

International Internal Discussion Bulletin

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Notes on the "Draft Theses on the Tactics of the Fourth International in Capitalist Europe"

International Commission, International Communist League, Dutch Section of the Fourth International

June 5, 1977

The general points of departure and the line of the conclusions for the countries of Southern Europe contained in the Draft Theses [See IIDB, Vol. XIII, No. 3 in November, 1976] are not likely to provoke much discussion within the international. The real discussion will have to concentrate on shortcomings of the text in answering the following questions, key questions to our European sections:

1. In which way, in Southern Europe, are revolutionary possibilities, through the building of revolutionary mass parties and a correct united front tactic going to be transformed into revolutionary reality?

2. In which way could the international take advantage of the objective dialectics between different sectors of capitalist Europe, in the North as well as in the South, both to prevent a negative impact of capitalist stability in the North in the developments in the South, and to make a positive outcome last?

The transformation of the workers movement that is becoming possible in the present period of crisis will have to be taken advantage of in order to take decisive steps in building revolutionary mass parties.

Are the tendencies of development outlined in the Draft Theses in itself sufficient, or most essential to realize that perspective? That is precisely what we have our doubts about. It would be somewhat easy to engage in referring to over- or under-estimating positive and negative developments. We will, however, try to argue that an impeding objectivist logic exists which keeps the Theses from being a sufficient guide for the action of our sections. This has its influence on the section on Southern Europe, as well as on those on Northern and Central Europe and the interaction between them.

In this contribution we want to enter into discussing the section on tactics in Northern and Central Europe, and we shall show by the example of Portugal what in our opinion are the shortcomings as to the action of the international in bringing about the positive interaction mentioned above.

Not or Not Yet Revolutionary?

Tactical problems in the countries that are not on the threshold of a prerevolutionary situation can only be defined adequately if we realize why it is these countries are not (yet) on the threshold. The use of the words "not yet" makes one suspect that an insight into that question is being troubled by a unilinear vision of development. The classification into two categories of countries should rather be replaced in the entire text by the clear qualitative distinction: countries that are on the threshold of a

prerevolutionary situation and countries that are not. Neither the word "already" in the first, nor the words "not yet" in the second case are enlightening. About this twofold division there exists "a broad consensus in the Fourth International" as well as about the "probable synchronisation of the revolutionary crises"—and let us be very clear: of the *revolutionary crisis* and not of the period leading up to it in all of its phases—and probably this consensus also exists as to the impotence of imperialism in the nearby future to avail itself of its more stable base in Northern and Central Europe as a sally base for a *direct* intervention in Southern Europe.

But are we to conclude from this consensus that in Northern and Central Europe we have "not yet" entered a prerevolutionary phase? We think in this case the formula "not yet" reverses the political burden of proof. The point at issue is: non-revolutionary situations. No formula of Trotsky's can change anything about that. It would rather be necessary to study the precise conditions under which rapid changes *will* and again under which they *will not* be possible in Northern and Central Europe. The second half of Trotsky's formula for that matter, is not being used: the situation in Southern Europe may also turn very rapidly into a counterrevolutionary one. To decide that we also have to analyze precise situations for each country.

What is the key problem in this further analysis? In one word, what is at issue is the new mass vanguard or broad vanguard. All possibilities to change the relationship of forces within the labor movement during a revolutionary situation in Southern Europe depend on the chances that exist for the revolutionary nuclei—of which the sections of the international are everywhere the politico-programmatically, in some cases also the politico-organizationally most important components—finding their base in the workers having already broken with reformism, to tie up with itself the vital cadres of the class both in practice and in political consciousness and in the confrontation with the bourgeois state to transform them into a decisive social force.

Qualitative distinction between Northern and Central Europe on the one hand and Southern Europe on the other hand narrows down to a qualitative distinction between the respective developments of the broad vanguard. In Northern and Central Europe the *later* development of a *more limited* workers struggle, to a *larger extent* under control of the reformist bureaucracies has prevented the transformation of the broad vanguard into a basically proletarian vanguard. In Southern Europe this process *has* come underway, leading to a vanguard with a socially changed composition.

This does not deny the value of the concept "broad

vanguard". Quite to the contrary it makes clear that the concept is instrumentally of great importance to understand the difference in situations in Northern and Central Europe and Southern Europe. But to use it *now* indistinctively for both Southern and Northern and Central Europe is failing to appreciate the qualitative distinction between both parts of Europe. In a whole series of formulations in chapter II of the Draft Theses this distinction is not made clear.

How is it that a text, correct, for that matter, in its broad outlines a text also we agree with as far as the tactical notes are concerned—for the remarks in chapter II are not much more than that—how is it that this text contains this sort of mistakes?

In our opinion we can speak of a tendency toward objectivist explanations, in which insufficient account has been taken of the differences in history and culture, and the differences in structure originating therefrom, of the labor movement in the different countries of Europe. This is where the weaknesses of any document that does not wish to deal explicitly with a more general economic and social analysis are most obvious. The analysis of the European Perspectives Document of the Tenth World Congress may have turned out correct in its broad outline; the development of the broad vanguard; the possible disintegration of the same; the influence of capitalism's socio-economic reserves in Northern and Central Europe, especially in the German Federal Republic; the nature of social-democratic hegemony in most of these countries; the restrictions to the political development of vanguard elements of the class that are being posed by their operating largely or exclusively through the unions ever since the decline or disappearance of Social Democracy as an organizing factor in the working class; all this is not being discussed in it. That makes the Draft Theses insensitive to the real question: to examine exactly *how* "a turn in the social conjuncture resulting from a turn in the economic conjuncture" in the countries of Northern and Central Europe "may play a decisive role" (page 17, first column). We know that a detailed definition of this "how" is in the first place a matter of national tactics. But the remarks in the paragraph are totally insufficient: developing international solidarity in the workers struggles can by no means be the sheer goodwill of the revolutionaries be turned into a lever against the dissimultaneousness of developments. No, they have to link themselves up with the layer of vanguard workers in the factories and the unions who have broken with reformism. As long as that layer hardly exists in most countries of Northern and Central Europe, international solidarity work is not a decisive lever in the struggle against the opportunities the bourgeoisie has to use the dissimultaneousness to its own advantage of buying off or seriously impeding a development of important struggles in Northern and Central Europe.

These objectivist weaknesses of the Draft Theses come home to roost again at two more important points (we shall not discuss here the necessary rephrasing, in the line of the remarks made so far, of a large number of smaller passages, from which the "not yet" spirit should be banished).

The common features of the countries of Northern and Central Europe are described without the necessary mediations, as a result of which wrong, because incomplete,

conclusions are drawn. In paragraph 14 this affects point (b) and especially point (d). The existence of a qualitatively broader group of workers whose critical attitudes toward the leadership of the CPs, Social Democracy and the trade-union bureaucracies are more pronounced (more pronounced than what?—than before 1968? Or than those of most workers? And how much more pronounced? Qualitatively more pronounced? Or does this "qualitatively" only apply to the number?) increases the availability of groups of workers for actions that escape temporarily and partially the control of the traditional apparatuses; but for such exemplary actions as are born by these groups in point (c) to be realized, in the first place, and in the second to have them strike a responsive chord among broader layers as in point (d), more is needed than the aggravation of the structural crisis of international capitalism. As a matter of fact, experience shows that, where such exemplary struggles come to the fore, the want of a broad workers vanguard and the weak and marginal implantation in the class of the revolutionary organizations that goes side by side with it, to a great extent enlarges the possibilities of integration of this struggle and of having it brought back under control by the bureaucracy, particularly by the left sections of the union bureaucracy. Especially the detonating role of the exemplary actions is subject to certain preconditions: that possibility exists only under the precondition that there is a general change of political climate and important layers within and under the influence of traditional workers parties start to turn away from the practice of class collaboration. In other words, the dynamics of the development of critical layers, particularly in the unions, has to coincide with the dynamics of the general social and political situation. This qualifies the importance of orienting our sections in their workers activities toward exemplary action: an "exemplary" orientation of the section without simultaneous attention to all developments within the bosom of the union movement, and where necessary of Social Democracy and the CPs, attention which may be summarized in the formula: enlarging and politically strengthening the critical layers, might turn into a disaster for the sections; the example would remain isolated and/or important developments elsewhere would be disregarded.

Nature and extent of those developments, for that matter, constitute the second point of criticism. The possibilities of deep divisions developing within the apparatuses of Social Democracy and the CPs do not by themselves lead to these divisions. And if these divisions appear it is still a question whether or not this is going to set bounds to "the freedom of maneuver of the bureaucratic apparatuses which would make possible a dialectic of 'unity/outflanking'." The very appearance of divisions, particularly between a Social Democracy in government and the left wing of a union bureaucracy makes the development of separate centrist tendencies within Social Democracy less probable. As a result of this, the dialectic involved might be one between three components: 1) the greater part of the Social Democratic apparatus; 2) the majority of the union bureaucracy; 3) a collection of still marginally implanted revolutionaries and combative union militants. We agree with the opinion that the inclination toward preventing a definitive rupture with the Social Democratic leadership weighs heavily for the union bureaucracy, and that as a result of this the room for the

revolutionaries to move within the unions becomes qualitatively larger than in the period before 1968. But this is something quite different from a dialectic of "unity/outflanking" the Spanish, French, or Portuguese way. Formulas like that put the sections before a double trap: either an overestimation of the possibilities of outflanking together with important parts of the class, the bureaucracy on the left—which may lead to an isolation from the majority of the working class of the revolutionaries and the vanguard elements within the class that are sparsely developing (in the best case an isolation of these two together, in the worst also of the revolutionaries from these vanguard elements); or an overestimation of the political dynamics of unity and, as a result, a policy of concessions that will make a differentiation from the left bureaucrats either impossible or very difficult and abstract.

How did International Solidarity Work Up Till Now? The Example of Portugal

First, we shall have to analyze more precisely in which way the influence of the maturing crisis in Southern Europe will manifest itself in Northern and Central Europe, and what impact again this will have on the development of the workers movement and the vanguard. So, what concerns us are questions like: what will be the influence of Southern European developments? On what layers of the workers movement and the youth will this influence be operative, and in what way? What will be its relation to the radicalization on the grounds of the fight against the attempts to make the workers pay for the crisis, etc.? Not whether this influence will be great, but: how it will develop, is the central question.

On the basis of the past period we can draw two important conclusions in relation to these problems. The first one is that the progress of the European revolution does not imply a reproduction of the Southern European vanguard in the North (compare what has been explained above). The second, that programmatic-political and organizational efforts will have to be made on a European scale in order to work out an optimal policy. The deficient assimilation of the development of the Portuguese revolution in 1974-1975 in the policy of the Fourth International all over Western Europe is a sad illustration of the case. We shall have to make up a critical balance sheet of the lack of a political campaign of support of the Portuguese revolution, borne by the entire international and particularly its Western European sections. It is a serious short-

coming of the IMT declaration that it, in making up something of a balance sheet, never says a word about this matter. Of course the Portuguese developments have been followed systematically and regularly by articles and comments in *Inprecor*, and the European sections have taken suitable initiatives. But a centralized European campaign of support and solidarity with the Portuguese workers, farmers and soldiers against the interference of the international bourgeoisie, the blackmail policy of credits, etc., would have enlarged these efforts substantially and would have shown to broad sectors of the European vanguard and working class the necessity and possibility of effective international action. The simultaneous hammering at all the essentials of revolution: the enlarging, coordinating and centralizing of the organs of self-organization of the working class, the farmers, soldiers and tenants; the extension of these organs to organs of dual power in opposition to the bourgeois state apparatus; the necessity of arming the proletariat; all these lessons of the Portuguese revolution could have been brought to the fore with more power and effectivity.

A campaign like that might also have increased our own credibility as an international tendency in the eyes of the vanguard and parts of the working class. An integral part of such a campaign should have been the support to the building of the section in Portugal. It is a whimsical play of history that the most important revolutionary upturn since 1968-1969 and the most developed prerevolutionary situation since the Spanish Revolution, during a period of very rapid growth of our movement, particularly in Western Europe, should take place in a country with a very weak Trotskyist movement. Of course, we agree that neither support from the international center, as there has been, nor an international campaign can bring improvement when it comes to the essential weaknesses of a national organization. But political and organizational-material support could have made, for example, an important contribution to the building of a revolutionary Marxist press, that was next to absent in a very important phase of the Portuguese revolution. An integrated international campaign like that would have meant a strengthening of the Portuguese revolution and at the same time an important preparation for the tasks ahead for the sections in the rest of Europe—not in the last place for those in Northern and Central Europe. The absolute necessity of setting up a European Bureau is once again underlined by these developments.

David, Gerard, Karel, Pieter

The Coming Revolution in Europe Contribution to the Discussion Preparatory to the Eleventh World Congress

By Letourneau, Nemo, Seldjouk, and Ulysse

Foreword

This document is a *contribution* to the international discussion preparatory to the Eleventh World Congress submitted by Comrades Letourneau, Nemo, Seldjouk and Ulysse, members of the Central Committee of the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire of France, who on the international level were members of the Leninist Trotskyist Faction before its dissolution.

The majority "European document" of the Tenth World Congress, the criticism of it by Comrade Mary-Alice Waters and the correspondence between the Ligue Communiste and the SWP in 1973 concerning the Union of the Left, marked the first stage of a contradictory debate on the orientation of the Fourth International in Europe. This debate was part of the discussion over differences between the majority and minority of the international following the Latin American turn of the Ninth World Congress. The development of the class struggle now makes it possible to resume the discussion on the basis of a balance sheet of the application of the majority orientation as expressed in the "European document." The main elements in the balance sheet are the French experience and above all the decisive test of the Portuguese revolution.

As the discussion for the Eleventh World Congress has begun, a certain number of recent documents, (balance sheets of the IMT and LTF on Portugal for the 1976 International Executive Committee, statements of the LTF in August 1976, the IMT statement of June 1977 and the second "European document," indicate that the important change in terms of the international discussion marked by the IMT "Self-Criticism on Latin America" leaves in place the fundamental differences on the Portugal balance sheet and the European orientation. These differences were

correctly characterized by the LTF in August 1976 when it said that the problem was to correct "... the error of orienting to the 'new mass vanguard,' including errors made in election policy, such as adaptation towards popular frontism, confusion about the character of Stalinism, and errors in mass work. . ."

The aim of the discussion for the Eleventh World Congress is precisely to attempt to leave these political differences behind in order to reinforce the unity of the international and to arm it with an orientation enabling it to respond correctly to the major events which are to come in the class struggle, particularly in Europe. An orientation resolution—or if necessary several resolutions—on building the international in Europe, can only be drafted *following* this process, taking into account the contributions of all the national sections and the terms of the political discussion resulting. The aim of this document is to present, in terms of affirmative propositions, what its authors consider at the beginning of the discussion to be the main lessons of the recent discussions in light of the positions defended by the LTF at the Tenth World Congress and in face of the Portuguese revolution and the discussion in the French section.

Considering the subjective limitations that marked its drafting, this document presents obvious *insufficiencies* in the concrete analysis of certain national situations or certain aspects of the activity of the international. In addition, the framework of the debate fixed by the documents previously published has been limited to the capitalist part of Europe only. The authors of this contribution think that the best way to put forward an orientation taking account of the deepgoing unity of the struggle of the European proletariat, as well as the specific characteristics proper to the social and political revolution in the

two parts of Europe, is to begin from an analysis of the tendencies of the class struggle in the whole of Europe and in the perspective of a Socialist United States for all of Europe. This discussion on Europe should therefore include a specific orientation for the construction of Trotskyist nuclei in the bureaucratized workers states of Eastern Europe.

Only the leadership of the international as a whole, however, has the means necessary to launch the discussion on this latter question.

I. PROGRESS OF THE EUROPEAN REVOLUTION

A. From Crisis to Crisis

1. The Division of Europe, the Unity of the European Revolution

The imperialist countries of Europe came out of the Second World War economically and politically devastated. The formidable revolutionary mass movement could be contained only through the joint intervention of American imperialism and the bureaucracy, whose counterrevolutionary alliance was sealed at Yalta and Potsdam.

The United States, now forced to take responsibility for the survival of the whole imperialist system, provided vitally important military, political and financial aid in order to restore the capitalist economy in the conquered countries, and to rebuild viable bourgeois states. Though the old dictatorships were kept for this purpose in Spain and Portugal, parliamentary-type regimes had to be restored in most countries after the defeat of different authoritarian experiments (especially De Gaulle). In most countries, the Stalinist and Social Democratic working-class parties participated actively in class-collaborationist schemes entrusted with the political and economic "reconstruction"; nonetheless, in a good many cases, the subjection of the working class had to be paid for with concessions (Social Security, for example) that are important victories for the working class within the limits of the capitalist order.

In Eastern Europe, the persistent imbalance in the relations between the classes and the rise of the mass movement after the defeat of fascism did not enable popular fronts to assume their role in defending the bourgeois order and made the expropriation of the weak bourgeoisies inevitable. Imperialism had to accept the formation of a buffer zone of "people's democracies" by the Soviet bureaucracy, indispensable for the defense of this bureaucracy's caste interests, that were threatened by both imperialist pressure and the revolutionary activity of the masses in Eastern Europe. In this way the Kremlin bureaucratically extended the social relations that prevailed in the Soviet state. While the proletarian masses did not come to power in Eastern Europe, capital was expropriated and the unity of the European capitalist market was broken, taking from the European imperialist powers an important zone of influence. This social division of Europe henceforth gave a different course to social struggles in the West, where the working class progressively regained its combativity in the struggle against capitalist exploitation, and in the East where it began to move against bureaucratic oppression. But the deepgoing unity of the struggle

of the European working class, far from being destroyed, was manifested in the close interrelations of the pace of the advance toward the political and social revolution: 1953 in Berlin and France; the reaction from 1956 to 1958 (Hungary and Poland; the May 1958 coup d'état in France); 1968-69 in France, Italy and Czechoslovakia; the mobilizations in Burgos and Gdansk and Szczecin mobilizations in 1971; the renewed offensive beginning in 1974 in Portugal, Spain and Poland, etc.

The monstrous result of the counterrevolutionary alliance between imperialism and Stalinism, the division of the German nation and the German working class, one of the largest and longest organized working classes of Europe, expresses in a concentrated way the timeliness and objective necessity for the proletarian revolution, that alone is capable of truly unifying all of Europe with respect for its peoples and nationalities.

2. The Decline of the European Imperialist Powers

With its eastern part cut off, capitalist Europe emerged from the ordeal of the postwar period deeply and permanently weakened. U.S. imperialism then asserted uncontested hegemony in face of the collapse of European imperialism, the weakening of the German state, and the irreversible decline of the British Empire; it chose to restore European capitalism and encourage the formation of the "Common Market," preparing the major penetration of American capital into the main European capitalist countries beginning at the end of the fifties.

During the same period, the loss of their major direct colonial possessions contributed to weakening the European powers. Deprived of resources from its empire, the British bourgeoisie no longer had access to the traditional means of ensuring "social peace." French capitalism also lost the protected market that for a long time had enabled it to satisfy the small traditional producers; the loss of Indochina, followed by the Algerian war precipitated the downfall of the Fourth Republic and led to the advent of the Bonapartist Gaullist regime. The last delayed episode in the decolonization process—the liberation of the Portuguese colonies—would involve the overthrow of the Salazarist state and open the road for the Portuguese masses to break into the political scene.

The European imperialist countries thus had to carve out a relatively subordinate place in the system of "peaceful coexistence" between the USSR and U.S. imperialism. Nonetheless, after a period of reconstruction, the major European economies experienced a phase of intensive capital accumulation and renewal of their productive apparatus that was expressed in a relative rise in their share in world production and trade; later on this trend was able to partially affect some of the most backward European countries (Spain and Greece). Moreover, while intensifying mutual trade among themselves, the European capitalist regimes plunged into sharp competition with other imperialist countries with the aim of conquering the markets of semicolonial countries or penetrating the Eastern European countries.

Nonetheless, on the eve of the world crisis all of these factors were not sufficient to significantly challenge the hegemony of American imperialist capital; from the technological and financial point of view it retained a dominant worldwide role in most of the decisive branches of

production, and a massive capacity for exporting capital despite the chronic imbalance in U.S. foreign trade and the monetary system based on the dollar. Furthermore, while officially recognizing the bankruptcy of its money, from 1971 on, U.S. imperialism more and more clearly asserted its desire to restore its position in international competition and in this way to see the other advanced capitalist countries bear their share of the burden for the imperialist system. Thus, the European states, still dependent on American military protection, do not appear to be in a position either individually or collectively to seriously challenge the worldwide dominant economic and political role of U.S. imperialism.

3. The Strengthening and Remobilization of the Proletariat

The working-class movement in the different European capitalist countries was not destroyed in the immediate postwar period. On the contrary, in the countries where it had been destroyed, with the exception of the Iberian dictatorships, the working class was able to reconstitute its organizations. Its unbroken combativity appeared several times in major workers struggles (1947, 1953, and 1963 in France; 1960-1961 in Belgium; the Asturian strike in 1968; May-June 1966 in Great Britain). Nonetheless, after having betrayed the revolutionary movement during 1943-45, the politics of the working-class leaderships succeeded in keeping the development of the class struggles within limits generally compatible with bourgeois forms of rule.

Moreover, for two decades strong economic growth was made possible by a rise in the rate of exploitation acquired in the period of "reconstruction"; American financial aid and the lifting of custom restrictions among the Common Market countries; the rearmament of the European powers; and the pressure exerted on the buying power of the dependent economies. This phase was characterized by a new extension of the capitalist relations of production, a sharp rise in labor productivity, and a profound transformation of the process of production in the most advanced sectors of the economy (durable consumer and social goods). Until the explosion of the world economic crisis, the relative regularity of this process of accumulation of capital limited the effects of economic competition among the various European countries and covered over the seriousness of the contradiction on which it was structurally based (the rising cost of capital and the swelling of nonproductive expenditures, growing destruction of the traditional forms of production, parasitic growth of indebtedness and the Eurodollars market, etc.). Although the economic growth subjected the working class to more intense forms of exploitation, and went hand in hand with a massive degradation of concrete work in industry and services, it also made possible the attainment of some noteworthy gains and some degree of job security.

Except for the dictatorships of Southern Europe, most of the bourgeois states seemed to be able to assure social cohesion until the end of the sixties through the game of parliamentary democracy which, with the eventual contribution from the Social Democracy, then reserved a central role to traditional bourgeois forces (conservatives, Christian Democrats, Radicals, etc.). The installation of the Gaullist Bonapartist state, an advance warning of the

crisis that would eventually affect the different parliamentary regimes, nonetheless expressed the impossibility in such a framework for French capitalism to overcome the social contradictions that flowed from decolonization and the need to adapt an outmoded capitalist system to the unprotected opening up of its market to imperialist competition. This regime was secured with the direct complicity of the working-class leaderships, and it inaugurated a period in which the attacks against the gains of the working class (buying power, working conditions, the right to education and health, etc.) and against the elementary independence of its organizations (the Bonapartist scheme of "participation" and "labor-capital association" were multiplied. From this same period (1964) in Great Britain, the Labour Party was entrusted with winning acceptance of a wage-control policy. These two anti-working-class offensives had as their counterpart in Eastern Europe the appearance of various liberal "economic reforms." They already gave notice of the hardening of relations between the classes that, throughout Europe, characterized the period beginning in 1968.

The European working class entered this new phase with increased objective power and strengthened fighting capacity. The ranks of the workers were more numerous and concentrated than ever. If the traditional small petty bourgeoisie and small farmers still have an important social weight in some countries (Southern Europe, France, Ireland, etc.), the growing domination of big capital precipitated their decline and threw an increased proportion of these layers into the capitalist labor market. These new wage-earners often formed the most exploited and least protected part of the working class. In this they shared the lot of most of the new women workers and the immigrant workers torn from the colonial countries by unequal development, or from the less developed zones of Europe for the same reason to be consigned to capitalist exploitation in the big industrial metropolises. Nevertheless, the rapid growth of this new form of industrial reserve army of labor during the last decades strengthened the ties between the different working classes; despite still slow and limited trade unionization, these layers tended to play a growing role in workers mobilizations.

At the same time, the degradation of the standard of living and working conditions suffered by many nonindustrial salaried layers—public-service workers and teachers, white-collar and distributive workers—and their growing unionization—increased the weight of the organized workers movement.

More powerful than ever in numbers and organization, the European working class was also strengthened by an unparalleled historical experience and by victories torn from the capitalist class during the last thirty years in the domain of the right to education, culture and information. In most countries, including the most traditional, the power of the organized workers movement little by little eroded the obscurantist and individualist influence of conservatizing institutions like the church or the family (for example, the struggle for divorce in Italy or the struggle against clerical influence during the Portuguese revolution). Finally, beginning with the sixties, a new working-class generation appeared on the scene that had not experienced the defeats of the thirties, the postwar period or the cold war. "The offensive spirit of the youth can assure the first successes in the struggle and thus

cause the best elements of the past generation to return to the road of revolution." Though it was far from being emancipated from the tutelage of its old organizations, the European proletariat in this way prepared itself to again take the offensive from the end of the sixties on.

B. A New Phase in the Class Struggle

4. The Renewal of the World Revolution

The rise of social struggles in Europe that was inaugurated by the French and Czechoslovak springs of 1968 prepared important political tests of strength between the classes, and gave to the current phase a qualitatively distinct character from the former period in which the thrusts of working-class combativity could be restricted. This new situation expressed a relationship of forces that was modified significantly in favor of the working class in the face of bourgeoisies caught up in growing economic and political difficulties. Its development was necessarily uneven. The outbreak of the Portuguese revolution opened a breach that has not been closed, in spite of the setback inflicted after November 25 and the actively counterrevolutionary role of the SP and CP. The political crisis in Spain, France and Italy can in the short run result in a rapid progression of mass revolutionary activity. Nevertheless, revolution in Europe will develop at a different pace in each country. It would be useless to pretend to precisely predict this pace and it would be wrong to analyze it as proceeding from a simple "contagiousness" of the most advanced experiences. In each of the European countries, including those where the current governments seem to be the best established, enormous contradictions have been accumulated in the objective relationships between the classes. A sudden revolutionary explosion can occur anywhere in Europe.

The current situation in Europe is unfolding within a broader movement. Prepared by the Algerian and Cuban victories, the new rise of class struggle is confirmed in two major events on a world scale: the Portuguese revolution and the American defeat in Vietnam. The collapse of the Thieu regime blew up the terms of the Paris accords that were reached under the counterrevolutionary guardianship of U.S. imperialism and the Soviet and Chinese bureaucracies within the framework of the "détente" policy. As did the Chinese revolution in its time, this victory is destabilizing the whole system of imperialist domination throughout Asia and on the other continents. Despite the hard setbacks inflicted on the Chilean and Argentine working classes, imperialism has been severely shaken. In the Middle East, imperialism and the bureaucracy are jointly trying to strangle the rise of the Arab revolution. The quick succession of the liberation of the Portuguese colonies and the rise of the mass movement in Southern Africa destabilize the social equilibrium of the whole African continent.

At the same time, the world political and economic crisis is undermining the pillars of peaceful coexistence, i.e., the American metropolis and the Stalinist bureaucracy. In the United States, the brutal attacks aimed against the standard of living of the working class are awakening a combativity that the trade-union bureaucracy has until now been able to contain thanks to the regular gains that "prosperity" permitted; the crisis of American imperialism

and its defeats around the world are fueling a profound crisis that goes all the way to the top of the political apparatus. Its most striking episode has been Nixon's ouster. At the same time, the political revolution has been put on the agenda in the bureaucratized workers states by a new mobilization of the working class that is sharpening all the contradictions of the parasitic bureaucratic system. Military and bureaucratic repression only strengthens the demands for full exercise of freedom of expression and organization that were first raised during the Czechoslovak revolution. The bureaucracy's policy of progressively opening the economy up to the world market is making the economies of the workers states more dependent on imperialism and implies growing pressure on the workers standard of living. The resistance of the Polish workers in 1970-71 and again in 1976 directly challenges the bureaucracy that is usurping the power of the working class.

At the heart of the contradictions that the imperialist system has created for itself, the continent of Europe, where the question of the social revolution and the political revolution are posed together, is one of the main areas where the process of the world revolution has resumed its course. This threat calls for a revision of the relations between imperialism and the bureaucracy. Imperialism—above all U.S. imperialism—tends to expand its channels of economic penetration into Eastern Europe. At the same time, in face of the intensification of the economic and political crisis, imperialism and the bureaucracy tend to reach agreements to limit the costs of their military rivalry (e.g. the SALT negotiations). The Helsinki accords are a reaffirmation of their counterrevolutionary alliance against the new rise of class struggles in the East, as in the West, at the same time as they imply new concessions by the bureaucracy under increased pressure from imperialism. The clauses on human rights are only the mask behind which imperialism tries to win the complicity of the bureaucracy and make new encroachments (such as free circulation of commodities and capital) on the gains of October. This is the basis of the Trotskyists intransigent struggle against this reactionary array, against the bureaucracy and in defense of the workers states.

5. Europe and the Crisis of Capitalism

The world economic crisis has sharply put on the agenda all of the contradictions accumulated during three decades of capitalist "prosperity," contradictions that were already manifested in the irrepressible speed-up of inflation from the late sixties on. But in spite of its exceptional depth, the recession has not yet made possible a stable resumption of capital accumulation. This would mean a massive devaluation of overaccumulated capital, a new and sudden rise in the rate of exploitation of the working class, a complete redefinition of the equilibrium and localization of the different branches of production. None of these conditions are really being met. In the short run, this sharp contradiction of the world market and the necessity for the imperialist countries to carry out their sectoral and geographic "redeployment" are leading to an exacerbation of inter-imperialist competition. Moreover, the crisis has profoundly aggravated the unevenness of capitalist development precipitating the bankruptcy of the least solid businesses, condemning whole sectors of production to decline, and leading to the brink of international bankruptcy for the

most vulnerable imperialist economies (Great Britain, Italy and, to a lesser degree, France). These difficulties have exploded the myth of a European integration of capital and economic policies, intended to create a unified force that could be a rival to U.S. imperialism on its own level. The sharpened competition of their immediate national interests is leading all the European states to try to give priority to defense of their own markets and energy supplies. At the same time, the growing unevenness of the economic evolution inside Europe is ruining every plan for a common monetary policy and leaves the countries on their own facing the many negotiations that, under the American aegis, are attempting to patch up the imperialist market system. The only real gains of the community policy—the “common agricultural policy” and the customs unification—are not even assured of surviving the differences of interests among the member countries and the rise of protectionist schemes. In another connection, the relative good health of West German capitalism cannot hide the vulnerability resulting from its exceptionally high degree of dependence on the foreign market and therefore on the state of the whole imperialist system. Certainly its commercial and technological superiority enables the Federal Republic to strengthen its role as imperialist exporter of capital and burdens it with some emergency subsidies to countries like Italy, Great Britain, or Portugal, whose bankruptcy would shake the equilibrium of all of Europe. Nonetheless, Germany must refuse to become a banker for Europe taking responsibility for saving adrift economies. This confirms the powerlessness of the European bourgeois classes to carry through, even in capitalist form, the unification of the productive forces that are imprisoned by the shackle of narrow national limits.

6. The Economic and Political Offensive Against the Working Class

Reinforced international competition and the need to restore the profitability of capital are forcing all of the European bourgeoisies to undertake new offensives against the gains of the working class.

The most immediate effect of the economic crisis was to raise underemployment to an unprecedented postwar level. Unemployment, the reduction of hours, and layoffs are massively hitting the working class, the most vulnerable layers first: unskilled youth, women, immigrants, etc. Nonetheless the resistance of the working class in many cases prevents the employers from going as far with the policy of layoffs as is demanded by the “restructuring” of production (this is especially true in France, Italy, and Great Britain, where the workers are defending vigorously their right to work). On the other hand, the necessity to increase the rate of exploitation imposes an offensive on all fronts against the working class’s standard of living, since the increase in inflation is not great enough to reduce the economic gains of the workers to zero.

In different forms and under different names, wage policies tending to limit the increase in purchasing power were on the agenda in most countries before the crisis. In France, the policy of “progress contracts” tried to take up where the Gaullist experiments were definitively defeated in 1968-69; the persistent economic crisis is leading to the official challenging of this policy in favor of a frontal attack against purchasing power (the Barre plan). In

Great Britain, after the defeat of regulation of “industrial relations” (1969) that was disavowed by the trade unions, and the mediocre results of the wage-control policy, the Labour Party government is negotiating an overall “contract” with the trade-union leadership organizing the reduction in the standard of living. Italy (where the sliding scale has been challenged), Germany and all the other countries of Europe have undertaken policies that are hardly more than variants of these two types of wage control. In all cases they are linked with sharp reductions of social expenditures and social services; the attacks against social security, medical services and education are especially perceptible in Great Britain, France and Italy.

The economic offensive against the working class also implies more attacks of all kinds against the legal freedoms and rights of the workers. All the “wage policies,” even those in “the form of contracts,” are paired with attempts to control the right to strike and reduce trade-union rights. From the 1965 French law that limited the right to strike in the public sector, or the plan for the (1969) Barbara Castle law, to the different restrictive laws instituted by the successive governments in Portugal, this is one of the most widespread tendencies of the recent period in Europe. These restrictive measures are most often accompanied by police interventions into labor conflicts, the development of corporate private police, or the encouragement of scab “unions.” The de facto or legalized restrictions on the pluralism of information, the restrictive or discriminatory laws against immigrant workers (France, Great Britain, Germany, etc.), the strengthening of the repressive arsenal (the “anti-wreckers” law in France, the *Berufsverbote* in West Germany, etc.), and the growth of police forces can also be seen everywhere in Europe.

7. The Mobilization of the Masses

This general offensive against the working class has laid the objective basis for the development of the mobilization in recent years. In some ways the youth radicalization preceded and gave notice of the renewal of working-class combativity that has developed fully in the period since 1968. The university youth were often the first to plunge into solidarity struggles against colonialism (Algeria and the Portuguese colonies) and imperialism (Cuba, Vietnam, etc.). Youth also mobilized massively in response to the stepped-up attacks that bourgeois society aims against their conditions of life: superexploitation, unemployment and lack of skills for young workers; university reforms, police repression and military regimentation; family, school and sexual oppression, etc. All these questions form the basis for the convergence of youth struggles with those of the working class. Thus, the repeated attempts of the Gaullist government to impose control by the bosses on the university and to strengthen the weeding-out process, prepared the sharp 1968 confrontation with the student movement that was to liberate the formidable fighting potential accumulated by the working class in the economic and political attacks it had suffered since 1963-65. The same kind of process could be seen in Germany or in Italy in the 1968-69 period. Today the struggles of high school and university youth and the fighting will of the young generation of workers are still powerful motive factors mobilizing all the oppressed and

exploited layers at the side of the working class to resist the destructive effects of the social crisis and force satisfaction of their demands.

Once again turning onto the road of revolution, the working class of Europe is tending to reenact the classic forms of its most striking revolutionary experiences: the 1919-23 period, Spain in 1931-37 and France in 1936, and the last postwar crisis.

As is usually the case in the first phases of important confrontations, the masses are turning toward their old trade-union and political organizations. This movement reveals the illusions that the masses still have in the old leaderships; nevertheless it expresses the maturing of the broad working-class masses who feel the need to increase their own degree of organization and who, in the absence of a recognized revolutionary leadership, think the instrument of their combat can be found in the old traditional organizations. This movement developed fully in Portugal: at the end of forty years of dictatorial oppression, the masses flocked toward the Stalinist and Social Democratic organizations within several weeks and rebuilt their fighting organizations (trade unions and committees); even on the electoral level, the rediscovered power of the working-class movement was expressed by the absolute majority of the working-class parties that has remained unchanged since 1975. In the same way, in France, an increase in the strength of the workers organizations has recently been manifested by a vigorous revival of the Social Democracy, which appeared to be moribund at the end of the Gaullist period. More generally, the growth of the trade unions and traditional parties of the working class can be seen in all the countries of Europe. This is significantly reflected in the elections (even if this movement is coopted by the policy of the leaderships to the benefit of class-collaborationist formulas): the wave of electoral support for the SPD in the autumn of 1969 that put an end to the "great coalition" and carried the SPD to the front line of governmental responsibilities; the comparable wave of support for the Austrian Social Democrats in 1971 and 1975; the setback dealt to the Conservatives' policy and their anti-trade-union plans (the Carr law) in the British elections of 1974; the more and more clearly growing strength of a movement toward the French CP and SP at the time of the vote for the Union of the Left in the 1974 presidential elections, the 1976 cantonal elections, and the 1977 municipal elections; the comparable strengthening of the audience of the Italian Communist Party during the 1976 legislative elections; the big gains of the Labor Party in the 1977 elections in the Netherlands; the increasingly strong movement toward the Spanish CP and, especially, the PSOE, in the June 1977 Cortes elections, etc.

In the area of partial struggles, the maturing of the masses is powerfully expressed through the many forms of their resistance to the effects of the crisis and wage policies, and this despite the working-class leaderships' refusal to organize a real labor response to the governmental offensives (or the direct responsibility they take in carrying out the austerity policy in Germany, Great Britain, Portugal, Italy, etc.). This whole movement is often accompanied by forms of action or organization that embryonically prefigure the democratic and unitary bodies that the masses tend to create in each of their revolutionary offensives. In their diversity and despite the current

unevenness of their development, the factory occupations, the general assemblies or the strike committees, the defense pickets, the different experiences of workers "delegates," the organizations that the soldiers are creating in the struggle for their democratic rights inside the army, without substituting for the organizational framework of the parties and trade unions, are opening the road to superior forms of organization of the united front and workers democracy that will reach their full development in the periods when the class struggle will impose dual power: soviets and workers militias.

The masses in Portugal have up to now gone the farthest in this direction: the multiplicity of experiences of workers control, the rise of mass committees in the factories, the neighborhoods, and among the soldiers, etc. Nonetheless, these did not attain a level of development giving them a character of real soviet bodies, that is, embracing the mass of workers, beginning to function as decision and power centers on all the economic, social and political questions, capable of asserting themselves in a centralized way as a direct alternative to the present regime. The development was also limited and weakened by the political division and disorientation of the working class that resulted from the class-collaborationist policy of the CP and SP and through their unprincipled rivalries as well as the policies of the centrist and ultraleft groups. This experience clearly shows that in all the countries of Europe, no decisive progress toward generalized actions of workers control and toward a dual power situation can be accomplished independently of a policy designed to remove the obstacles raised by the treacherous leaderships in the way of the *workers and peasants government*.

Indeed, whatever the difference in rhythm in each of the countries, in a general way the objective movement of the class struggle tends to put on the agenda the question of the overturn of the present governments, *the question of political power for the working class*. Throughout Europe the new mobilization of the working class on a broad scale around its fundamental demands (employment, purchasing power, defense of social services) is accompanied by a much broader rise of struggles around all the questions that the crisis puts on, or returns to, the agenda. The mass mobilization of the small farmers who are violently hit by the economic crisis, the renewal of the struggles of national minorities against their oppression, the defensive movements against industrial pollution, the soldiers fight for their democratic rights, the rise of mass struggles around demands mainly concerning women (economic and legal equality, abortion and contraception, divorce, etc.) is besieging all the present governments with elementary demands that they are proving incapable of satisfying in a lasting way. Thus, in a pressing fashion in all the countries of Europe, "each serious demand of the proletariat and even each progressive demand of the petty bourgeoisie inevitably leads beyond the limits of capitalist property and the bourgeois state."

8. The Crisis of the Bourgeois States

The deepening of the social crisis and the objective necessity for the bourgeoisie to attack the economic gains of the working class are leading to an open crisis in the forms of bourgeois rule that prevailed during the past

decades. The old authoritarian regimes—the dictatorships in Southern Europe, but also the Bonapartist Gaullist regime—proved incapable of politically containing the development of the relationships between the classes. But as the Portuguese experience showed, every bourgeois attempt at an institutional readjustment risks being seized by the masses as the time to challenge the very foundations of the bourgeois state. This explains the restrictive limits against which, in the current state of class relationships, the Suárez reform in Spain or Giscard d'Estaing's efforts to get rid of the institutional and political heritage of the Bonapartist regime run up against.

In France the Bonapartist regime founded by De Gaulle has, since 1968, ceased to be a form of rule enabling the bourgeoisie to effectively confront the rise of the mass movement. The ruling class is attempting to extricate itself from this crisis-ridden system, but the relationship of forces between the classes does not allow it to organize a transition toward a stable form of political power without first of all dealing a political defeat to the working class. The break between Chirac and Giscard seals the political bankruptcy of Gaullism and Giscard's inability to form a "new majority" behind himself. This political shattering of the bourgeoisie no more frees Giscard from his dependence on the Gaullist party than it allows Chirac to follow a policy independent of the institution of the presidency. The main consequence of the open rivalry between these two clans is to precipitate the crisis of the decomposition of the Bonapartist regime to which both factions are irredeemably tied. Furthermore, the rival moves of Chirac and Giscard contribute to the same overall effect: deepening the political crisis while weakening both of the principal supports of the regime one by one: the presidential role and the Gaullist party. Whereas the whole objective motion of the class struggle puts the final liquidation of the moribund Fifth Republic on the agenda, the prolonged existence of the Giscard-Barre government is directly supported by the policy of the treacherous leaderships who actively work at delaying the political crisis's moment of truth.

In Spain, Juan Carlos's vow taken after the death of Franco expressed the bourgeoisie's desire in face of the threat of a mass surge onto the political scene, to preserve the political continuity and the bulk of the Bonapartist and corporatist institutions inherited from Francoism. But the growing mobilization of the masses also forces Juan Carlos to adopt a demagogic policy of "liberalization" of the regime. Given the Arias Fraga government's inability to put this policy in practice, Juan Carlos had to call upon Suárez. The policy of the new government team will sharpen the contradictions tearing up the Spanish bourgeoisie and the state apparatus and will call forth active resistance from the "hard" wing, the "bunker," which wants to keep the Francoist dictatorship in its old form. The policy of "reform" aims at prolonging the life of the decaying dictatorship by injecting limited elements of parliamentarism into the existing institutions of the Francoist state. The holding of the elections to the "Juan Carlos Cortes" is aimed at countering, with the complicity of the working-class leaderships, the demand for free elections and a constituent Cortes and at putting the masses onto the institutional ground chosen by the regime in order to derail the struggle to overturn the dictatorship. Without the support of the working-class leaderships such a policy would be impossible to carry through; for that

reason the bourgeoisie had to legalize the main workers parties and in that way let them be part of the first line of defense of the legitimacy of the regime and its "reform." In the present relationship of forces between the classes, this policy, far from assuring a transition from the military-police dictatorship toward a stable "classical" parliamentary-type or "strong state" type regime, can only give the bourgeoisie and the counterrevolutionary apparatuses a short respite before the main confrontation between classes which is building up.

In regimes with a parliamentary tradition, the crisis is imposing obligations that cannot be carried out without coming into conflict with rights that were previously an integral part of the bourgeois-democratic tradition. This contradiction fosters a real decay of the British, German or Italian parliamentary systems, a decay eloquently expressed by the unfolding of political-financial "scandals."

All this does not mean, however, that the political crisis that has opened in Europe is necessarily orienting toward the "outcome" of fascism or war, as it did for Europe in the thirties. On the other hand, new imperialist aggression against subject countries and a new wave of protectionism and economic nationalism represent the forms that the furious competition for control of the world market might take within a short time.

In the main countries of Europe the ruling class must, in the event that it should prove incapable of exercising power with its own means, accept a return to class-collaborationist formulas, bringing the workers parties themselves into the responsibilities of power. This has taken, or will take, the most diverse forms according to the special characteristics of each workers movement and the uneven extent of the developing political crisis in each of the European countries. The Labour Party came into the government in 1974 with the avowed mission of implementing the austerity plan which catalyzed the miners' strike and the downfall of the Heath government. Such is also the role assigned to the coalition dominated by the SPD after the 1972 German elections; to the PSB with its entry into the government alongside the PSC-CVP; to the Finnish popular front linked to the SAK union federation; to the Social Democratic organizations associated with various governmental coalitions in Holland, in Switzerland beginning in 1974, in Ireland beginning in 1973, etc.

In the Southern European countries the support that the bourgeoisie is seeking from the labor bureaucracies takes a different form given the extreme gravity of the crisis and the role played by the Stalinist parties in the working class. After the dismemberment of the Salazarist apparatus, the Portuguese bourgeoisie could only contain the revolutionary mass movement by relegating the exercise of power to coalitions uniting the military hierarchy with the two main workers parties. In a more conventional way, it may prove inevitable for the bourgeoisie to allow such popular-front coalitions to come to power in the course of the future developments of class struggle in Spain, France or Italy. But for the Social Democratic and Stalinist parties—as for the bourgeoisie—this is nothing but a "last resort against proletarian revolution" which will not actually be utilized until class relations make it necessary.

As long as this remains a possibility, the ruling class and the bureaucracies prefer to keep to more subtle but no less active forms of collaboration tending to prolong the existence of the regimes in power.

The determination of the Union of the Left to scrupulously adhere to the institutional framework of the Fifth Republic and avoid any political crisis enabled Giscard—despite the lack of any real social base of support—to launch an economic attack of broad scope against the working class. Then, just before the elections in which the masses were about to give massive support to the workers parties, the PCF [French Communist Party] used the pretext of a debate over the “updating of the common program,” a bourgeois program supported by the CP and the SP on which these two parties have no serious differences, to launch a campaign against the SP calling into question its working-class nature. With terminology reminiscent of the “Third Period” of the PCP [Portuguese Communist Party] in the spring of 1975, this orientation is only a new form of the policy of dividing the ranks of the workers and holding out a hand to the bourgeoisie, practiced up to now under the cover of the “Union of the Left.” Fearing that the aspirations of the masses cannot be contained by the counterrevolutionary obstruction of a Union of the Left government just after an electoral victory, the CP openly tries to prevent the electoral victory of the workers parties, thus giving the Giscard regime a new breathing spell, or, if that is not possible, to pave the way for a coalition government in which the CP would not directly take part. This new attempt at dividing and disorienting the masses cynically contributes to the defense of the status quo in Europe.

Until the eventual governmental realization of the “historic compromise,” this compromise allows the Italian bourgeoisie to confidently base itself on the support of the PCI [Italian Communist Party] to carry out the “Andreotti plan” and its policy of keeping order. The trade-union and working-class leaderships actively cooperate in this project of attacking the gains of the workers (sliding scale), denying women elementary democratic rights, blocking the demands of youth, organizing a fierce repression, as happened in the most recent student demonstrations. The particular weaknesses of Italian capitalism, the backlash of the crisis of the Common Market and the melting away of the clerical party gave the PCI an important role in applying the anti-working-class policy of the Italian bourgeoisie. This is expressed in the official constitution of the “constitutional arc”: the PCI is now not only the “party of abstention”; it has gone over to complete solidarity with the party of the Vatican and its governmental policy.

Likewise, refusing to challenge the legitimacy of the Spanish dictatorship and its monarchical form, the policy of the PCE [Spanish Communist Party] and the PSOE [Socialist Workers Party of Spain] is the best prop for the “liberal” masquerade of Juan Carlos. From “democratic break” to “negotiated break,” from “democratic convergence” to “negotiation commission” and ending with the “constitutional pact,” the working-class leaderships work as active agents of the Spanish bourgeoisie to confine the activity of the masses in the shackles of their policy of national unity. This is the meaning of the PCE and PSOE’s participation in the last elections. By voting heavily for working-class parties the masses expressed their aspiration for democracy and freedom for the oppressed nationalities; they in no way indicated support for the Cortes itself or for the “democracy” of Juan Carlos hiding behind the cover of the working-class leaderships. The orientation of these leaderships is thus directly con-

trary to the aspirations of the masses who still have political confidence in them. Trying to give the badly decomposing dictatorship a breathing spell, the PCE and PSOE opposed the elementary demands of the workers by signing the Moncloa pact with the government. Holding a majority in Catalonia and Euzkadi, they base themselves on various local popular-front combinations in order to better deny the right of the nationalities to self-determination: they accept, in fact, both the perpetuation of national oppression by the Castilian state and political subordination to the bourgeois forces within the nationalities. This is why they participated in the Parliamentary Assembly in Catalonia, the different maneuvers preceding the return of Taradellas and the reestablishment of the Generalidad, as well as the similar operations in Euzkadi.

Despite this policy of the workers parties, the massive resistance of the working class to the attacks from the anti-working-class policy and the internal erosion of the present regime in France, Italy or Spain are giving a more and more precarious character to the current forms of government. Whatever be the efforts deployed to delay the consequences of the political crisis, these consequences have every possibility of forcing the bourgeoisie to again turn more and more directly to collaboration with the treacherous workers parties. It would not be a matter of opening a new phase of “reforms” along with substantial economic concessions to the working class: none of the European economies today have access to the objective resources needed for such a policy. The only task assigned to the workers parties will be to block the road of the revolutionary movement of the masses and to implement the anti-working-class policy that the current governments have been able to impose.

II. THE CRISIS OF REVOLUTIONARY LEADERSHIP AND THE BUILDING OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

A. The Crisis of Revolutionary Leadership of the Proletariat

9. The Main Obstacle to the Revolution

The policy of the workers parties leadership is the main obstacle holding the proletariat and its allies back from mobilizing to transform the prerevolutionary situation into a revolutionary situation.

The desperate efforts that the Social Democratic and Stalinist leaderships are making to turn back the wheels of history and defend the status quo in Europe have not been sufficient to turn the masses from their old organizations. These illusions continue to hide the insurmountable contradiction between the traitorous policy of the old leaderships and the objective needs that are the basis for the mass mobilization.

The strategic task of the current period is still therefore to free the masses from the grip of their old leaderships and to gather, in the very course of the class struggle, the elements of the revolutionary leadership to be built. To this end the maturing of the political crisis in Europe makes the approach defined in the Transitional Program quite timely: the contradiction between the maturity of the

objective conditions for the revolution and the crisis of revolutionary leadership of the proletariat must be overcome; the masses must be helped to bridge the gap between their current demands and the program for socialist revolution, leading them inevitably to one conclusion: the conquest of power is on the agenda in Europe; only the class-collaborationist policy of the old apparatuses is opposed to it.

10. The Role of the Social Democratic Organizations

The Social Democratic party leaderships have fully played their role as the lieutenants of imperialism inside the working-class movement since the historical bankruptcy of the Second International. Nevertheless, in several European countries (the Scandinavian countries, West Germany, Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, etc.), the Social Democracy continues to have predominant influence among the working-class masses and to be considered by them as their framework for political organization, despite its openly counterrevolutionary politics. Thus in West Germany, the SPD has been rebuilt with a mass base on the basis of the pre-1933 Social Democratic apparatus; the growing subjection of the SPD leadership to the interests and ideology of the West German bourgeoisie led to the abandonment of any formal reference to the fight of the working class at the Bad-Godesberg Congress in 1969. This important political setback that was inflicted on the working class was nevertheless not sufficient to break the ties with the trade-union movement or to liquidate the SPD as a party massively recognized by the workers as theirs: the proof of this came in 1972 when the working class mobilized *en masse* to oppose the reactionary attempt to replace the Brandt government. Moreover, in most of the countries of Europe where the Stalinist parties have a mass base, the Social Democracy may continue to have or to win important positions among the petty bourgeoisie and in the working class, and can even go so far as to directly challenge Stalinist hegemony; the French, Portuguese and Spanish examples testify to this. The last case is characterized by the ties which the PSOE has to a union federation deeply rooted in the history of the Spanish proletariat, the UGT.

The history of their social-patriotic degeneration and their international ties, which differ from those of the Stalinist apparatuses, make the Social Democratic organizations the most direct partners of imperialism inside the workers movement. This is why, whenever the situation permits, imperialism prefers to give it class-collaborationist responsibilities at the governmental level. Whatever be its influence, the Social Democracy generally maintains looser organizational ties with the masses it influences than do the Stalinist apparatuses. (In regard to this, the Labor Party has a particular place, for it is a historical product of the trade-union movement and remains organically linked to it, despite its ideological connection to the Social Democracy.) This is why the Social Democratic apparatuses are developing mainly by activity in the area of bourgeois parliamentary democracy: the Social Democratic organizations have asserted themselves as managers of the bourgeois state, or can make their own contribution to popular-front formulas as working-class parties made up of notables and parliamentarians. In the countries where the Social Democratic and

Stalinist apparatuses have a mass base, their respective role in political organization of the working class leads them to divide up counterrevolutionary responsibilities each in their own way. Nonetheless, powerful bureaucratic rivalries tend to oppose them, each leadership having both to preserve its influence among the masses and present itself as the best representative of the bourgeoisie. Conjuncturally, the development of these contradictions can lead one or another apparatus to take positions that clash less directly with the interests of the working class or, just the opposite, to assume the main responsibility for counterrevolutionary tasks. This was true in Portugal in 1975: at first, while the CP imposed itself as the main governmental partner of the military hierarchy, the leadership of the SP was forced, on the basis of the defense of its own bureaucratic interests and without ever wanting to break its links with the MFA, to oppose several measures that were serious attacks against democratic conquests and the independence of the working-class organizations: the law on trade-union unity and "non-party" projects, *República*, etc. Later, on the other hand, it was the CP that was able to take its distance from the repressive austerity policies implemented by the governments henceforth led by the SP and thus regain part of its lost influence. At no time, however, did the Stalinist apparatus or the Social Democratic leadership change from their counterrevolutionary orientation. The Portuguese experience and to a lesser degree the ongoing rivalries inside of the Union of the Left between the French CP and SP demonstrate on the contrary that *class collaboration and division of the working-class ranks* are two complementary aspects of this policy that turns its back on the workers united front and on a policy of unity and independence of the working class.

11. The European CPs and the Crisis of Stalinism

The parties coming out of the Stalinized Third International definitely passed to the side of the bourgeois order. Their counterrevolutionary role and their attachment to the social status quo has been continuously expressed since the thirties—and in spite of the isolation imposed on the different CPs in the period of the cold war—by support for the policy of the Soviet bureaucracy and hence for unconditional defense of capital and the bourgeois state everywhere in the world. In every period of sharp crisis, Stalinism has taken the form of an open alliance with the bourgeoisie inside popular-front coalitions. Once again this policy has been put on the agenda in several countries of Europe (after having been so in Chile). The concrete diversity of the political formulas used ("Union of the Left," today including the weak Left Radical party and open to Gaullist patriots; the "Historic Compromise" proposed to the Italian Christian Democracy; the "national concentration" with the forces of the Spanish bourgeoisie, etc., up to and including Suárez; the "Alliance of Progressive Forces" supported by the Greek "Interior" CP) expresses the necessary adaptation of the Stalinist strategy to the national conditions of the class struggle.

This policy is being developed in a frame of reference ("theories" of "socialism in one country," of the popular front, of the "revolution by stages") that grow directly out of the Stalinist betrayal of Marxism and Leninism, made necessary by the counterrevolutionary interests of the

bureaucracy. On the other hand, if the forms of recruitment and organization of the Western Stalinist parties are being adapted to the requirements of a more and more electoralist and managerial policy (in France and Italy, especially), the internal regimes of these parties conserve the main traits of bureaucratism.

Today, as before, the policies implemented by the Western Stalinist parties conform closely to the general interests of the Soviet bureaucracy. In the framework of the relationship of forces necessary for its policy of "peaceful coexistence," the Soviet bureaucracy relies on the West European CPs to exercise pressure in the negotiations with the different bourgeoisies. Likewise its concern for exploiting interimperialist rivalries to its own benefit—militarily or commercially—can only encourage the social-chauvinist policies through which the different CPs pose as defenders of the "national interest," and give their support to one or another "patriotic" faction of the bourgeoisie. Finally and this is the main point, Moscow and the Stalinist parties of Europe fundamentally share one same central preoccupation, which is not the intrinsic desire for "reforms," or to manage the bourgeois state, but rather to block by *all* political means the revolutionary upsurge of the mass movement; the extreme caution that the CPs manifest toward directly taking on governmental responsibilities, their attempts to stabilize the political crisis at its current level, in fact express the same concerns as those that lead Moscow to support—with a lack of discretion that sometimes apparently ran at cross purposes with the tactics of the national CPs—the current bourgeois governments.

Nevertheless, the new rise of the social and political revolution is a powerful factor sharpening the crisis of Stalinism, whose international cohesion has already been severely shaken by the Sino-Soviet dispute and the bureaucratic splits of the Greek, Spanish, Finnish, Swedish and British CPs. While they conserve their common fundamental hostility to the worldwide proletarian revolution, each component of the bureaucracy tends to orient itself in conformity with its own national interests, and for the European CPs, by adapting more and more closely to the characteristics of its national bourgeoisie. This is the inevitable development of a chauvinist tendency that was objectively written into the original "socialism in one country" orientation and that was powerfully encouraged by the "popular front" line codified by the Seventh Congress of the Comintern and its bureaucratic dissolution in 1943. This tendency, today strengthened by the shift in the relationship of forces in favor of the proletariat, leads the international Stalinist apparatus toward bureaucratic dislocation.

In the capitalist countries of Europe, the Stalinist parties while maintaining their close ties with the Kremlin bureaucracy, are acquiring closer and closer relations with the imperialist state apparatuses of their own countries, especially through the different administrative positions on a central or local level. In this precise sense Trotsky spoke of a "double nature of the social base of the parties of the Comintern." In their counterrevolutionary quest for a political alliance with the bourgeoisie, the CPs are led to step up the concrete pledges to respect the bourgeois institutional order: defense of the Gaullist Fifth Republic, respect for the Spanish monarchy and its bloody flag, with a hand stretched out to the Catholic hierarchy. This same policy implies the necessity to take an increased distance

from the Kremlin: the abandonment of formal references to the "dictatorship of the proletariat" and "proletarian internationalism," or the demand for autonomous "national roads" and "Eurocommunist" uniqueness. Also, as began to be apparent at the time of the invasion of Czechoslovakia, the Western CPs are more and more forced to take a certain distance concerning bureaucratic repression in the USSR and its Eastern European satellites. While this policy does not contradict the CPs' desire to increase their guarantees to the bourgeoisie, it is also the result of the difficult situation in which the Stalinist apparatuses are placed, confronted with the broad mobilizations that have developed against bureaucratic repression expressing the aversion of the working-class masses toward the Stalinist caricature of socialism.

All these differentiations are the basis for violent conflicts in the international Stalinist apparatus. In its essence the polemic sparked by the recent statements by Carrillo follows directly from the polemic opened by the "Ponomarev Document." The Kremlin in no way criticizes the reactionary policy of the PCE, but reproaches Carrillo for putting doubt over the "socialist" nature of the USSR and for his extreme defense of independent "national roads." These differences do not at all put in question the fundamental agreement on peaceful coexistence and the popular-front line. They are on the contrary the result of the very application of this general line in the new phase of the rise of the class struggle in Europe. Moreover, the CPs take the most openly "Eurocommunist" positions, supporting a policy of active support for the continuation of the current regimes, in the three countries most immediately affected by the beginning of the revolutionary crisis.

The international Stalinist apparatus thus tends to rupture along line corresponding to the uneven and varied manner in which each component of the bureaucracy feels the particular requirements of carrying out the counterrevolutionary policy and feels the pressure of imperialism. This whole process does not simply boil down to the rise of "Eurocommunist" currents or a conflict between Western CPs and the Soviet bureaucracy. Important nuances in the attitude of the different CPs in power toward "Eurocommunism"—the categorical condemnations from the Polish and Czechoslovak leaderships—contrast with the favorable response from the Yugoslav and Rumanian bureaucracies and with the prudent reserve expressed by the Hungarian CP. The various governments of Eastern Europe are also divided on such questions as the rate of economic reform and the Sino-Soviet dispute. Furthermore, the tendencies toward increasing adaptation to the demands of imperialism have their own effects within the different workers states, starting with the USSR. The clan and faction struggles are powerfully sharpened by imperialism's economic pressure and the reappearance of mass opposition.

The openly social-chauvinist positions of the "Eurocommunist" currents objectively reinforce all these pressures felt by the worker-state bureaucracies, from without and from within, in the restorationist sense of an extension of the market elements and an increased economic opening toward imperialism. But the response of the dominant faction in the USSR, far from being on the basis of defense of the gains of October, only tends to protect its own bureaucratic and reactionary interests. As a parasitic

caste, the Soviet bureaucracy, unlike the European Stalinist parties, do without the rhetoric about the USSR as the "socialist fatherland" and about the "proletarian internationalism" which endows it with the semblance of legitimacy for its counterrevolutionary policy on the national and international level. All the factions of the bureaucracy, each in its own way, express by their policies the implications of their common orientation of defending the social status quo in a period of new rise of the revolution: closer and closer collaboration with imperialism in its attacks on the gains of the working class, whether through austerity policies or the offensive against the conquests of October.

12. Radicalization and Crisis of the Traditional Organizations

While all the mass demonstrations of workers, youth, farmers, and women invariably run up against the obstacle of the bourgeois governments and the reformist leaderships' policies, the radicalization of the different social layers brings with it growing political contradictions. These contradictions, which express the objective antagonism between the semiconscious movement through which the masses plunge onto the road of revolution and the politics of the bureaucratic apparatuses, cannot be correctly described by isolating out a "new vanguard" that is supposed "to escape from the control of the traditional leaderships."

In fact, the complex differentiations in the levels of combativity and consciousness that are being more and more manifested inside the mass movement are expressed politically by the strengthening of centrist organizations outside of the old organizations, as well as by the development inside of them of currents that come into conflict with the bureaucratic leaderships and their policies.

Within this overall movement the organizations of the anarchist trend have a place of their own. In most countries in Western Europe this current consists only of small ultraleft sects. In Spain, on the other hand, the CNT, the trade-union federation with an anarchist tradition, is one of the historically established organizations of the working class which the class is today seeking to rebuild, thinking it can be a tool in its struggle; its leadership shares in full with the Stalinist and Social Democratic leaderships the responsibility for the counterrevolution. It cannot be excluded that in Italy the collapse of the spontaneist currents, in the absence of a strong enough Trotskyist movement, would allow the anarchists to win a certain significant portion of the critical tendencies created in response to the policies of the treacherous leaderships.

The different centrist organizations—anarchist, Maoist, spontaneist, populist—have largely developed throughout Europe especially among the radicalizing youth, which is less solidly organized by the traditional organizations of the workers movement. They can also benefit from the masses' attempt to create an organized framework in a period of rapid upsurge in the class struggle. During the French May and the first period in the Portuguese revolution this phenomenon developed on a relatively broad scale. The congenital incapacity of these groups to outline an alternative policy conforming to the interests of the workers—that is, by clearly standing for the unity and

independence of the working class—nonetheless condemns them to vegetate on the fringes of the broad mass movement and/or to place themselves more or less directly in the wake of the apparatuses. This is most clearly shown when the deepening of the political crisis strengthens the pressures exercised by the class-collaborationist formulas (France, Italy) or when the centrists have developed all the disastrous consequences of their orientation (Portugal).

On the other hand, while in the first phases of the prerevolutionary crisis the masses are largely turning toward their former organizations, the traitorous policies of the leaderships will inevitably create (even in the party ranks or the trade unions) progressive disillusionment which should help loosen the hold of the old apparatuses and prepare the rise of a revolutionary leadership. This process is developing unevenly in the different European countries, and explains how the numerical strengthening of the old organizations can be accompanied by a deep maturing of the masses and a political weakening of the domination of the bureaucratic leaderships. These phenomena are appearing today in forms corresponding to the way in which the masses in each country have already been able to see the disastrous effects of the apparatuses' politics: the discrediting of the Portuguese CP and SP leaderships that were successively brought to the front ranks of governmental responsibilities for the counterrevolution, and the development of a left wing with a working-class audience inside the SP; the electoral retreat of the Social Democrats in Sweden and Germany, in the main due—as in 1970 in England—to a consistent working-class abstention following the direct role of administrating the crisis assigned to the traitorous parties; the appearance of new differentiations in the SPD and the Jusos and new oppositions in the trade-union federation (for example, at the congress of the metalworkers in September 1977); the development of working-class resistance to the austerity policy and powerful mobilizations in areas such as the anti-nuclear struggle in the Scandinavian countries; growing contradictions inside the British trade unions in response to the austerity policy implemented by the Labour Party; different and still confused forms of revolt against the PCI's open support for the anti-labor policy. Similar phenomena of the same magnitude will of necessity develop in the ranks of the working-class parties in Spain and France, as events in the class struggle dispel the hopes stimulated by the promises of the "popular fronts" or the "national union" policies, hopes that still mask the actively counterrevolutionary character of the politics of the CPs and SPs and their de facto support to the current regimes.

B. The Political Axes of the Construction of the European Sections of the Fourth International

13. Building the Party

Most European Trotskyist organizations experienced a remarkable growth during the recent period of rise in the class struggle. Although none of them has yet reached the stage of a real workers party that is recognized as such by a part of the working class, the situation that is developing in Europe opens the possibility of making a qualitative leap in this direction in the years to come. The main condition in this regard is to know how to link up with the

masses in their daily struggles in order to counterpose to the politics of the traitorous leaderships an orientation that, in each circumstance, corresponds to the needs of the proletariat and its allies and lays out for them concretely the road to power. In doing this, the Trotskyist militants should fully take into account the different levels of consciousness that exist among the masses, paying particular attention to the elements that, inside or outside of the traditional organizations, are beginning to question the policies of the bureaucratic leaderships and are confusedly seeking a revolutionary way. But just as they do not adapt to the illusions of the broad masses, Trotskyists will be unable to construct the party by concentrating, in an arbitrary way, on the aspirations of such a small layer. They take as their starting point and their guide to action, in every circumstance, the objective situation and the interests of the masses and the proletariat as a whole.

In doing so, the sections of the Fourth International in all fields counterpose the policy of the workers united front to the policy of class collaboration to which the treacherous leaderships seek to subordinate all the activity of the masses. This struggle for the workers united front is not simply a "clever maneuver" to denounce the capitulations of the leaderships in which the masses still generally have confidence. It corresponds to the pressing objective needs of the class struggle. The first problem is to broaden and strengthen the mobilization of the masses so as to overcome, through concrete actions, the deep divisions which the conservative policy of the workers leaderships have created among the workers. It is also necessary to unite the struggle of the working class and its allies on the basis of a solid political alliance, putting the struggle of all the social layers under the political leadership of the proletariat and mobilizing the whole working class in defense of its needs and its most exploited and most oppressed segments. Finally, the struggle for the workers united front, breaking with the whole orientation and practice of the treacherous leaderships, culminates in the demand for the complete independence of the working class and its organizations from the bourgeoisie.

Thus the Trotskyists struggle for the workers united front is not simply aimed at unity "at the base"—ignoring the ties that the masses continue to have with their old leaders and the central role these leaders play in the relations between the classes—nor at incantations for the unity of the traditional workers apparatuses. Without ever making the unity among the old organizations a precondition, Trotskyists take all the necessary initiatives for the mass mobilizations to develop on a basis allowing broad layers of workers to unite in defense of their objective needs and thus help lead them toward the central task on the order of the day: the need for the whole labor movement to unite its ranks, break all political dependence on the bourgeoisie, and take power.

Thus, whether in intervening in the various mass movements, forming oppositional trade-union groupings or participating in general political battles (such as at election time), the main concern of Trotskyists should be to help at least a part of the masses to grasp clear, concrete, precise demands making it possible to progress in the direction of realizing the workers united front and the confrontation with the bourgeois state. All the tactical initiatives of the sections of the Fourth International should be subordinated to this objective.

Closely coordinated political activity and the launching of mass campaigns on a Europe-wide level are very important for the development of the sections and for building the international itself. This is particularly true for anti-imperialist and antibureaucratic solidarity work and for the campaigns against the Common Market and NATO and for the Socialist United States of Europe. These activities are not simply a sum of national campaigns but call for vigorous political initiative from the international leadership.

At certain times in the class struggle the Fourth International will be able to make use of fraction work in the mass workers parties. Possibilities for this already exist in the Labour Party, the SPD and the PSOE and can open up quickly in other Social Democratic or Stalinist parties, especially in their youth organizations. Keeping in mind the difficulty of this work and the enormous political pressures felt in such a situation—such a tactic can only be undertaken with the careful political support and supervision of a powerful independent political pole and the central leadership of the international. Likewise, Trotskyists will certainly be making use of opportunities for common action with one or another force of the so-called "far left" when this is possible. However, we have no "policy for unity of revolutionaries" or "tactic of alliance" which is distinct in its political basis from the overall struggle for the workers united front. Nor have we "privileged allies" defined *a priori* for a whole period: the opportunities for unity in action should be assessed in each concrete situation in the class struggle and on the basis of a single criterion: is there substantial political agreement on the concrete tasks on the agenda? From this standpoint, in the present situation in Europe, the deep differences dividing Trotskyism and the centrist organizations on all the main political questions (the characterization of the workers parties and the policies of their leaderships, the current importance of the struggle for the workers united front and a workers government, the principle of a class vote, etc.) mean that the formation of "revolutionaries' fronts" seriously weakens the political fight of the sections of the Fourth International. The balance sheet of the Portuguese FUR, the Proletarian Democracy, the electoral blocs in France, Belgium and Spain, are evidence of this. Rejecting the idea of seeking unity without any serious political basis does not prevent us—far from it—from taking an offensive stance in the theoretical and political debate with the different centrist forces. Such a stance should help deepen the crisis of these organizations with the perspective of winning from them the best elements for the building of the international. Such a struggle should not, however, be formulated in terms of organizational "fusion" unless the evolution of the particular currents has led them to substantial agreement on the fundamental founding principles of the Fourth International and on its program: the policies of Stalinism, the question of the Leninist party and the need for the Fourth International, the permanent revolution, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the struggle against class collaborationism and for the workers and farmers government.

For that reason we must distinguish the struggle we wage against the centrist organizations from the necessary political discussion with the forces emerging from the previous crises of the Fourth International. Whatever the

deep differences with these latter groups, the existence of several international currents which proclaim adherence to the Transitional Program but which did not join in the 1963 reunification requires a special policy toward them with the aim of strengthening the Fourth International. In the spirit of the perspectives opened up by the Reunification Congress, the leadership of the Fourth International should, without sectarian preconditions, organize the political discussion with the OCRFI and the LO current, who have requested it. The opening up of a public discussion on "The Crisis of Stalinism" should be extended beyond simply a discussion of ideas; we should explore the possibilities for carrying on certain concrete common struggles against the Stalinist policies, whether in the fight for the political independence of the class in the elections, for example, or campaigns against repression in the bureaucratized workers states.

14. Mobilizing the Working Class and Its Allies

a. The redoubled attacks by capital against the gains of the working class and the middle salaried layers gives increased breadth to the mass mobilizations for immediate demands. In all the European countries the Trotskyists are helping broaden this mobilization, remove the obstacles which the workers leaders put in the way of a united and effective response to the austerity policies and outline perspectives for uniting the broadest layers of workers in defense of their immediate interests. In the struggle against inflation, unemployment and anti-labor policies, the necessity for the economic and transitional demands in this way becomes most apparent: against layoffs and attacks on purchasing power, sliding scale of wages and working hours; workers control of working conditions, health and safety; rejection of the austerity programs, defense and extension of social security, public facilities and social services; against economic sabotage and speculation, opening the account books, expropriation of the industrial and banking trusts, workers control over prices and investments, etc.

Corresponding with the most immediate needs around which the workers are now mobilizing massively, such demands prepare the masses to sharply confront the whole policy of their governments and make more apparent the objective need for removing them, for taking the path of a political break with the bourgeoisie and putting in a workers government, the only kind able to fully satisfy the demands. This mobilization of workers which puts the conquest of power by the proletariat on the agenda, is given powerful impetus by the movement of all the social layers which reject the oppression and attacks of all types on them by capital and its state. Particular attention should be given to all these mass movements in order to outline perspectives for them which will help them broaden and grow alongside and under the leadership of the proletariat.

b. The Youth

The political character of the radicalization of the new generation is rooted in the crisis of imperialism and the related crisis of Stalinism and the Social Democracy. Imperialism's attempts to maintain its domination over the world and to crush revolutionary movements have been a powerful radicalizing factor for the youth beginning in the 1960s, especially in Europe. In addition the

desire to resist the multiple attacks by capitalism in crisis leads youth to fight for a decent existence and a decent future and to confront the bourgeois state.

In this movement the youth is not as tightly controlled by the treacherous leaders who reproduce the old bourgeois world inside the working class: "All the opportunist organizations by their very nature concentrate their main attention on the upper layers of the working class, and as a result ignore both the youth and the working women."

This can give the various centrist organizations a base of influence among the youth. But it above all offers the Fourth International the opportunity to test itself in a major way as the leadership of the youth movement: "The youth want a skill. The youth want to learn, to work, to live. The youth want to create a new world and to know what the future will be like. For that reason the youth will rally to the flag of whoever shows them a future."

For that, it is necessary to resolutely reject any conception isolating from our overall work a so-called revolutionary strategy for youth alone or for student youth alone: "Work in the youth is not an end in itself. It reaps its fruit in the thrust given to the building and strengthening of revolutionary parties capable of leading the working class to victory." The struggles of the youth cannot be isolated from the political questions arising in the national and worldwide class struggle as a whole and it cannot be opposed to them. All the youth—working and student—must join with the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie in order to fight their oppression. Trotskyists fight for the political unity of the working-class youth behind the proletariat. "Only under the banner of the proletariat in struggle for power can the Fourth International win the demands of the exploited youth." This fight for the unity of the youth against the divisiveness which comes out of the social relations and which is maintained politically by the apparatuses is part of the general struggle waged by Trotskyists to realize the workers united front.

To do this we must advance a program of democratic and transitional demands, the concrete application of the Transitional Program of which it is an integral part, aimed at mobilizing the mass of youth against the multiple attacks by capital against the student and working youth of the new generation; the right of all youth to work, to education, to professional training, to blossoming; against deprivation of skills and unemployment; against the bourgeoisie's educational reforms; against the superexploitation of young workers, for equal work and equal pay; against any austerity policy; for cultural and social facilities and professional training under trade-union control; for democratic rights for soldiers; against all forms of sexual oppression, etc.

Keeping in mind the specific characteristics in each country, Trotskyists actively work to build mass united organizations of student youth and unionization of the working-class youth.

At the same time they fight tirelessly in every mobilization of youth or sections of it for the class and its organizations to take up and support alongside the youth the objectives of the movement.

They fight against all attempts by the state apparatus to control and integrate the mass organizations of the youth; within the unions, they demand the creation of youth commissions and are the best activists in them.

In this struggle and in face of the attitude of the counterrevolutionary leaderships, the most advanced elements will join us to organize to fight capitalism. We should be ready to respond to this radicalization by building Marxist youth organizations, organizationally independent but tied to the program of the Fourth International.

This organization should find the best elements of the young generation to build it and should base itself on the radicalization and political awakening of the youth in its struggle against Stalinist and Social Democratic influence. Several European sections are already engaged in or oriented toward building youth organizations. Although its forms and tactical stages can vary according to circumstances, this orientation should be vigorously supported. In every country the activity of these organizations should be oriented around priority axes and campaigns so as to put it at the head of the great masses of youth in their struggle against the varying aspects of their exploitation and oppression. These organizations must also carry on intense agitation and propaganda on the general questions of the class struggle, to engage the youth in joint struggles with women, workers and foreign students, national minorities, in actions of solidarity with labor and antiimperialist struggles, in the overall political struggle for the workers united front against the bourgeois regimes.

Setting aside specific national characteristics, major European and international campaigns should be carried on aimed at the youth of the various countries: against NATO and the European Parliament; in defense of political prisoners; for soldiers' rights, etc. Such campaigns, the progress made in building youth organizations on a national scale, and the lessons drawn from the different experiences ought to enable rapid progress, at least on a European scale, toward the Communist Youth International.

c. In all the European countries the last decade has been marked by a *powerful movement of radicalization and mobilization of women*. This is expressed both by their growing participation in trade-union activities and labor struggles and by the rise of struggles directed against the many forms of superexploitation and oppression of women. The demands related to the right to employment and to professional training and those concerning social facilities (child-care centers, schools, and hospitals), the mobilization for the right of contraception and abortion, the struggle for the legalization of divorce (in Italy and Spain, etc.) have grown in a powerful way in Europe. In their breadth and their goal, these mobilizations challenge the overall relations between the classes; forced into partial concessions, bourgeois governments clearly demonstrate their inability to completely and lastingly satisfy the elementary demands of women; their struggles also shed light on the conservatism of the workers leaders, faced with growing contradictions because of the masses' response to such aspirations. Trotskyists actively contribute to developing a mobilization around fundamental demands of women to win their democratic rights, using organizational forms capable of making this mobilization extremely broad and democratic: an all-female movement, neighborhood groups, trade-union structures, and specialized organizations (the French MLAC, for example). Their proposals for campaigns should help in each instance to orient people toward the questions concerning women

most directly and massively and should reject substitutionist or ideologist-type initiatives favored by petty-bourgeois currents. Trotskyists also fight for wider unionization of women and for them to force the workers organizations to unite for the satisfaction of their demands, as in Italy.

d. In most of the countries of capitalist Europe, with the exception of Britain, a significant part of the population remains composed of poor peasants (tenant farmers, sharecroppers, small landowners). These people are experiencing a worse and worse economic situation because of the survival of large landed proprietors or the increased domination of capital in agriculture and especially in the channels of finance, processing and commerce. As the Portuguese experience showed, the political victory of the proletariat can only be won in a solid alliance with the poor peasants who themselves can only escape their oppression in making common cause with the workers against the bourgeoisie. Therefore the Trotskyists, in addition to their activity among agricultural wage workers—one of the most exploited parts of the proletariat—cannot neglect the importance of a program for the pauperized and exploited layers of the peasantry. Our ultimate aim is collectivization of agriculture as well as industry, but the proletariat will not impose this aim on the poor peasants. They must be assured the legitimate guarantee of their right to work and their standard of living and they must be given a real opportunity to rely on themselves to choose one or another form of farming. Such a program will include the slogans most appropriate to the conditions of each country: opening the account books of the Common Market and the agricultural and food trusts, nationalization without compensation of credit and big commerce; equal rights for agricultural and industrial workers; enactment and defense of agrarian reform; expropriation of big property in favor of collective tilling by cooperatives and small enterprises; abolition of sharecropping; public credit at low-interest rates; extension of social protection; special programs for job development in the regions hardest hit by the crisis, etc.

e. The immigrant workers from semicolonial countries or from less advanced European economies are an important part of the industrial proletariat in several capitalist countries of Europe (Britain, France, Germany, Switzerland, etc.); they are generally the most exploited and oppressed part of this industrial proletariat, the worst victims of the economic crisis and the least organized. Trotskyists fight all forms of racism, for the abrogation of all restrictive or discriminatory legislation, for full legal equality—including political rights—for the immigrant workers. Their program includes slogans to solidify unity with native workers on the basis of the demands of the most oppressed: preferential rights to education, free literacy training, guaranteed employment, freedom of travel, etc. Trotskyists also work to broaden unionization of immigrant workers and for their demands to be taken up by the whole labor movement.

f. The development of the social and political crisis in Europe has powerfully awakened *the struggle of the national minorities* which in addition to their old oppression often suffer the worst of the effects of the industrial and agricultural crisis. This movement affects both the bureaucratized workers states, where the aspirations of many nationalities and cultural minorities (Jews, Ukrainians, etc.) confront the reactionary oppression of the

bureaucracy. In capitalist Europe, the Irish question and the Basque struggle are the most advanced expressions of a movement which, in very diverse forms, takes on new acuteness in most countries: Belgium, Italy and Greece; Spain (Catalonia, Galicia, the Canary Islands, etc.); the United Kingdom (Scotland and Wales); France (Brittany, Occitania, Euzkadi, North Catalonia, Corsica, etc.). Moreover, in all countries the economic crisis aggravates the effects of the unevenness of capitalist development and the difficulties of the less prosperous regions (Mezzogiorno in Italy, West and Southwest in France, etc.).

This new rise of the mobilization of national minorities is a very direct part of the struggle of the working class against the bourgeois state and government in several countries. More than ever the decadence of British imperialism and its state puts the question of Irish liberation at the heart of the process of the proletarian revolution in the British Isles. Likewise, as the general strike in Euzkadi showed on the eve of the election to the Cortes, the revolt against the centralist oppression by the Castilian state is one of the most powerful components of the movement of the Spanish masses mobilizing to destroy the dictatorship; the concession of "autonomy" through which the bourgeoisie, with the support of the workers leaders, attempts to block the real exercise of the right to self-determination cannot suffice to disarm the struggle of the oppressed nationalities.

While maintaining their complete political independence from the bourgeois or petty-bourgeois leaderships of the nationalist or regionalist movements, the sections of the Fourth International actively support the economic, linguistic, and cultural demands of the oppressed masses and solidarize unconditionally with them in the struggle against military and police repression. Massive campaigns should be organized toward this end on a national and international scale (particularly with the Irish and Basque masses).

Trotskyists defend in the clearest way the right of all oppressed nations and nationalities to decide their own future, up to and including separation if they desire it. This puts the struggle for the total independence of Ireland on the agenda today, and in the Spanish state the fight for the exercise of the right to self-determination and the meeting of free Constituent Cortes for all the nationalities; the full recognition of the right to unity and separation of all the Basque country and all of Catalonia. This struggle is part of the perspective of a socialist federation of Iberian states.

At the same time Trotskyists explain that the real solution to the problems of the masses everywhere can be found only in the struggle for a workers government and for a federation of the Socialist United States of Europe. The Fourth International and its sections should initiate the broadest solidarity campaigns, particularly on the Irish and Basque questions.

g. Trotskyists wage a relentless struggle *against militarism and the bourgeois army*, the instrument of social oppression and imperialist domination. In doing so, they also combat the orientation of the treacherous workers leaders of supporting "national defense" and "democratization of the army." In their overall political struggle Trotskyists put forth the perspective of dissolving the military hierarchy, organization of soldiers along democratic and soviet lines and overall control of military

activities by the workers organizations and the trade unions. At present they actively participate in mobilizing soldiers and organizing them on a mass scale. This movement found its most advanced development in Portugal. In most other countries of Europe an important potential combativity has been shown among soldiers who mobilize on a broader and broader scale to defend their democratic rights. We should fully support such a movement, giving particular attention to the fight against repression and for full rights of expression, assembly and organization, including on all the national and international political questions. We must also help any moves toward the democratic organization of the mass of soldiers independent of the military hierarchy, and linked to the labor movement. In this way the best conditions will be created for bringing the soldiers solidly to the side of the workers struggle.

The same is not true for members of the bourgeois police apparatus who belong to the repressive bodies in a professional capacity and assume a function aimed directly against the workers. The workers do not support any demands of these bodies: their only perspective is dissolution of the repressive organs of the state, firing of all police and execution of police functions by the workers militia.

h. Major mobilizations are beginning to develop throughout capitalist Europe to combat the "destructive and degrading tendencies of decadent capitalism." The defoliants used over Vietnam, nuclear arms, the Seveso "accidents," and industrial pollution are all manifestations of capitalist barbarism and imperialism's inability to use science and technology for human progress.

Trotskyists fight in this arena to mobilize the broadest masses and for the workers to demand that their organizations defend them in all aspects of their daily life. It is up to the proletariat and the labor movement to lead a struggle which is part of the fight to overturn capitalism.

The policy of the treacherous workers leaders allows bourgeois and petty-bourgeois forces to take the leadership of these movements and channel them off toward the reactionary utopia of a supposed return to nature. Trotskyists must work to put the mass mobilizations under the leadership of the proletariat and show a class alternative to the obscurantist ideas of the petty-bourgeois "pacifist" and "ecologist" movements.

15. For the Political Unity and Independence of the Working Class; Toward the Workers Government

The rise in the class struggle and the sharpening of the political crisis puts on the agenda in the main countries of Europe the question of overturning the bourgeois regimes and installing workers governments. Against the class-collaborationist policy through which the workers leaderships chain the workers to the defense of the bourgeois order, the task of the sections of the Fourth International is to show the masses the perspective for a way forward corresponding to their objective needs, a way forward assuring the unity and independence of the proletarian front against the bourgeois state. In such a perspective several major battles are on the agenda today in most European countries.

a. Trotskyists fight for *the absolute political and organizational independence of the combat organizations of the working class, beginning with the unions.*

The offensive throughout Europe against workers previous gains underlines the need to firmly resist any efforts to restrict trade-union rights, in particular the right to strike. It also highlights the importance of fighting all attempts to involve workers organizations in enforcing austerity policies or "wage controls"—including co-management or participation, bourgeois planning, wage pacts, etc. This struggle requires intransigently defending the independence of the union movement in relation to the state and government, including when workers parties participate in the government. It also requires an all-out fight against proposals such as those for Shop Councils put forward in France by the leaderships of the CFDT and later the CP and SP. This proposal, which goes in the direction of establishment by the bourgeois state of organs of power limited by definition, represents an attack both on the elementary functioning of the unions and on the future development of committee-type organs and workers councils. The fight for trade-union independence has an immediate meaning today in the countries where the workers leaders are already in the front line applying anti-wage policies: the Social Democrats or Labourites in Portugal, Germany or Britain, the Stalinists in Italy, etc. In a complementary way, we wage a fight to defend and strengthen union democracy (the right of minorities to exist and express their views, defense of the federalist organization principle, the practice of general assemblies, etc.), to develop the broadest and most democratic forms of struggle and organization (elected strike committees, with representatives subject to recall, etc.) and for trade-union unity where it does not exist (unity of action, toward trade-union fusion).

In Spain and Portugal, the crisis of the dictatorial regimes put on the agenda the demand for definitive dissolution of all corporatist-type organs and the rebuilding of real workers unions organizationally independent of the bourgeois state apparatus. That was why it was necessary to fight head-on the trade-union "unity" law in Portugal. This law, in several of its provisions, moved toward reestablishing state and military control over the mass organization of the workers in a new form: for that reason it was and remains on the agenda that a trade-union congress, united and democratic, should be called. For the same reason, it was imperative in Spain to destroy the vertical CNS organization and to combat without concessions the Stalinist policy of participating in the official "union" elections.

Today it is equally imperative to denounce the governmental plans for "trade-union reform" and the creation of "factory committees" which, with the support of the Stalinist apparatus, represent a state intervention in the free functioning of the workers unions and in addition is aimed at putting institutional shackles on the movement of the masses toward forming their own united and democratic organs. One of the central tasks of the Spanish proletariat is to build a mass, independent, united trade-union organization.

b. Without spreading any illusions about the necessity or possibility of any bourgeois-democratic "stage," the parties of the Fourth International do not hesitate to mobilize broadly around political slogans expressing the masses desire to *defend and extend their democratic gains* helping remove obstacles to the workers progress toward the fight for a workers government and the destruction of the bourgeois state itself.

This kind of activity has the most potential in countries where bourgeois rule remains more or less tributary to dictatorial or Bonapartist forms. In Greece the paralysis of the Caramanlis regime in face of the social and political crisis poses new threats to democratic rights, whose defense is a central task. In Portugal the fight to defend and widen democratic rights has been and remains a decisive task in the masses revolutionary struggle: for dissolution of all repressive organs (PIDE, in particular); against the political tutelage of the military hierarchy (the MFA, the Council of the Revolution, the institutional pact limiting the power of the Constituent Assembly, etc.); against all the repressive measures of the different governments, actively supported by the Stalinist leaders (the anti-strike law, *República*) and the Social Democratic leaders (the "law and order" policy of the Soares government). In Spain, similarly, the mobilization to put a workers government in power is firmly rooted in the fight against the dictatorial state forms and against the workers leaders' de facto support for them in endorsing the fake "liberalization" of the Suárez regime. This creates the need for a fight for total amnesty, unrestricted rights of expression and organization, the dissolution of the repressive bodies and against the monarchy, for the right of self-determination for the oppressed nationalities, for the dissolution of the Cortes granted by decree, for free elections, for constituent Cortes. In a different form the crisis of decomposition of Gaullist Bonapartism and the policy of the Union of the Left, prolonging the survival of this regime, put the immediate slogan of "Dissolution of the National Assembly" on the agenda in face of the Barre plan offensive and gives a permanent meaning to the demand to abolish the Fifth Republic and its constitution. These democratic slogans lead directly to the demand for the formation of a government made up solely of workers organizations, a demand that gives these slogans their full political impact for the workers struggle today.

In the European countries, the masses' mobilization to defend their democratic rights, without having such a central character, confronts the existing regimes in many fields; the struggle against repressive legislation, police attacks on individual rights, emergency laws (as in Ireland); the fight for secular state and educational policy in the countries where the Church maintains its hold; against all monarchical vestiges, whether "constitutional" or not; the demand for real equal rights and satisfaction of the demands of the most oppressed layers of the population (women, youth, gays, immigrants, national minorities, etc.). In all these fields, building a mass mobilization and seeking the broadest working-class unity are the appropriate modes of action; these are the methods required for the workers and the labor movement to defend themselves against police attacks and against threats from fascist-like or racist movements such as those found in several European countries. No minority action, no "propaganda in action" can substitute in this area as in all others for a consistent fight for the workers united front.

c. The workers class struggle, in all revolutionary or prerevolutionary periods, is based on the rise of democratic and united organs. These elementary forms of the workers united front appear still in embryo and isolated form in partial experiences such as strike committees or certain workers control actions; they reach full bloom in the extension of workers control and the generalization of soviets and workers militias which characterize a situation

of dual power. At each stage of the development of the class struggle, Trotskyists must actively support all forms of organization, all mass actions in the direction of workers control which effectively help to extend the practice of workers democracy, reinforce the organized power of the workers against their class enemy and overcome the division of the traditional organizations. Such a policy presupposes the greatest discernment concerning the real level of mobilization and consciousness of the masses and the firmest struggle against anarchist, populist or "self-management" tendencies which in one way or another make "control" or "workers democracy" a cover for a reformist or ultraleft orientation. In this context workers "self-organization" should never be isolated from all the tasks for which the working class mobilizes and advances toward unity and political independence. It would only make "workers control" or "soviets" into an empty fetish to pose them as an alternative to defending the workers demands, to fighting to defend and extend democratic rights, to seeking trade-union unity and independence, or to fighting for a political break with the bourgeoisie and for a workers government. As was shown in the Portuguese experience, only on the basis of defending their democratic and economic demands did the workers, mobilized in massive numbers, come to form their strongest committees; these committees could not have reached their full extent, however—providing the political basis for real dual power—without the main political obstacles to the realization of the workers united front being removed: dependence on the military hierarchy, attacks on democratic and labor rights, and division of the workers ranks. Thus, far from being counterposed, the perspective of soviets and the immediate struggle against attacks on the Constituent Assembly (the institutional pact, the threats of dissolution) and for the formation of a CP-SP government without bourgeois ministers were necessary parts of the same fight for the workers united front.

d. In the present situation of prerevolutionary crisis, the struggles of the working class and its allies in most European countries run up against the political roadblock of the governments in power and the workers leaderships' refusal to propose an independent political solution. Accordingly, the central axis of Trotskyists activity should be to formulate in concrete, mobilizing, agitational terms, a governmental solution reflecting the need for the workers and their organizations to take the road of breaking with the bourgeoisie without further delay and demand all power for themselves.

In several European countries it is parties which the workers overwhelmingly look upon as their own that are assuming governmental responsibilities, whether by themselves (Britain) or in parliamentary coalitions (West Germany, Belgium, Norway, Finland, etc.). Trotskyists support the formation and existence of governments composed only of workers organizations as against the bourgeois parties (conservative, liberal, Christian Democrat, etc.) in their electoral slogans. This in no way implies support to the program and policy of class collaboration which characterizes the Social Democratic or Labor parties. In all cases the fight for political independence for the working class seeks to mobilize the masses to unconditionally defend their demands and to reject having the unions give their allegiance to the government policy; it counterposes to the government policy the immediate tasks of a genuine

workers government, breaking with the bourgeoisie, in response to the aspirations of the workers.

In the present situation in Portugal, a similar policy should be followed against the "law and order" policy of the Soares government. However it should base itself on the demand for formation of a PSP and PCP government, a slogan which combats the bureaucratic rivalry of the two main workers parties and expresses the need to break with all forms of subordination to the military hierarchy (such as the continued constitutional role of the "Council of the Revolution").

The demand for a political break with the parties of the bourgeoisie—with its "political representatives that are virtual corpses"—and for the formation of a government of workers organizations without bourgeois ministers has a directly agitational significance and an enormous educational value in face of the popular-front policy practiced by the workers leaders in France, Italy, Spain and Finland. The call for the immediate formation of a CP-SP government is indispensable to unmask the concrete form taken by the counterrevolutionary policy of these parties.

The struggle against future governmental coalitions with the bourgeoisie, the struggle against the division of the workers ranks, and the struggle against present support for governments in power are directly tied together in slogans demanding that the workers leaders take the path of a political break with the bourgeoisie without delay; "Giscard out, Down with the Fifth Republic, SP-CP unity, For a single list in the legislative elections. Neither Gaullists nor Radicals, CP-SP government without bourgeois ministers." "Andreotti out, Christian Democracy out. No to the historic compromise. For a PCI-PSI government." "Suárez out, down with the monarchy, dissolution of the decree-granted Cortes, For a constituent assembly; For a PCE-PSOE government." Understood in this way, these political slogans are not simply denunciations. They have a mobilizing function; they express simply and in an immediate way the objective necessity, flowing from all the mass struggles, to get rid of the ruling governments and reject the death trap of the popular front; they provide the most powerful means of going from these struggles to lead the masses to the "one and only conclusion: the workers must break with all the traditional parties of the bourgeoisie to . . . establish their own government."

At the same time Trotskyist militants know that even in the unlikely case where exceptional circumstances force the CP and SP to break with their whole current policy and form a government without bourgeois ministers, this would still be a bourgeois government in its policy. Hence, while Trotskyists unconditionally support any action in the direction of a break with the bourgeoisie—such as the formation of a CP-SP government—they give no support to a policy not conforming to the workers interests. In relation to a future CP-SP government, as in relation to a popular-front government, they actively encourage the independent mobilization of the masses in defense of their demands, for the formation of their democratic bodies and for all the tasks that should be carried out by a genuine workers government: expropriations, workers control, monopoly of foreign trade, dissolution of the repressive institutions and a break with the bourgeois political institutions. With this perspective they begin now to carry out very concrete agitation and propaganda for their own program for the current crisis, a program which reflects all

the demands the masses need to grab hold of, against the whole policy and program of the treacherous leaders, whether in face of a popular-front government or a government of only workers organizations. In this way they contribute in the very test of the class struggle to advancing the consciousness among the masses of the objective contradiction between their aspirations and the treacherous policy of their leaders. In this way, decisive steps can be taken quickly toward building parties of the Fourth International in Europe.

16. Against the European Imperialist Powers; Against the Bureaucracy; Against Peaceful Coexistence; For the Socialist United States of Europe

a. The Fourth International and its sections are in the vanguard of the struggle against imperialist domination and fights head-on the chauvinistic attitude which is an inseparable part of the orientation of the old workers leadership.

In solidarity with all the liberation struggles throughout the world (Central Africa and Australia, the Middle East, Latin America, etc.) the European Trotskyists make a particular contribution to mobilizing the masses against the imperialist policies of their own states: against the arms race, arms sales, military interventions (France in Chad and later Zaïre; the British army in Ireland, etc.); for self-determination and independence for the territories under direct imperialist domination (the French colonies and Ireland); against imperialist pillage of the imperialist-dominated countries, etc. On all these questions Trotskyists must be attentive to all the events around which national or international campaigns are capable of broadly mobilizing the masses for concrete objectives.

b. Without ever embracing chauvinist theories of the "national interest," but rather basing themselves on proletarian internationalism, Trotskyists fight all international imperialist alliances and placements of military force. Intense propaganda is needed in favor of the destruction of the NATO alliance and the Common Market. An international campaign by the Fourth International is needed to denounce the bourgeois operation for electing a "European parliament." This campaign can be

an occasion for explaining to a wide audience the unity of the working-class struggle in all the European countries, the current importance of the fight to establish workers power as the only way out of the present crisis.

More current than ever, the slogan of the Socialist United States of Europe, the spearhead of the struggle of the international and its sections in all European countries, today outlines a concrete perspective; it expresses the necessary political convergence between the struggle for the social revolution on the agenda in capitalist Europe and the struggle for the political revolution in Eastern Europe.

This is the overall perspective in which the fight against the division of Germany fits—a division whose continuation is one of the main stakes in the defense of the international status quo implied by the détente policy. The Fourth International, as against both imperialism and the bureaucracy, stands clearly for the socialist unification of Germany. From the same standpoint, the Fourth International denounces the counterrevolutionary Helsinki accord, demands the withdrawal of occupation troops—both imperialist and bureaucratic—throughout Europe, and opposes all existing military agreements.

c. Trotskyists have a decisive international responsibility in developing mass campaigns to defend the victims of repression and to free political prisoners in both the capitalist countries (Spain, Ireland, Argentina, etc.) and in the bureaucratized states. In the latter case, the Fourth International defends all dissidents, regardless of their affiliations, against all attacks on individual rights and freedoms of expression and organization. It fundamentally distinguishes this unconditional struggle against bureaucratic repression from the defense—equally unconditional—of the conquests of the October revolution against the many pressures exerted by imperialism with the complicity of the bureaucracy, the agent of the world bourgeoisie within the workers movement. The sections of the Fourth International help build the broadest united-front actions in solidarity with workers struggles and against repression in the bureaucratized workers states. This is the way the illusions encouraged by the statements of the Social Democratic and Stalinist leaders about "freedom," or the demagogic provisions of the Helsinki agreements, can be combated.