction the IMT made in their "Self-Criticism" of an error they committed in relation to the vanguard forces that developed in Latin America under the impact of the Cuban revolution. That error was to tail-end forces that drew incorrect lessons from the Cuban experience. We should have fought against that political deviation among these vanguard forces, the IMT declaration says. It was a mistake in 1969 to believe that the vanguard could bypass the mass workers parties with the strategy of armed struggle.

If this same rethinking is applied to Europe, then some of the errors made in Europe—most damagingly in Portugal—can be corrected. The logic of the 1969 turn follows an opposite course. So we must now probe to see what the differences really are around the question of the "new mass vanguard."

I was also interested in the comments by Comrade Jacob indicating that the IMT comrades in Sweden have shifted their line in practice. He said that in 1972 in every strike the comrades would distribute leaflets explaining the "dual power" strategy. That didn't work too well. They've since made a correction, though it is not yet complete. They still think maybe this line will be applicable when the class struggle heats up in Sweden. Nevertheless, there is a change in their political practice today.

On other points that comrades have mentioned, we can see motion and convergence. For example, on women's liberation. We're not certain that there will be a document supported by a large majority. That's not what matters at this turning point. There is now serious discussion about all questions of theory, history, and political line. Areas of agreement and disagreement are being explored to delineate them more clearly. Many previous differences are being surmounted, and this discussion is helping everyone to clarify their ideas. The very fact that we're actually getting into serious discussion is an indication of political progress.

While we're considering points of convergence, we must also appraise the fusions that have taken place or are

about to be consummated in Canada, Mexico, Australia, and hopefully Spain. They are not just objectively important steps in themselves (they are the most positive things that have happened in the international for a long time), they also exhibit a dynamic reversing the course that led to the splits.

Before, in every country, IMTers or LTFers who were in a minority in their sections were in sharp disagreement with the line of their sections, and often this led to splits. Now, comrades from both the IMT and the LTF have been able to arrive at basic political agreement on what to do in several different countries. This is another factor to be taken into account. We must probe the meaning of this development on an international as well as national level.

From LTF to LTT?

What is our real choice? A majority of the international now agrees on the fundamental point on which the LTF was established, to reverse the turn taken on Latin America in 1969. Should we now establish a new tendency on the basis of the other political differences that developed in the course of this long struggle? I think that is basically the question we're discussing here. Some comrades say, yes, that's what we should do.

Comrades Nemo, Mélan, and Sarah propose that the faction be dissolved, but that a tendency be constituted on the basis of all the political documents of the LTT and the LTF. They don't propose to throw out any of the past documents of the LTT and LTF and substitute new documents. That is, they don't propose formally redefining the political basis of the tendency. But the whole framework on which the LTT and LTF were established has in reality been changed by the adoption and publication of the "Self-Criticism." The tendency the comrades propose would have a different axis and purpose than its predecessors.

The proposal to dissolve the LTF is not an attempt to cover up differences nor does it assume that the remaining differences have been resolved or necessarily will be resolved. That remains to be seen. It is a move designed to follow up in the most expeditious and resolute manner the situation opened up by the "Self-Criticism," by the fusions, and by the need to objectively explore the convergences we see in a number of countries and on a number of questions.

Before the May 1977 meeting of the United Secretariat we held a meeting of the LTF Coordinating Committee in which the majority of the Coordinating Committee decided to propose to the IMT comrades that we explore, through discussions in the leadership bodies of the international, the real extent of our differences on questions raised in the framework of a document on Europe. We do not rule out the possibility that clarification could result in a document supported by a large majority of the international.

The proposal to dissolve the LTF is not predicated upon any assumption that we are going to draft common documents on any of the points that are before the next world congress. That would be a trap. Suppose we can't agree on a document, what happens then? Do we have a big explosion, a re-forming of tendencies, and reconsolidation of factions? Not necessarily, because that is not what the dissolutions of the factions is based on.

The proposal made to the comrades of the IMT on the United Secretariat was to have objective discussions in the leadership bodies and explore, without previous factional

lineups, the differences and convergences. The best variant, of course, would be to arrive at documents supported by a large majority. If that is not possible, we would at least clarify the differences. We should not assume that differences would necessarily crystallize along the old faction lines.

What has happened since we made the proposal to discuss a Europe document? IMT comrades originally said: "Yes, let's do that." The IMT comrades then said that they were submitting amendments to the resolution on Europe for the next world congress, then announced they were going to discuss them *first* in the IMT. End of discussion.

This is an example of how the factional structures themselves get in the way of organizing the kind of discussion that is in order. We proposed an opposite course to continuing the discussions first in the IMT and the LTF and then bringing our respective resolutions into the leadership bodies.

Our proposal amounts to this: Take the IMT documents on Europe and put them behind us, take the amendments and put them behind us. Take LTF criticisms and drafts and put them behind us. Now let's get together in the leadership bodies for discussion. Let's discuss this conception of the "new mass vanguard." Let's discuss the CP-SP government slogan. Let's discuss election policy in France and Spain and the rise of popular-front formations such as the Union of the Left. Let's discuss all the other problems that have divided us. Let's discuss the adequacy of the "European" framework for resolving these questions.

Let's not jump to quick conclusions either. Let's take the necessary time to discuss matters fully, making sure we are not detoured into terminological debates, carry-overs from past discussions, or suspicions from past relations. That is, let's begin to have discussions in the leadership bodies without hard-and-fast lineups, without any prior assumption that we must have a common document or that we inevitably will not. In the process, we will see what the real differences are, what the real convergences are, and this will make it easier to reach agreements where possible.

We should treat all the points on the agenda of the next world congress like that. And we'd better review that agenda.

The proposal for the dissolution of the LTF is not predicated on agreement on any of the questions that arose in the course of the struggle other than reversing the 1969 world congress turn on Latin America. It is not a proposal to cover up differences. The last thing we're interested in is documents that are so general they can be interpreted as one likes. As always, our goal is political clarity.

After dissolving the factions, what will be the scope and depth of the remaining differences? Will they be of such character as to foster the formation of new tendencies before the next world congress? No one knows the answers to these questions today.

Will new tendencies be necessary if there are differences? We don't know, but we should recall the experience of the minority after 1969. We did not form a tendency for almost four years. Having very sharp differences does not necessarily mean it is wise to form a tendency, even if the formal grounds for doing so are present. Whether or not to do so is a question of political judgment as to what will best help achieve political clarity.

On this score we have a problem of different organiza-

tional practices among the sections. The practice of the French LCR with its virtually obligatory formation of tendencies before conventions and obligatory dissolution thereafter, for example, tends to force comrades who have differences they want to express to form a tendency, or make a bloc with others who want to form a tendency. If they do not, it is extremely difficult for them to get a fair hearing for their views. The pressure is to form a tendency automatically if you have a disagreement on line. That is the worst thing to do.

We have already seen new alignments of positions in leading bodies and we will see more. We have to start from that premise. If we want to maximize the possibilities of success at this new stage, we must assume that the differences, if any, will not be along the old lines.

Finally, not to dissolve the factions today when it is possible and correct to do so would be irresponsible in face of the fusions being carried out in several sections. It would be an obstacle to consolidating the fusions and an obstacle to the comrades who are trying to learn to work together.

Can the situation blow up even if we dissolve the factions? Of course. If the IMT utilizes—or rather abuses—its majority to try to settle all questions before there can be any real discussions, that would block continuation of this promising process. To have a democratic and authoritative world congress, where the differences have been clearly delineated and all sides know what they are, we must take whatever time is required to hold the necessary discussions. In that way the debate will be most fruitful and the Fourth International can go forward on the right track. The same is true with regard to the outstanding organizational problems. We must work on those organizational problems in a nonconfrontational, collaborative spirit.

But the fact that ill-considered or irresponsible actions *could* create new obstacles should not be permitted to stand in our way. Our action in dissolving the LTF will help establish a new framework in which hardened factionalists will find it more difficult to operate.

So the motion before you is to dissolve the Leninist Trotskyist Faction unilaterally and immediately.

Summary

There were a couple of small points raised by Comrade Mélan I will take up first.

On the question of the slogan of a CP-SP government in France, we have noted a convergence between us and some of the IMT comrades. Recently there was a discussion on this question in the United Secretariat, and although no vote was taken, I think a majority in the United Secretariat now supports raising that slogan. Following the elections early this year, a discussion of this slogan took place in the French LCR Central Committee. There was a divided vote on the question that did not follow IMT-LTF lines.

It's quite important that there be no misunderstanding on one point that was raised. In 1975 the LTF did not think that we and the IMT comrades were "on opposite sides of the barricades" in general in Portugal. The debate over Portugal was among revolutionists, among Trotskyists. It's true that at one point we would have been on opposite sides of some actual barricades set up by the Stalinists and the centrists, who were trying to prevent SP

workers from going to a rally called by their party. That was a serious danger, but we shouldn't generalize from that instance that we are politically in different class camps.

I want to give my opinion about some things going on in the Spanish Liga Comunista [Communist League]. Comrade Anna has already explained the leadership methods utilized by Roberto inside the LC, particularly his method of "characterizing" the political positions of any comrade who disagreed with him, rather than objectively discussing those differences on a political level.

Now, Roberto has developed explicitly anti-Trotskyist and anti-Leninist positions, throwing the LC into a severe crisis of leadership. The situation in the LC is quite bad—there are a few hundred comrades left out of an organization that at its high point had more than 1,000. Many are inactive. When we were in Spain during the election campaign we met many people who had left the LC, some, like Anna, fortunately going over to the LCR instead of withdrawing from the Fourth International. It is my opinion that many of the LC's past positions on Spanish politics were sectarian. I believe the same was true of certain positions of the LCR.

The position taken by a majority of the LC leadership before the recent elections reflected this sectarianism. They were for a boycott. A minority of comrades, including many of the LTF leaders, opposed the boycott. Following the elections, those who opposed boycott won a majority in the Central Committee. The task before the ex-LTF comrades in Spain will be to fight against that legacy of sectarianism, and the anti-Leninist political line and leadership methods of Comrade Roberto. The central immediate job is to win as many people in the LC as possible to the perspective of rapidly fusing with the LCR.

In discussions with the LC leadership, I have told them that it is my opinion, and the opinion of the SWP leadership in general, that if only a minority opts for fusion, that minority should fuse. Out of the leadership crisis that is strangling the LC, a leadership must emerge to steer the organization away from sectarianism. An essential aspect of doing that is effecting the fusion. A question of this political magnitude cannot be viewed from the purely formal framework of the "democratic centralism" of the LC. Our framework must be the Fourth International, of which both the LC and LCR are a part. Many very valuable cadres are going to be lost if the LTF comrades do not wage a determined struggle to the end against Roberto's course and fuse! Most importantly, the FI desperately needs the LC cadres in the fused organization to help integrate and lead the thousands of new members coming to the international in Spain.

Comrade Mélan raised the question, Does the LTF still stand on its past positions? Yes. We stand on all of our platform documents and the additional ones mentioned in the balance sheet report. Have we reached agreement with the IMT on all questions, or the majority of them, or any of them? None of us said that we have. All we have said is that we've made fundamental progress on the main issue on which the LTF was founded: the turn on Latin America at the 1969 world congress. We've said that other differences still remain. There is evidence of convergence, but we don't know at this point the extent of the convergence.

This brings us to the point raised by Comrade Sarah about the nature of the remaining differences. We agree that differences have not disappeared and that we must

have political clarity. Our disagreement revolves around how to achieve it. How do you best arrive at political clarity in the new situation? Through a tendency? Through a faction? In this case it is better to have neither. The concrete situation should determine which is the best way to get political clarity.

In the situation opened up by the "Self-Criticism on Latin America" and other convergences that we see, especially the fusions, we must create a new, nonfactional framework in order to prepare for the next world congress. The best way to achieve clarity under the current circumstances is to dissolve the factions.

Comrade Sarah raised a question about the document on Europe the IMT has submitted to the world congress discussion. It has been agreed to put this document behind us and initiate new discussions with the comrades of the former IMT if it is dissolved. We hope that these will result in greater clarity.

There is more involved than literary redefinition in what the IMT declaration said about the "new mass vanguard." Mary-Alice's original criticism of the European resolution adopted at the 1974 world congress recognized that the IMT comrades were attempting to grapple with an important phenomenon—the existence of a social layer of radicalizing students and increasing numbers of young workers. We said that the IMT confused this social layer and the ultraleft, Maoist, and centrist groups of the "far left." It projected a strategy of attempting to coalesce the "far left" groups and their followers by organizing campaigns that politically adapt to the Maoists and centrists and thereby outflank the traditional organizations. For example, this was the line followed in respect to the FUR (Front for Revolutionary Unity) in Portugal. Although they criticized the FUR, including its platform, they refused to say that the FUR itself was an obstacle to building a revolutionary party, a Trotskyist party rooted in the struggles of the working masses.

To the "far left" schema of the European resolution, we said no. You must start from the objective needs of the masses and their level of consciousness. Then you try to win over the most radicalized forces and groupings that you can work with to correct positions and to the revolutionary party.

The IMT comrades in their declaration now say that "the emergence of a mass vanguard is a *social* phenomenon and not an assemblage of the so-called far left organizations." They project the need to wage a "constant political and ideological battle against the confusionism and political deviations of the ultraleftist and centrist formations, combined with a policy of united front. . ." toward the Social Democrats and Stalinists. Thus, they have taken important steps away from the notion that they are going to put together components of the "far left" into an "adequate instrument" to "outflank" the mass workers organizations.

Comrade Mélan asserts that tendencies are needed in the different sections in Europe and assumes that if each of these separate tendencies faces the same problems, they should retain an international tendency. I think we have had enough discussion here to see that it is not necessarily true that LTF supporters will retain tendencies in their sections on national questions. The situation in each section is different. The discussion today revealed more convergences in more sections than I knew about.

If you presume that tendencies will be necessary in each

section, then you should conclude that the comrades of the LTF in Belgium were wrong to dissolve their tendency in the Belgian section on Belgian questions. They came to the conclusion that they didn't need it, that they had achieved sufficient political agreement on what to do in Belgium. Either they have made a blunder or they have reached correct conclusions about those agreements. Knowing the capacities of the LTF comrades there, I assume they have assessed the situation correctly.

In past years we had another difference with Comrade Mélan, with Comrade Roberto when he was in the LTF, and other comrades on how to "characterize" the IMT. Politically the difference came down to whether or not the 1969 world congress turn was the essential issue we were fighting on. That was a debate we had in the LTF for three years, as comrades will remember. Obviously, if you hold that the 1969 turn was not the key, you will not consider the rethinking in the "Self-Criticism" as a very important change. Ironically, your view would more or less correspond to that of the IMT comrades, who from the opposite standpoint, are annoyed that we keep coming back to the turn of the 1969 world congress.

But that is the basis the LTT and LTF were founded on—to correct a specific turn in Latin America that diverged from the method of the Transitional Program and the Leninist strategy of party building. This debate was occurring outside the international as well, and was linked with it. The Guevaraists proposed a different strategy from building a Leninist party. They subordinated program to the strategy of picking up the gun. That was their dividing line between a genuine revolutionist and one who isn't. Their guerrilla strategy, they thought, would be able to win militants in Latin American Stalinist parties over to their side. It would enable the revolutionists to bypass, maybe "outflank," the Stalinist organizations. The moral example of courageous confrontation with the class enemy, they held, would be so great that the reformists would not be able to stand against it.

We said that the IMT had made an adaptation to that view. They did not adopt the entire Guevaraist program and outlook, but they accommodated themselves to it. What has happened since?

Let's look at some of the corrections the IMT made in its "Self-Criticism." The "Self-Criticism" says that it was a wrong method to deduce immediate political tactics for each of the countries on a whole continent on the basis of an analysis of the general economic and social features.

It says the 1969 document on Latin America had incorrectly analyzed the Cuban revolution by erroneously assuming that guerrilla warfare was decisive to its victory. The mass mobilizations of the working class had proved decisive.

They say that the notion that a few courageous revolutionists can by their example in action set in motion a process leading to the socialist revolution was false.

They say that they underestimated the weight and role that the Latin American Communist parties would continue to have. And because of that, they underestimated the importance of the political and ideological battle against the Stalinists.

They say that they did not take into account the real size of our own forces and their political capacities before deciding upon this strategy. They did not understand the real relationship of forces between reformists and revolutionists in the mass organizations like the trade unions.

They say that the vanguard cannot modify this relationship of forces by carrying out a series of exemplary actions.

Another important point made in the "Self-Criticism" is that they had adopted a strategy that was foreign to the very existence and needs of the working class.

They say their strategy picked out one element in a general revolutionary strategy, armed struggle, and substituted that for the whole of our revolutionary strategy, for the entire Transitional Program. There was an underestimation of urban mobilizations, that is, of the role of the proletariat and its organizations. Therefore they weren't politically prepared for the democratic openings in Bolivia, Argentina, and Chile and missed excellent opportunities for building the Fourth International in those countries.

And, finally, they say that the articles criticizing the turn of the 1969 world congress by Comrade Hansen, which were centered on the need for a Leninist strategy of party building, were correct. They say their orientation isolated them from the organized workers movement, making it more difficult to recruit proletarian cadres.

Look at the totality of those statements and then consider their implications. Do you think the IMT comrades, having demonstrated their capacity to make these corrections, will confine their critical observations to the single continent of Latin America? Don't these points apply even more to North America and Europe? Aren't the IMT comrades politically astute enough to notice the obvious implications?

Suppose we found agreement that these points could be applied generally? This is not far-fetched, as shown now by the agreement on them for Latin America. And I'm sure there will be agreement with IMT comrades that we don't want to make the same kinds of errors elsewhere that were made in Latin America. They say that a small vanguard organization cannot by example alone change the class relationship of forces. If that is true in Latin America, isn't it true for Europe?

When we say there is a relationship between what was done in Latin America and errors we saw in Europe, that's not a mystical linkage. We are dealing with some of the same questions in a different form.

In the "Self-Criticism" the IMT is coming to grips with the difference between a proletarian strategy and a petty-bourgeois strategy. Won't that help pave the way for a fraternal discussion of the need to further proletarianize the Fourth International? Of the need to build proletarian parties and what steps we can take now toward that objective? Of the need to recruit and train worker-Bolsheviks, that is, professional revolutionists who are part of their class and take the political campaigns of the party into their class? And of the need to adopt proletarian methods of organizational functioning and to move away from petty-bourgeois dilettantism in the functioning of the Fourth International and its sections, toward proletarian professionalism?

On the necessity for consensus functioning in the international following the dissolution of the factions: We shouldn't get entangled in abstract formulas. What it means in practice is simple. In the first place we always try, if possible, to reach agreements in a democratic-centralist organization by consensus. That is part of building a team leadership in the normal functioning of the international and its national sections.

One leader of the IMT recently told me that he thought democratic centralism could be defined as "organized distrust." That opinion reflected a specific state of affairs in this comrade's section, not primarily having to do with relations between IMT and LTF comrades, but with relations inside the IMT. It is true that democratic centralism sets up rules for how minorities and majorities should relate to each other. But that is not the heart of democratic centralism by a long shot. Democratic centralism comprises the whole way in which democracy and centralism are interrelated in a Leninist party, including how the leadership is built and functions, and the relationship between leadership bodies at all levels and the membership. It is not a set of rules on what to do with a minority or a majority. It is how we function all the time. Essential to that normal functioning are our attempts to reach agreements on secondary questions through consensus.

What we are saying is that we have to bend the stick in the direction of seeking consensus now in the international. Let's handle the problems that we still face in a nonconfrontationist way. If we can't solve them right away, let's not ram through a majority vote. That could lead to further blowups. Let's take our time and try to work them out together. The mode of conduct is nonconfrontationism and collaboration.

I want to address the LTF comrades who are opposed to the move we are making here. You propose that the LTF drop down a notch to an LTT and maintain a tendency. The majority here disagrees, and after the majority votes this afternoon there will be no LTF and no LTT.

The question will then be raised: Will you form a tendency along the lines of your proposal? That would be a new tendency. In the first place, its composition would be different. In the second place, its axis would be different. A majority of comrades of the LTF and IMT disagrees with the framework that you propose for the next stage of the debate. If you rush to form a new tendency before the process proposed by the LTF majority leads to clarification, you run the risk of going off on a tangent. That is, by immediately organizing your own discussion, separate and apart from the general discussion in the leadership bodies, you would weaken yourselves politically and be more likely to fall into error.

Even though you don't think this is the correct framework, we hope you will decide to participate with all of us in the coming discussions. Comrades Mélan and Nemo are

part of the IEC and would be able to participate in this discussion in the United Secretariat directly. If you immediately form a tendency with a European resolution of your own, you would place yourselves outside that process.

This nonfactional discussion that is opening up must also include the leaderships of sections. It won't be just the United Secretariat or the IEC members who participate in this discussion. It must include comrades like Sarah and Matti and Anna, who are part of the leaderships of their sections.

Finally, to return to the question of the political reasons for the dissolution of the LTF.

Jack explained that in order for the dissolution of the LTF to be effective, it's got to be done all the way. You can't do it halfway, and convince the international that we've gone all the way.

Comrade Sarah replied that the IMT comrades won't believe us anyway, even if we dissolve entirely. That's not true. That's not true especially in the light of this meeting, which IMT comrades are observing. That accomplished the same thing as our observing their meeting will. Because this is not a meeting in which people have covered up what they think; they have spoken their minds without concealment. The dissolution is going to be real and the IMT comrades know it. But we have to carry it through all the way to make the point completely clear.

That is one side of the matter. What about the IMT side? Comrades, we have to help lead the IMT as well as the LTF. That is the fact. Experience has shown that the comrades of the IMT don't know the difference between a faction and a tendency. Their declaration is a declaration of a faction but they call it the declaration of a tendency and sincerely believe that. I don't think it is possible for them to move from a faction to a tendency.

We unsuccessfully tried a while ago to bring about the mutual dissolution of the factions. The hitch was—and is—that this perspective holds us hostage to those in the IMT who are resisting the dissolution. We could dance around with the IMT arguing about mutual dissolution for quite some time. Our unilateral dissolution breaks out of this framework.

In effect, we are making a bloc with those in the IMT who want to dissolve the factions without delay and move toward a period of collaboration. By making this political move we make it much easier for the IMT to follow suit.

New York, N.Y. 10014
August 22, 1977

To Members of the Leninist Trotskyist Faction

Dear Comrades,

At a three-day meeting August 15-17, 1977, the Steering Committee of the Leninist Trotskyist Faction discussed the present situation in the Fourth International and in the organizations in sympathy with its program and revolutionary-socialist objectives. By a vote of seventeen for and two opposed it was decided to dissolve the faction forthwith. While this step was unilateral, the hope was expressed that the International Majority Tendency will take similar action in the near future.

Representatives of the IMT were invited to attend the sessions as observers. They were thereby able to follow for themselves the debate in the Steering Committee over the advisability or inadvisability of dissolving the faction. At the urging of the pan-Canadian leadership, and in agreement with the representatives of the United Secretariat and French LCR, two representatives of the OCRFI, one from Canada, the other from France, were also invited to attend as observers. Unfortunately, previous engagements prevented them from taking advantage of the opportunity.

A balance sheet of the contributions made to our world movement since 1969 by the LTF members was presented by Jack Barnes. This was adopted and is scheduled to appear in the next issue of the International Internal Discussion Bulletin.

On the specific question of dissolving the LTF, Barry Sheppard made a report, explaining the motivation. His report and his summary of the discussion were adopted. They, too, are scheduled to appear in the next issue of the International Internal Discussion Bulletin.

The reasoning of the majority of the Steering Committee was, in broad outline, as follows:

1. The faction was formed when it became clear that the majority leadership of the Fourth International was defaulting in its responsibility of recognizing the disastrous

consequences, particularly in Latin America, of the turn toward the guerrilla war strategy made at the 1969 world congress, and of rectifying this course.

2. When the IMT in December 1976 presented its criticism of the turn as applied in Latin America, entitled "Self-Criticism on Latin America," this removed the main political basis for factional formations in the Fourth International. While vestiges of the old course remain in the form of resolutions passed at the 1974 congress, there is good reason to believe that these can be rescinded.

3. Other differences stemming from the turn in 1969 arose. Some of these remain to be resolved. However, this task of clarification has been hampered to an undue degree by the factional atmosphere engendered by the dispute over the course in Latin America and its consequences. Thus the overall interests of the Fourth International require the elimination of this atmosphere and its replacement by an atmosphere of comradely collaboration at all levels.

4. The feasibility of a vigorous effort along this line has already been demonstrated on a national level in various countries, an outstanding instance being the fusion this month of the factions in Canada that had split publicly. Fostering this trend is a certain convergence of positions on various important issues.

5. If the factional atmosphere can be eliminated, the Fourth International will gain fresh attractiveness, having demonstrated its capacity to maintain a vigorous internal life, including the formation of factions, without ending up in a major split.

* * *

The Leninist Trotskyist Faction has now been dissolved. If any of you have further questions on any details relating to the dissolution, please write. However, this should be done immediately, as we plan to close our office within the next few weeks.

Comradely yours,
Gus Horowitz