

TROTSKYISM VERSUS
REVISIONISM

A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY

VOLUME FOUR

*The
International Committee
against liquidationism*

NEW PARK PUBLICATIONS

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A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY

edited by C. Slaughter

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*The International Committee
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8. International Bulletin No. 16 of the International Committee of the Fourth International

9. *Fourth International*, Vol. 2, No. 1, Summer 1965, pp.35-38

10.a, b. Internal Bulletin of the International Committee of the Fourth International

10c. *Fourth International*, Vol. 2, No. 1, Summer 1965, pp.39-42

11. *Fourth International*, Vol. 1, No. 1, Spring 1964

12. *The Newsletter*, July 4 and 11, 1964

13. *The Newsletter*, July 20, 1964

14. *Ceylon: The Great Betrayal*, Newsletter pamphlet, Summer 1964

15. *Problems of the Fourth International*, Newsletter pamphlet, August 1966

16a. *Workers Press*, July 7, 1970

16b. *Workers Press*, September 8, 1970

17. Bulletin International Series No. 11, *For a Discussion on the problems of the Fourth International*

Note on sources

The documents published in these volumes have been collected from the journals, internal bulletins and correspondence of the Trotskyist movement over the period since 1951. The series is designed to provide the basic documentation of the fight within the Fourth International during that time. Editing of the text has been kept to a minimum: footnotes and bracketed explanatory notes have been added only for essential reference. In all other respects the documents have been reproduced as they appeared in the sources indicated below.

Each volume has a foreword introducing the reader to the main developments covered in it, with a glossary of names and an index provided as additional guides to the documents.

The sources for the documents used in this volume are as follows:

- 1, 2, 3. International Bulletin No.10 of the International Committee of the Fourth International
4. International Bulletin No. 12 of the International Committee of the Fourth International
5. *Fourth International*, Vol.2, No. 1, Summer 1965, p.34
6. *Ibid.*, pp.17-30; pp.32-3
7. International Bulletin No. 14 of the International Committee of the Fourth International

Foreword

The starting point of this fourth volume of documents of the International Committee is the spurious 'reunification' in 1963 of the Socialist Workers Party (USA) with the revisionists (Pabloites) who had earlier split from the Fourth International in 1953. When the SWP severed its association with the International Committee in order to effect this 'reunification' (forming the so-called 'United Secretariat of the Fourth International') they were warned that this could only prepare the most disastrous betrayals. Above all, the SWP's cynical decision to forbid discussion on the political issues which had earlier split the movement gave the surest indication of their theoretical degeneration. According to them, the advantages of unification were such as to override any such discussion. It did not take long for the opposed positions to be verified. As the documents here reprinted make abundantly clear, down to the smallest detail, the unprincipled unification was *directly* responsible for the events in Ceylon in July 1964 which are perhaps the most significant turning point in the history of Trotskyism.

The Ceylonese section of the Pabloite 'International', the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP) had long been hailed as the most successful of sections in achieving roots in the mass movement and a national political identity. In July 1964, less than one year after the SWP's 'reunification', the LSSP leaders accepted ministerial positions in the bourgeois coalition government of Mrs. Bandaranaike. The great majority of the LSSP at a special congress endorsed this action.

Accordingly, this majority was expelled from the 'United Secretariat'. But this expulsion did not begin to answer the real questions: what was the responsibility of the United Secretariat itself for the betrayal?

Proof can be found in the documents below that the SWP and the United Secretariat were directly responsible for what happened in Ceylon. The primary result of the agreement (by the SWP and the Pabloites) not to discuss contentious matters was that the United Secretariat, fully warned of the impending disaster in Ceylon, *suppressed* any discussion of it because, they said, such discussion would be 'divisive'!

Once more we see, however, that the refutation of a revisionist position by objective developments did not turn the revisionists off course. On the contrary, Mandel, Hansen, Frank and all the revisionist leaders refused to face up to their responsibility for the events in Ceylon, and in this way they walled off the cadres inside their own parties from the lessons of the experience. The International Committee, on the other hand, pointed out very sharply to the Ceylon minority, now formed into the LSSP (Revolutionary), that it was not sufficient to reject empirically the treacherous step taken by the majority. Only if the entirely false conceptions of internationalism which had nurtured the betrayal were understood and rejected could the LSSP (R) possibly avoid the same fate.

The fact is that since 1964 the LSSP (R), refusing to break from the Pabloite International, has become completely opportunist, as evidence in the policies of its leader Bala Tampoe. The International Committee based itself on the handful of comrades who fought to start from the international struggle against revisionism. It is from these comrades that the present section of the IC in Ceylon, fighting in every trade union and among the youth, has been built.

In this volume, the lessons of this experience are fully documented. It becomes very clear that behind the Ceylon betrayal was a revision of the essentials of dialectical materialism and of every basic Marxist position, including the meaning of proletarian internationalism and the independence of the revolutionary party. The Ceylon experience indicated not just the depths to which revisionism had sunk, but first and foremost the fact that imperialism was entering a new stage of its historical crisis, marked by the fact that in one case it had to resort to 'Trotskyist' revisionists in order to maintain the basis of its rule! For the International Committee it was not therefore a matter of drawing

'theoretical' conclusions from the Ceylon betrayal, or merely contemplating its implications. What confronted the movement was the danger that if the sections failed to set course for the building of independent revolutionary parties, to win and train the new forces which would be thrust forward by the new stage of the crisis, they would fall victim to the 'left' petty bourgeoisie and thus end up serving imperialism. These lessons from the struggle internationally were basic to the turn of the Socialist Labour League, British section of the International Committee, in 1964.

For four years, the SLL had worked inside the Labour Party Young Socialists, and had won full support for its policies and its leadership inside that organisation. In 1964 the reformist bureaucracy began a vicious campaign of administrative expulsions and other measures to smash the youth movement. All the lessons of the Ceylon experience — the stage reached by the crisis of imperialism, the fatal dangers from revisionism and liquidationism — shaped the SLL's decision to rally the youth around the banner of building the revolutionary party and founding a daily paper, and as the first step, to split decisively from the Labour Party, as the only way of preventing its being decimated by the bureaucracy.

In this way, the lessons of the international struggle against revisionism armed the IC sections to prepare in practice as well as in theory for the accelerating crisis which broke through the surface in 1968 in France, in Czechoslovakia, and in the gold crisis of that year, soon to be followed by the collapse of the whole Bretton Woods system in August 1971. The fight against revisionism in the years covered by this volume was conducted on the firm basis of this orientation to the building of independent revolutionary parties. When comrades study this and earlier volumes, they will be doing so on that very same basis, the struggle in practice to build revolutionary parties, sections of the Fourth International.

Today, the SWP confirms in practice, in a 'negative' way, the theoretical lessons for which the International Committee has been fighting. Just as the SWP in 1945 was compelled to expel (quite rightly) the faction which had worked inside it on Pablo's instructions, so in 1974, 20 years later, the SWP has now expelled 69 members of a faction working as 'a party within a party' on behalf on the Mandel-Frank leadership of the 'United Secretariat' in Paris! The fact is that this 'United Secretariat' is split from top to bottom, not only in the United States but all over the world. Such splits were

inevitable on the quicksands basis of the 1963 reunification. On the one side, petty-bourgeois adventurism typified by the Pabloite Ligue Communiste in France and the Tariq Ali International Marxist Group in Britain, and on the other the petty-bourgeois opportunism, dressed up as 'orthodoxy', of the SWP. Any serious cadres left in these organisations will find the path to Marxism only by turning to the International Committee.

In 1971, the French Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI) split from the International Committee, and it is important that the documents of that split be studied alongside those in this volume (see 'Fourth International' Vol 7 No2, Winter 1971-72, Workers Press 29/3/72 to 11/4/72 and 'In Defence of Trotskyism'). What is vital is that the OCI, rejecting dialectical materialism as the theory of knowledge of Marxism and as the foundation of the training of the revolutionary youth, arrived at essentially identical theoretical positions with these of the SWP.

Their split came at a much higher stage of the development of the world crisis, and it was possible to educate a large cadre of youth and workers on the basis of the theoretical lessons of the split in a number of countries, forming entirely new sections of the IC and strengthening the existing parties. It is to the education of these comrades that

Their split came at a much higher stage of the development of the world crisis, and it was possible to educate a large cadre of youth and workers on the basis of the theoretical lessons of the split in a number of countries, forming entirely new sections of the IC and strengthening the existing parties. It is to the education of these comrades that the publication of this and the three previous volumes, covering the period 1953-1973, is directed.

Chapter One

The principled standpoint on unification

On the motion of the Socialist Labour League, in August 1962 the International Committee proposed to the Pabloites the setting up of a Parity Committee (a committee with equal representation from the International Committee and the Pabloite International Secretariat) to organize the international discussion, and this committee met on September 2, 1962. The minutes published here (Document 1) show that a firm framework was laid down which could have drawn the whole world movement into discussion. The International Committee fought at all times to make this framework operative, against the attempts by the Pabloites and the Socialist Workers' Party to cover over the fundamental issues.

DOCUMENT 1

Minutes of the First Meeting of the Parity Committee, September 2, 1962

Present: 3 representatives from each side, plus one observer.

Chair: It was decided to have alternately a delegate of the IEC and of the IC in the chair.

1. *Aims of the Parity Committee*

The IC representatives stated that they did not politically represent the SWP, but rather a definite political tendency in continuity with the break made in 1953.

The IC and the IEC both presented statements to the committee which indicated the goal and the purpose of the parity committee as seen by both organizations. It was agreed to annexe these statements to the minutes and to limit any joint resolution to questions on which there is common agreement.

2. *Organization of the Discussion*

Agreed that a special common apparatus was not practicable at this stage. Each side should be responsible for publication of its documents. A rubber stamp will be manufactured and put on the copies circulated for international discussion. The Parity Committee will supervise the distribution of this material.

It was agreed that so far as possible a common list of addresses should be compiled. In the case of addresses which could not be exchanged, further discussion will arrange distribution methods. Dispatch should be from a common centre, with joint financial responsibility.

It was agreed that where oral discussion can supplement the written discussion, this should be arranged at an early meeting of the Parity Committee.

By common agreement, it is also noted that both parties should strive to keep the discussion and the polemics internal, but that at this stage, no definite undertaking can be given in that respect.

Arrangements for translation will be made by the two sides. Measures will be taken to prevent duplication.

A communique recording the decisions of this first meeting would be issued in mid-September after consultations in London. This consultation would also fix the numbers of documents to be prepared.

The documents to be first presented are:

From the IEC: Theses of the VI Congress on
The Colonial Revolution
International Economic Perspectives

From the IC: Resolution, World Prospect for Socialism
Two other documents given agreement by
the parties concerned.

The first dispatch will be from the Committee's next meeting on October 15 in London.

3. *Joint Activity*

(i) Campaign for rehabilitation of Trotsky, etc. It was agreed to prepare a balance-sheet of activity so far on this question and on this basis lay the groundwork for a joint statement and campaign at the next major development in the Stalinist crisis.

(ii) The Angolan revolution. It was agreed to engage in a joint propaganda campaign on the Angolan national movement. Exchange of material to begin immediately.

Motion Agreed at the Meeting on September 2

1. All national sections affiliated to the IEC and the IC are invited to participate in an international discussion to explore the possibilities of regroupment of the Fourth International.

The BLA (Posadas tendency) will be invited to participate in the discussion.

If it is unanimously agreed by the members of the Parity Committee, other organizations can be invited to participate in the discussion.

2. The Parity Committee will meet once a month to examine reports on the discussion from the participating organizations and to organize joint activity internationally and in those countries where two or more tendencies exist. All organizations will be encouraged to develop the maximum practical activity during the course of the discussion and to submit experiences of such activity for international discussion.

3. The Parity Committee calls for the ending of factional splits within the participating sections while the international discussion is proceeding.

4. It is recognized that all tendencies have the right to organize such congresses or meetings as they might think necessary for the purpose of their political activity, within the statutory framework of their respective organizations.

Proposals Submitted by the International Committee of the Fourth International to the September 2 Meeting

1. All national sections affiliated to the IS, IC or LA-Bureau (Posadas group) are invited to participate in an international discussion to assist in the reorganization of the Fourth International.

If it is unanimously agreed by the members of the Parity Committee, other organizations can be invited to participate in the discussion.

2. These sections would have full rights to submit any material they thought necessary for such a discussion, and it shall be the duty of the

Parity Committee to circulate all such material received for discussion throughout the international movement.

3. The Parity Committee should meet once a month to examine reports on the discussion from the participating organizations and to organize joint activity internationally and in those countries where two or more tendencies exist. All organizations should be encouraged to develop the maximum practical activity during the course of the discussion and to submit experiences of such activity for international discussion.

4. The Parity Committee calls for the ending of factional splits within the participating sections while the international discussion is proceeding.

5. The Parity Committee agrees to work for the calling of a preliminary international congress during the summer of 1964. The purpose of this congress would be to establish the political policies and the relationship of forces between the various tendencies so that discussion can then proceed towards a definitive solution of the international crisis.

6. It is recognized that all tendencies have the right to organize such congresses or meetings as they might think necessary for the purpose of their political activity.

August 25, 1962

Resolution Submitted by the IEC to the September 2 Meeting

1. The 23rd Plenum welcomes the reopening of the negotiations for the reunification with the organizations of the International Committee in execution of the resolutions voted at the 4th, 5th and 6th World Congress which declared that unity is possible and desirable.

2. It decides to participate in a parity committee with the International Committee in order to promote the reunification process. The

delegation of the IEC at the parity committee will be appointed by the IS and will act under its control.

3. This delegation will produce before the committee the documents of the 6th World Congress and possibly some other political documents elaborated by the IS.

4. The IS will send a report at the beginning of the negotiations for the reunification to the leaderships of the sections. These leaderships will also be informed about each new step inside the parity committee.

5. The 23rd Plenum will re-examine the whole problem of the reunification in the light of the first experience of the parity committee.

6. A final decision on the question of reunification will be taken by the 7th World Congress.

7. The 23rd Plenum expresses its strong belief that the political and organizational conditions exist for a successful reunification. It appeals to all the Trotskyists in order that they be equal to their responsibilities and help the world movement to progress with reunified forces in the historical period of world revolution in march which will see in the coming years the progressive integration of our cadres in the mass revolutionary forces in all the continents.

8. The IS will write a public statement analysing and illustrating the reunification process.

DOCUMENT 2**Declaration on Reunification of the World
Trotskyist Movement by the 23rd Plenum of the
IEC (Pabloite), June 23-24, 1962**

1. — Ever since the split of 1953-54, the Fourth International has consistently stood and fought for reunification of the world Trotskyist forces, and voted motions in this sense at its 4th, 5th and 6th World Congresses. This persistent stand in favour of unity was based on the fundamental political and organizational principles of our movement.

a) Politically it expressed the evaluation of the differences dividing world Trotskyist forces as being compatible with coexistence within a single international organization, based on democratic centralism.

b) Organizationally, it expressed opposition to any idea of a monolithic International; recognition of the possibility of coexistence of different political tendencies remains based on the common programme and principles, and that they accept the functioning of the international organization along the general rules of democratic centralism.

The International's struggle for reunification was further based on the firm belief that acceptance of unity of action and normal discipline for all tendencies within the general framework of the common programme is a life-and-death question for the Trotskyist movement.

The reformist and Stalinist parties keep a minimum of cohesion essentially not on the basis of programmatic agreement, but on the basis of the power of attraction of the material apparatus of the parties (the apparatus of the trade-union movement and the bourgeois state apparatus on the one hand), as well as on the basis of the mass influence of these parties. If the world Trotskyist forces, which are not kept together by any material power of attraction, are not firmly

educated in the spirit of faithfulness and attachment to the International, they are in danger of going through a process of frequent splits, because of the numerical weakness of which they still suffer, each tendency arising on the basis of momentary differences being inclined to 'go it alone', before experience can have conclusively decided the issue.

2. For this very reason, the Fourth International considered the split of 1953, and especially the Open Letter calling for disregard towards the normally elected leadership of the International, as a big mistake, which has done great harm to the world movement. Any differences which existed at that time in the International should have been thoroughly discussed inside the movement, and any organizational grievances brought up before the competent bodies. As long as all Trotskyist organizations do not keep these general rules, irresponsible splits will continue to hamper our progress, even under favourable objective conditions.

3. The political basis of the 1953-54 split, as we saw it, was a lack of full understanding of the correctness of the International's turn in the estimate of the world situation, made in 1950-51. Many comrades at that time did not understand correctly the tremendous consequences of the victory of the Chinese revolution, of the rising colonial revolution and of the progress of the productive forces in the workers' states, not only with regard to imperialism — whose world positions have ever since worsened — but also with regard to the Soviet bureaucracy, which has been thrown into a very grave permanent crisis, but a crisis of a different nature than the crises born out of the economic weaknesses of the Soviet state in the thirties, or out of the defeats of the international labour movement in that same period. They therefore saw a tendency of 'capitulation towards Stalinism' in the International's correct estimation, that the political revolution in the USSR would be preceded and prepared by numerous divisions within the bureaucracy, concessions by various bureaucratic factions towards the masses, and important reforms within the Soviet Union and the so-called 'people's democracies'.

4. But starting from the XXth Congress of the CPSU, some organizations affiliated with the International Committee or in sympathy with its political views as in the case of the SWP, corrected their

evaluation of the world situation and of the evolution within the Soviet Union, and arrived at an estimation of events very close to that of the Fourth International. From that time on, reunification became not only desirable but also possible. Whereas unity negotiations broke down in 1957 on considerations about the organizational functioning of the International. This obstacle now appears to be removed, for instance, the latest convention of the SWP has clearly stated or restated its fraternal opinion that the Fourth International should adhere to the principles of democratic centralism on an international scale.

At the same time, the splendid campaign of aiding the Cuban revolution, developed in the heart of the imperialist metropolis, and closely parallel to the campaign of helping the Algerian and other revolutions by the International, indicated that the majority of the IC had adopted a line of action in world politics very similar to that of the International, without forgetting in any way that only victorious proletarian revolutions in the imperialist countries can deal the final blow against capitalism, and eliminate for ever the spectre of nuclear annihilation.

During this period, however, some of the organizations affiliated with the International Committee, like the Burns group and especially the Lambert group in France, have not come closer towards a common Trotskyist position. The sectarian orientation of these groups, their failure to adopt a correct position towards the Cuban revolution and the Cuban workers' state, but especially the unconditional support given by the Lambert group to the MNA, so-called 'proletarian' and even 'bolshevik' wing of the Algerian revolution, which showed itself later as a tool of French imperialism, are raising special problems.

5. After the 4th and 5th World Congress, the 6th World Congress of the IVth International came out strongly in favour of unity, and unanimously gave the IS a mandate to reopen negotiations with this purpose. The deepening of the world crisis of Stalinism which was illustrated by the XXIIInd Congress of the CPSU; the great chances given to revolutionary forces independent of the Kremlin within the framework of the colonial revolution, as illustrated by the splendid victory of Fidel Castro in Cuba and his progressive evolution ever since, put today a tremendous responsibility upon all Trotskyist organizations. Unification is not only necessary in order to exploit all

the chances opened up for progress of our world movement under these conditions. It is also the best means of educating in practice the communist and revolutionary militants all over the world in the possibility and necessity of a world communist organization, united in action and at the same time completely free and democratic in its internal discussion, admitting various tendencies within its boundaries. Therefore, unity today is not only possible and desirable; it is urgently needed as a contribution of the world Trotskyist movement towards a progressive solution of many key problems posed today before the world revolutionary forces.

6. For all these reasons, the XXIIIrd Plenum of the IEC calls upon all Trotskyist organizations without exclusivism towards anybody, to open a process of rapid reunification:

a) It decides to participate in a parity committee set up together with the International Committee, in order to organize an international discussion in which all tendencies within both organizations should freely participate;

b) It will consistently fight within that parity committee in order to have the discussion orientated towards unification, i.e. to have it centred around the problems confronting the world movement today, and not around the past differences which can safely be left to be considered at some future date, within a united organization.

c) It will propose to start immediately common actions, e.g. to coordinate the activities of aiding the Cuban, the Algerian, the Angolan, the coming Spanish revolution; to co-ordinate the struggle for an open rehabilitation of L.D. Trotsky and of all the victims of the Moscow Trials; to co-ordinate activities in the youth movement, etc.

d) It will propose a common call for a World Congress of Reunification of the Fourth International, to be called as soon as possible.

e) The XXIIIrd Plenum states that, as it sees the present political line of both sides, nothing stands in the way of building an integrated international leadership based upon the essential forces of the International and of the International Committee, who today have common positions on all important world political issues.

7. In order to heal rapidly the wounds left by the 1953 split, it will be necessary to suspend till the World Congress following the Reunification Congress the disciplinary powers towards sections detailed by the IEC, i.e. to transfer them to that World Congress. Such a transitory measure is normal and inevitable after a reunification, and was indeed already proposed by the IEC during the 1957 negotiations.

The goal remains the building of a World Party of Socialist Revolution based on democratic centralism. Under the concrete conditions of the world movement today, this means an international leadership composed of leading members of all important sections of the movement, working out a common line after fraternal discussion, closely following world events and developing the maximum amount of activity, in order to make the International known in all countries, and spread its organization to countries where no sections exist, or strengthen it where the existing sections are very weak. It means the duty of all sections to apply in public the general line worked out by the International after discussion, while retaining their right to fight for a change of line within the organization.

The XXIIIrd Plenum states its firm belief that all the political and organizational requirements for a successful rapid reunification are today present. It calls upon all Trotskyists to live up to their responsibilities and to help the world movement to forge ahead, with united strength, in the historic period of advancing world revolution in which we live, and which will see in the coming years a growing integration of our cadre with revolutionary mass forces on all the continents.

DOCUMENT 3

A Comment on the Declaration of the IEC 23rd Plenum by the NEC of the Socialist Labour League, September 8, 1962

Last February, the National Committee of the Socialist Labour League took the initiative in placing before the International Committee a resolution which called for:

The IC to approach the IS with a view to the setting up of a sub-committee consisting of three members from the International Committee and three from the International Secretariat. The purpose of this committee would be to arrange an exchange of internal material on international problems among all the sections affiliated to both the sections.

It is to be hoped that such a step would encourage discussion, and the sub-committee could arrange for the regular publication of an international bulletin dealing with this.

Eventually, the sub-committee would prepare a summary report on the area of agreement and differences between the two bodies.

This was unanimously accepted, negotiations were opened with the Pablo group and the first meeting of the Parity Committee took place on September 2.

At this meeting the representatives of the International Committee were handed a statement entitled 'Declaration on Reunification of the World Trotskyist Movement' which was adopted on June 23 and 24, 1962.

The statement merits attention because it explains the reasons why the Pabloites have decided to support the Parity Committee proposals, and the way in which they conceive the reunification of the world Trotskyist movement. In our opinion, it places some very real obstacles before the work of the Parity Committee, in addition to the already deep-going divisions of programme and principles.

In April 1957, the SWP of the USA, which is prohibited by the Voorhis Act from participating in an international organization such as the Fourth International, recommended certain organizational proposals for reunification of the world Trotskyist movement. Unfortunately, these proposals were not submitted to the International Committee for discussion but were sent directly to the Pabloites via the secretary of the Ceylon LSSP. This unfortunate breach of international relations led to some confusion, especially since the International Committee had supported the Open Letter of the SWP against the Pabloites of November 1953. The International Committee felt, quite rightly, that it should have been consulted before any proposals were presented to the Pabloites by the SWP. This was especially so since the Committee felt that prior discussion on the outstanding political differences would be necessary before organizational proposals for healing the split were submitted for consideration.

This, of course, was the position adopted by the International Committee in 1954 shortly after the split. The proposals for such discussion were abandoned at that time due to the opposition of the SWP.

The Pabloite declaration says that: 'unity negotiations broke down in 1957 on considerations about the organizational functioning of the International' (See paragraph 4 of the statement).

It is important to note this statement since certain leaders of the SWP are fond of accusing the Socialist Labour League of being responsible for the breakdown in the 1957 negotiations.

According to the Pabloites it was the proposals of comrade Cannon which were responsible for the breakdown in 1957.

The proposals which the IC submitted to the Pabloites this year are substantially the same as our proposals in 1954 and 1957. We do not consider that it is seriously possible to talk of reunification without the issues dividing the two organizations being discussed in the world movement. The fact that both the SWP and the Pabloites have now accepted these proposals marks a positive step forward but it does not in any way remove the political disagreements.

It sets in motion a process whereby these disagreements can be discussed throughout the world movement. At the same time common activities can be organized between the tendencies within the different countries where they have functioning sections. It allows the discussion to be combined with political work in a way that can help to clarify the movement.

The International Committee believes that it should be possible to hold a conference during the latter part of 1964 which could be devoted to a discussion on the political questions and in comparing the practical experiences of the work of the different sections. From the deliberations of this conference, it would be possible to ascertain whether or not it was possible to unify the world movement. The International Committee feels that because of the deep-going nature of the split on the political questions, such a process must of necessity take some time.

The Pabloite declaration of June 23 and 24 adopts a different position from the International Committee. It says that:

The IVth International considered the split of 1953, and especially the Open Letter calling for disregard towards the normally elected leadership of the International as a big mistake, which has done great harm to the world movement. Any differences which existed at that time in the International should have been brought up before the competent bodies. As long as all Trotskyist organizations do not keep these general rules, irresponsible splits will continue to hamper our progress, even under favourable objective conditions.

The political basis of the 1953-54 split, as we saw it, was a lack of full understanding of the correctness of the International's turn in the estimate of the world situation, made in 1950-51. Many comrades at that time did not understand correctly the tremendous consequence of the victory of the Chinese revolution, of the rising colonial revolution and of the progress of the productive forces in the workers' states, not only with regard to imperialism — whose world positions have ever since worsened — but also with regard to the Soviet bureaucracy, which has been thrown into a very grave permanent crisis, but a crisis of a different nature than the crises born out of the economic weaknesses of the Soviet state in the thirties, or out of the defeats of the international labour movement in the same period. They therefore saw a tendency to 'capitulation towards Stalinism' in the International's correct estimation, that the political revolution in the USSR would be preceded and prepared by numerous divisions within the bureaucracy, concessions by various bureaucratic factions towards the masses, and important reforms within the Soviet Union and the so-called 'people's democracies'.

This is just a repetition of the infallible Pabloite thesis of the Third World Congress, the centuries of degenerated workers' states theories of Pablo, and the war-revolution theories based upon the inevitability of world war three.

We must say right here and now to the Pabloites that no unification

is possible on such a basis. We recognize, however, that there are certain factors which motivate the Pabloites in making such a statement.

The most important of these is the undoubted fact that since 1957 the SWP has readopted the Pabloite political method and considers itself to be at one with Pabloite positions in a number of important questions. The Pabloites claim in paragraph 4 that after the 20th Congress of the CPSU in 1956 'the SWP corrected their evaluation of the world situation and of the evolution within the Soviet Union and arrived at an estimation of events very close to that of the Fourth International.' The SWP on the other hand are never tired of telling us that it is the Pabloites who have changed their position and are moving towards the SWP. (See the SWP Plenum Resolution, published in International Bulletin No. 9).

Whilst the Pabloites consider the organizational proposals of Cannon in 1957 to have been responsible for a breakdown in unity negotiations, they stress that 'this obstacle now appears to be removed, for instance, they say, 'the latest convention of the SWP has clearly stated or restated its fraternal opinion that the Fourth International should adhere to the principles of democratic centralism on an international scale.'

The Pabloites are referring here to the last part of the SWP Plenum resolution. There is little doubt that the majority of the SWP are now busy retreating from their 1957 Parity proposals and are, in fact, prepared to accept the same Pabloite democratic centralist structure that was in operation in 1953 when the split took place.

The SLL is not returning to 1953. So far as we are concerned the split was fully justified.

The defeat of Pabloite revisionism inside the world movement is an essential precondition for the establishment of an international democratic centralist structure. We do not want minority rights in an international organization dominated by Pabloism. The differences have grown greater since 1953 and we are going to utilize the discussion to prove this.

We will in no circumstances accept the Pabloite conceptions of international democratic centralism or their declaration in paragraph 7 which says:

In order to heal rapidly the wounds left by the 1953 split, it will be necessary to suspend till the World Congress following the Re-unification Congress the disciplinary powers towards sections detailed by the IEC, i.e., to transfer them to that World Congress. Such a transitory measure is

normal and inevitable after a reunification, and was indeed already proposed by the IEC during the 1957 negotiations.

We find ourselves in agreement with the opinions of comrade Cannon when he said not so long ago that the Pabloites:

conceive of the 'International' as the literary and technical apparatus of the International Secretariat, which in practice operates outside all control. This whole conception and practice is incompatible with a living world movement made up of functioning, self-governing, working-class parties and, in reality, operates to prevent the development of such parties.

Whilst the international programme adopted by the First World Congress in 1938 must guide the basic development of national sections, the experiences of the leaderships in the political and organizational tasks of building these sections is indispensable for the establishment of a collective international leadership. This is still a long way off. It cannot be resolved by the ultimatic methods of the Pabloites and their revisionist policies. The functioning of the Parity Committee is the first step towards bringing the sections together on a world scale. From this it is hoped to accumulate at a much later stage such international experience as will enable the international movement to go forward on a democratic centralist basis.

The IEC statement leaves us with the impression that the Pabloites consider their participation in the Parity Committee as a manoeuvre to obtain the support of the SWP. Their statement attacks the so-called Burns group in England and the Lambert group in France. It talks in paragraph 6 (e) of 'building an integrated international leadership based upon the essential forces of the International and the International Committee, who today have common positions on all important world issues.'

It is very clear what is meant by such a declaration. The Pabloites are using the Parity Committee as a means to get closer to the SWP in order to drag it more rapidly into their orbit. They therefore consider that the Parity Committee is a place where the inessential forces such as the Burns group in England and the Lambert group in France can be dispensed with. (We would be happy to learn of the so-called 'essential' force in England, but then we are familiar with the 'keymen' proposals of Pablo's international in the past.)

We sincerely hope that the Parity Committee will continue to function in the way that we have outlined, but we want to draw the attention of the world movement to the grave dangers of the Pabloite

proposals which are a serious blow against international collaboration and the discussion which is now opening up. We ask all sections to support the Parity Committee proposals of the International Committee and to reject the Pabloite proposals contained in their declaration.

Chapter Two

The SWP, Castro and Trotskyism

For Joseph Hansen and the SWP leadership, the Cuban revolution was to be the weapon they wielded to steamroller the unprincipled reunification. Castro and the July 26th Movement were presented as the living proof of the nature of 'modern' revolutionary leadership, arising from the pressure of the objective forces for socialism without any need for the building of the Fourth International. This chapter consists of the major statement made in this discussion by Hansen (Document 4), together with a letter from James P. Cannon (Document 5) which brings out perhaps better than anything else the crass pragmatism of the SWP leadership.

DOCUMENT 4

*Cuba – The Acid Test:**A reply to the Ultraleft sectarians*

by Joseph Hansen, November 20, 1962

It is written: 'In the Beginning was the *Word*.'
 Here I am balked: who, now, can help afford?
 The *Word*? — impossible so high to rate it;
 And otherwise must I translate it,
 If by the Spirit I am truly taught.
 Then thus: 'In the Beginning was the *Thought*.'
 This first line let me weigh completely.
 Lest my impatient pen proceed too fleetly.
 Is it the *Thought* which works, creates, indeed?
 'In the Beginning was the *Power*,' I read.
 Yet, as I write, a warning is suggested,
 That I the sense may not have fairly tested.
 The Spirit aids me: now I see the light;
 'In the Beginning was the *Act*,' I write.

– *Goethe*.

AS THE main stream of the world Trotskyist movement heads toward healing a split that has lasted an unconscionable eight years, some ultra-left currents in various areas are pressing in an opposite direction, seeking to perpetuate the old rift, to deepen it if possible, and even to precipitate fresh ruptures. The Latin-American Bureau of J. Posadas, ordering an end to discussion before it was even initiated, bolted from the International Secretariat last April under guise of 'reorganizing' the Fourth International, and raised the banner of a programme that goes so far in its deviation to the left as to include a but thinly disguised appeal to Moscow to start a preventive nuclear war. On the side of the International Committee, the top leaders of the Socialist Labour League, under guidance of Gerry Healy, have chosen to interpret the efforts of the Socialist Workers Party to help unify

world Trotskyism as a 'betrayal' of the basic principles of Marxism which they intend to fight tooth and nail; and, to emphasize their dedication to this course, they have hardened a posture on Cuba the only virtue of which is to lay bare an astonishing lack of the most elementary requisite of revolutionary leadership — ability to recognize a revolution when you see one.

How are we to explain this curious turn? Obviously it was precipitated by the unification process. A series of practical problems surged to the fore. How can you unite with the opposing tendency even if they do consider themselves to be Trotskyists? The question is asked by groups on both sides. After years of bitter factional war how can you collaborate and live in the same organization? Didn't the public positions of the other side damage the cause as a whole? How can you work with leaders whose records provide grounds for deep suspicion? How can you find areas of agreement? A far easier, more 'Leninist', and therefore more 'principled' tactic is to simply continue firing at them, no matter if differences have to be magnified. Prestige, pride, bullheadedness, personal eccentricities, all these came into play at the prospect of unification. In the case of the Latin-American Bureau, for instance, a factor may have been fear that pretensions as to size and influence, which were actually declining, would be exposed by unification, or that habits of paternalistic centralism would have to give way to democratic controls. Nevertheless, however weighty they may be — and in a small movement they can loom large — such factors do not explain the political differentiation.

The same fundamental cause that brought fresh impulsion to unity sentiments in the past couple of years is also responsible for the flare-up of resistance. At bottom lie the mighty forces of the colonial revolution and the interrelated process of de-Stalinization. These are having an effect on the radical movement roughly comparable to that of the Russian Revolution some forty years ago. Cutting across all formations, they are shaking them and regrouping them, dividing them to right and to left. If the repercussions among radicals began with the victory of the Chinese Revolution and speeded up with the famous Twentieth Congress and the Hungarian workers uprising, it came to a crescendo with the Cuban Revolution. When the massive nationalizations took place, and the Castro government expropriated both American and Cuban capitalists, every tendency had to take a stand. The imperialists left little room for equivocation.

The Trotskyist movement has not escaped the general shake-up either. The Chinese victory, de-Stalinization, the Hungarian uprising were reflected in both capitulatory and ultraleft moods as well as strengthening of the main stream of Trotskyism. What we have really been witnessing in our movement is the outcome of a number of tests — how well the various Trotskyist groupings and shadings have responded to the series of revolutionary events culminating in the greatest occurrence in the Western Hemisphere since the American Civil War. The move for unification and the symmetrical resistance to it are no more than logical consequences to be drawn from reading the results, especially those supplied by the acid test of the mighty Cuban action.

The fact that differences, even sharp differences, exist among the ultra-lefts who were turned up by the latest and most decisive test does not invalidate this conclusion. Posadas, for example, after initial opposition, came around to the view that Cuba is a workers state, thus making a rather better showing than Healy on this crucial issue. Yet he is, if anything, even more truculently opposed to any moves toward unification of the Trotskyist movement. Advocating a line that bristles with inconsistencies and extravagances, Posadas is nevertheless compelled to adapt himself to one of the main realities of politics in Latin America today. Throughout that vast region, it is political death among radical workers to voice a position on Cuba like the one on which Healy insists. Posadas, for all his flights of fantasy, was able to recognize this reality after discovering it the hard way. Healy, unable to agree to so grim a conclusion from anything he has seen in insular British circles, is more nonchalant about the prospect of such a fate overtaking the Latin-American Trotskyists.

As is typical among ultra-lefts, elaborate justifications 'in principle' are offered for their sectarian course, along with dire prophecies about the consequences of the 'betrayals' being committed by those following in the real tradition of Lenin and Trotsky. Like similar rationalizations of ultra-lefts before them, these offer little resistance to critical appraisal. I propose to demonstrate this by examining the main thread of argumentation about Cuba as presented in SLL material, above all the document, 'Trotskyism Betrayed'. I will then take up briefly the related considerations offered by the leaders of the French Section of the IC in 'Draft Report on the Cuban Revolution', a document that discloses substantial differences with the SLL leaders on Cuba while maintaining a united front with them on the question of unification.

Should Marxists Go by The Facts?

The world Trotskyist movement has waited now two long and crowded years for the SLL to recognize the facts about the Cuban Revolution. The SLL leaders have refused to listen to the American and Canadian Trotskyists who have followed events in Cuba with close attention from the very beginning. They have refused to listen to the Latin-American Trotskyists who have first-hand acquaintance with the development and results of the Revolution in both its home base and the rest of the continent. They scorn the conclusions reached by other Trotskyists throughout the world. Why this obstinate refusal to admit palpable events? Strangest of all, the leaders of the SLL have come to recognize that they are refusing to acknowledge the facts; they have converted this into a virtue and even elevated it into a philosophy. The reasoning is very simple: To recognize facts is characteristic of empiricism; Marxism is opposed to empiricism; therefore, as Marxists, we refuse to recognize facts. Here is how this reasoning — included as part of the package in a review of Lenin's *Philosophical Notebooks* — is presented by Cliff Slaughter in the original academic language which has proved so entrancing to the readers of this article:

Lenin's Notebooks on Hegel might appear obscure and a not very pressing preoccupation, when big things are happening all over the world. However, it is exactly on the theoretical front that the sharpest and most uncompromising struggle must be waged. A mistaken conception here can mean a whole mistaken method, the relations between the facts becomes totally misunderstood, and disastrously wrong conclusions will be drawn. For example, some 'Marxists' assume that Marxist method has the same starting-point as empiricism: that is to say, it starts with '*the facts*'. It is difficult to understand why Lenin and others should have spent so much time on Hegel and the dialectical method if this were true. Of course, every science is based on facts. However, the *definition* and *establishment* of '*the facts*' is crucial to any science. Part of the creation of a science is precisely its delimitation and definition as a field of study with its own laws: the '*facts*' are shown in experience to be objectively and lawfully interconnected in such a way that a science of these facts is a meaningful and useful basis for practice. Our 'empiricist' Marxists in the field of society and politics are far from this state of affairs. Their procedure is to say: we had a programme, based on the facts as they were in 1848, or 1921, or 1938; now the facts are obviously different, so we need a different programme. For example, the spurious 'Fourth International' of Pablo's group decided

some years ago that the Stalinist bureaucracy and its counterparts in various countries were forced to act differently because of changed objective circumstances ('facts'). New 'revolutionary currents' were abroad in the world, more recently particularly in the colonial revolution. The consequence of this 'mass pressure' would be to force the bureaucrats to act contrary to their wishes and to lead the workers to power. The great scope of the colonial revolution, the 'liberalization' of the Soviet regime, and the exposure of Stalin by Krushchev, were taken as the 'facts' in this case. Then again, the revolution in Algeria, Guinea, and particularly Cuba are said to be yet a new kind of fact: *socialist* revolutions,* even without the formation of revolutionary working-class parties. (*Labour Review*, Summer 1962, p. 77)

Study of this shining passage is worth the effort, for it reveals the theoretical method used by the SLL leaders in approaching the Cuban Revolution and much else in today's world. We note the qualifying sentence, 'Of course, every science is based on facts.' The author is to be congratulated on admitting this; it is a favorable indication of at least a certain awareness that a material world does exist. We can even pin a medal on him for the sage observation that the various sciences cover different fields, that in these fields facts have various orders of importance and that it is the job of science to reveal their significance and the significance of the relations between them so that we can put them to use. But let us examine more closely the two sentences that stick up like bandaged thumbs: 'For example, some "Marxists" assume that Marxist method has the same starting-point as empiricism: that is to say, it starts with "*the facts*". It is difficult to understand why Lenin and others should have spent so much time on Hegel and the dialectical method if this were true.'

So 'Lenin and others' spent so much time on Hegel and the dialectical method in order to avoid starting with the facts? Or to be able to bend them with philosophical sanction to fit preconceived notions? Or to avoid sharing any grounds whatsoever with empiricism, especially in the precise area where it is strongest? But Hegel did not teach that. He was more dialectical in his appreciation of empiricism than Slaughter and others. Hegel recognised that empiricism is much more than mere observing, hearing, feeling, etc. and that its aim is to discover scientific laws. 'Without the working out of the empirical sciences on their own account,' he observed, 'Philosophy could not have reached further than with the ancients.' As was his method with

* The article from which Hansen is quoting here reads: '*socialist* revolutions can follow "organically" the democratic revolutions, even *without*...' (Ed.)

all views which he considered to have philosophical merit, he sought to include what was valid in empiricism in his own system. It is worth noting, for instance, that 'Being,' the opening category of his logic, corresponds on this abstract level to an empirical beginning.

Hegel criticized empiricism on two counts: (1) In place of the *a priori* absolutes of the metaphysician, which it rejects, empiricism substitutes its own set of absolutes. Thus it is arbitrary, one-sided and undialectical. (2) Its basic tendency is to oppose the idealism of which Hegel was an ardent exponent: 'Generally speaking, Empiricism finds the truth in the outward world; and even if it allow a super-sensible world, it holds knowledge of that world to be impossible, and would restrict us to the province of sense-perception. This doctrine when systematically carried out produces what has been latterly termed Materialism. Materialism of this stamp looks upon matter, *qua* matter, as the genuine objective world.' (*The Logic of Hegel*, translated from the Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences, p. 80).

I would submit that 'Lenin and others' did not bring from Hegel his opposition to empiricism on idealistic or religious grounds. On the other hand Marxism does share Hegel's position that vulgar empiricism is arbitrary, one-sided and undialectical. But empiricism 'systematically carried out'? This is the view that the 'genuine objective world', the material world, takes primacy over thought and that a dialectical relationship exists between them. What is this if not dialectical materialism?

Slaughter's error is to establish an absolute gulf between empiricism, and Marxism, leaving out what they have in common. In brief, he is guilty of rigid, mechanical thinking on this point. However, we plead that the culprit be let off with a light sentence in view of the novel circumstances. How often are we privileged to see a British metaphysician demonstrate that the heavy machinery of academic learning can be so finely controlled as to prove a mere trifle like facts don't count? And with Lenin's Philosophical Notebooks fed as information to the machine! It's better than cracking a walnut with a pile driver.

An additional error is involved. Slaughter finds it 'difficult to understand why Lenin and others should have spent so much time on Hegel and the dialectical method' if it were true 'that Marxist method has the same starting-point as empiricism: that is to say, it starts with "the facts".' Our utilitarian must easily understand then that the

practical benefit which 'Lenin and others' got out of Hegel and the dialectical method was the view that a scientific system of thought like Marxism — unlike empiricism — takes precedence over facts. True, in its origin, the Marxist system of thought was admittedly built on a foundation of facts, but once in existence it became — thanks to Hegel — relatively free from the need for further contact with facts. Thus the time spent on Hegel and the dialectical method was more than compensated for by the saving made possible in disregarding current facts. The primary task of a Marxist theoretician today, consequently, is not to apply the dialectical method to analysis of reality — this is subordinate since the job has been done and we know from the system of thought what the reality is like and what it is going to be like. The primary task is to study the books and become adept at expounding the texts so that the system is promulgated in all its purity. Facts are of practical value in this task as illustrations and confirmation of the correctness of the system but are of not much import on the theoretical level.

But this is dogmatism, not Marxism. Marx and Engels did not simply take over idealist dialectics and assign it a chore such as it performed for idealism; namely, helping to dig up material to prove the validity of a philosophical system. From that point of view dialectics is devoid of methodological interest.

In the Marxist world outlook, dialectics does not serve an auxiliary role. It is central. To understand what this means and to appreciate its relevancy to the issue at hand — our attitude toward facts — we must go back to the origin of materialist dialectics, which is to be found in Marx's solution to the chief contradiction of Hegel's dialectics. This contradiction, as Slaughter will certainly agree, was its failure to provide for self-criticism, for dialectical self-adjustment. The impasse was inevitable, since the Hegelian system excluded anything more fundamental than thought itself and there was thus nothing for thought to be adjusted against. The material world was viewed as a mere inert and passive 'other' created by the activity of thought. Research thus centered on the nature of thought, the 'nuclear energy' of the Hegelian system. Marx brought dialectics out of this blind alley by empirically taking matter as the fundamental source of motion. He thereby turned things around drastically and opened the way in principle for adjustment of his own theoretical system; that is, by checking it against the primary source of all movement, the material world. In place of thought spinning on itself as in the Hegelian

system, Marx found the way to a genuine 'feed back'. Through this revolution the dialectical method became self-consistent. It, too, is open to change. A major characteristic of materialist dialectics, consequently is supreme sensitivity to facts. Any work that fails in this respect will not stand up as an example of materialist dialectics. It is an apology or an academic exercise such as abounds in the Stalinist school of pseudo-dialectics.

Does this feature of materialist dialectics have any practical consequences or is it simply a curiosity among splitters of hairs? We are at the very heart of Marxist politics! An evolving material world, moving in a time sequence, inevitably forces rectifications in the thought that hopes to reflect it in close approximation. This holds with even greater force if that thought aims at active intervention, for it must seek genuine and not illusory points of support in a reality that is in dynamic movement. The primary task of a Marxist theoretician is to analyse reality with the best tools available — those of dialectics — so as to provide the most accurate guide possible for revolutionary action in the world as it actually exists at a given stage. This requires us to start with the facts.

The point is crucial. The type of thinking exemplified by Slaughter's contribution, which has brought the National Committee of the SLL to the sad position of refusing to acknowledge the facts in Cuba, has inspired a flood of arguments like those found in the previously cited paragraph from *Labour Review*:

(1) Years ago some people of a 'spurious "Fourth International" ', decided that there were new facts about the Stalinist bureaucracy which required Trotskyism to make adjustments. They were wrong. Today the same 'spurious' sources assert that new currents in the colonial revolution can force bureaucrats to act contrary to their wishes and lead the workers to power. Wrong again. We leave aside crude simplification and consequent distortions of opponents' views and also the merits of the real points involved in order simply to call attention to the logic: Bad people were wrong before; *therefore*, they are wrong again.

(2) These same 'spurious' characters or perhaps some '“empiricist” Marxists' whom Slaughter does not name, also say — in obvious error — that 'the revolutions in Algeria, Guinea, and particularly Cuba are . . . yet a new kind of fact: *socialist* revolutions, even *without* the

formation of revolutionary working-class parties.' Again we leave aside the distortion of opponents' positions in order to call attention to the hidden syllogism: What is not provided for in the programme of Marxism cannot occur; this possibility is not provided for in the programme of Marxism; therefore, it has not occurred.

In place of the problem of finding points of support for our programme in the world in which we live, the SLL method is simply to assert the necessity for our programme *despite* the reality.

There is nothing wrong, of course, with asserting the need for revolutionary socialism, including the need for party building, but this is only 'A'. Agreeing on that, we wish to proceed to 'B'; how is this to be accomplished in a given situation? The SLL leaders display little interest in 'B'. For them 'A' seems sufficient. Here is a typical example of their thinking that indicates this:

In practice, however, both the Pabloites and the SWP find themselves prostrate before the petty-bourgeois nationalist leaders in Cuba and Algeria, which they have chosen to regard as the touchstone of revolutionary politics. Our view of this question is not opposed to that of the SWP simply in terms of who can best explain a series of events. It is a question rather of the actual policy and programme of Trotskyist leadership in these backward countries.

But no revolutionary socialists 'choose' what shall be regarded as the touchstone of revolutionary politics. This is done by much bigger forces; namely, classes in conflict. Cuba and Algeria happened to be the two areas in the world where this conflict has reached revolutionary proportions at the moment. This was not determined by any decision of ours. It was determined by revolutionary mass actions. Nor did we choose the current leaderships of the colonial revolution. They are the result of objective conditions of vast sweep. What we did choose was to study the facts and in these facts seek openings for *effective* application of our programme. If we may express the opinion, it is an overstatement to say that anyone finds himself 'prostrate before the petty-bourgeois nationalist leaders in Cuba and Algeria' because he refuses to follow the SLL National Committee in thinking that a Trotskyist can clear himself of any further responsibility by putting the label 'betrayal' on everything these leaders do. It is an error of the first order to believe that petty-bourgeois nationalism — petty-bourgeois nationalism, has no internal differentiations or contradictions and cannot possibly be affected by the mass forces that have thrust it forward. To avoid the political prostration that follows

the method practiced by the SLL, revolutionary socialists seek to go beyond simply repeating the words about the need for a party. By joining in the action of the revolution, they seek to help build a revolutionary-socialist party in the very process of the revolution itself instead of arguing with the revolution that it would have been better to delay things until the party had first been constructed.

Slaughter states, we recall, that 'Part of the creation of a science is precisely its delimitation and definition as a field of study with its own laws: the 'facts' are shown in experience to be objectively and lawfully interconnected in such a way that a science of these facts is a meaningful and useful basis for practice.' We welcomed that statement. Now we must protest what followed, if Slaughter was by some remote chance thinking of us when he said, 'Our 'empiricist' Marxists in the field of society and politics are far from this state of affairs. Their procedure is to say: we had a programme, based on the facts as they were in 1848, or 1921, or 1938; now the facts are obviously different, so we need a different programme'

In the case of Cuba, proceeding by the Marxist method, we sought to establish the facts and then determine how they are objectively and lawfully interconnected with our previous analysis of China, Yugoslavia and the buffer countries. Our conclusion was not to say, 'We need a different programme'. Quite the contrary. We stated that the case of Cuba confirmed our previous analysis and thus confirmed the correctness of Trotsky's analysis of the Soviet Union and of his theory of permanent revolution. From this we derived a meaningful and useful basis for finding our place in the Cuban Revolution.

In contrast to this, the SLL leaders approach Cuba as if the problem boiled down to illustrating the correctness of Lenin's norms for a healthy workers state. The correctness of these norms is not at issue. We believe in them, advocate them, and seek to advance them as always. The SLL leaders, however, stop at the mere assertion of these norms and try to force them to do work for which they are insufficient. This leads them into a series of glaring errors and even into disastrous policies, as we shall see.

To anticipate what we shall attempt to prove in detail, the SLL leaders, following the method indicated in Slaughter's article, do not show how the facts in Cuba are objectively and lawfully interconnected with the preceding Trotskyist positions. Instead they commit a very common but also very basic mistake: they dissolve the concrete into the abstract. They do this in two steps. First they refuse to link

the facts in Cuba with the criteria used in analysing China, Yugoslavia and the buffer countries. They then quite illogically stop at Lenin's norms. The result of going this far, however, is to leave them with only Lenin's norms to determine the character of a workers state. The *criteria* for determining a workers state have been dissolved into the *norms* which, since Trotsky's time, have been recognized as valid only for determining a *healthy* workers state. By dissolving Trotsky into Lenin in this way, the SLL leaders are left without the tools of theory necessary to assess anything except what would have been considered a workers state in 1917. What will not fit the norms is given a *capitalist* label, since no greys exist in the SLL's world of solid blacks and solid whites. Thus, incapable of correctly analysing the Cuban Revolution, they end up by refusing to accept as non-capitalist anything that deviates from Lenin's norms. The correct label for that position is ultraleft sectarianism. This method compels them, as an odd final consequence, to contend that 'Lenin and others' brought from Hegel the view that facts are not primary. They provide their own ultimate absurdity and seek, appropriately enough, to find sanction for it in the philosophy of idealism.

With such reasoning the National Committee of the SLL determines its policy in a revolution that is shaking the Western Hemisphere. Thus in much of what they write about Cuba one gets the impression of a thought process little above that of medieval times when the experts determined what the world was like through fasting, meditation, prayer and pious reference to the holy scriptures.

Who Has Lost Touch With Reality?

An instructive example of what this type of thinking can lead to is provided by the document to which the National Committee of the SLL appended its joint signature, 'Trotskyism Betrayed'.

Does the dictatorship of the proletariat exist in Cuba? asks the NC. 'We reply categorically NO! The absence of a party squarely based on the workers and poor peasants makes it impossible to set up and maintain such a dictatorship. But what is even more significant is the absence of what the SWP euphemistically terms 'the institutions of proletarian democracy' or what we prefer to call soviets or organs of workers' power.

To substantiate this stern decision handed down by the SLL court, we are referred, in accordance with the method of thought we have

discussed above, to the writings of Lenin; and the appropriate texts are cited as if the leader of the Bolsheviks had the Cuban situation before him.

So what exists in Cuba? We are given it, straight from the bench, without any if's and's or but's: 'In our opinion, the Castro regime is and remains a bonapartist regime resting on capitalist state foundations.'

As for Castro, he is taken care of with similar crispness: 'The regime however, is a variety of capitalist state power. The Castro regime did not create a qualitatively new and different type of state from the Batista regime.'

According to these experts in what the law books say, who cannot find any mention of Cuba in Lenin's *State and Revolution*, not even dual power exists in the island: 'The 'militia' (the quotation marks on 'militia' put those half million armed Cubans in their place!) is subordinate to Castro's state — not to soviets, not even to a constituent assembly. In this sense they do not constitute workers power or even dual power.'

And all those happenings in Cuba, about which the papers have been making such a fuss, are explained as easily as digging up an appropriate citation from Lenin: 'Despite or rather because of (that 'rather because of' is good!) all the economic and social changes that have taken place in the last two-three years, Cuba has witnessed, not a social revolution which has transfereed state power irrevocably from the hands of one class to another, but a political revolution which has transferred power from the hands of one class to *another section of that same class* . . . Where the working class is unable to lead the peasant masses and smash capitalist state power, the bourgeoisie steps in and solves the problem of the 'democratic revolution' in its own fashion and to its own satisfaction. Hence we have Kemal Ataturk, Chiang Kai-shek, Nasser, Nehru, Cardenas, Peron, Ben Bella — and Castro (to mention a few).'

There you have it — in all its baldness — the judgment of the National Committee of the SLL on the Cuban Revolution and its achievements.

But a puzzle remains. How come that the Republican Party, which is fairly aware of Wall Street's thinking, doesn't recognize that Castro is just another 'Batista'? Why the dragging of feet among the Democrats, who know Wall Street's thinking just as well as the Republicans but who take a longer view of the interests of capitalism?

Above all, how explain the anomalous reaction of the Cuban capitalists who poured out of the island like rats from a burning cane field and holed up in Florida, the way Chiang and a section of the Chinese capitalists holed up in Formosa? How was it possible for the entire capitalist class of the United States to unite, without a single fissure, against Cuba and risk bringing the world to nuclear war in the effort to topple the Castro government? How come they refuse to recognize that their properties could not be in safer hands than those of a Cuban 'Chiang Kai-shek'? How are we to assess this strange new phenomenon of Wall Street losing touch with reality in the one area where it never misses — its property interests?

Another mystery. How come that the Soviet people, the Chinese people, the Koreans, Vietnamese, Yugoslavs, Albanians and people of the East European countries, all consider that Cuba has become non-capitalist and now has an economic system like theirs? How explain that they, too, have lost touch with reality on such a decisive question?

For that matter, what about the Cubans? Here a whole population is apparently suffering from a manic-depressive psychosis. The capitalists and their agents think they have been overthrown and it's a disaster. The rest of the population agree and think it's wonderful. They have raised the banners of socialism and tens if not hundreds of thousands are assiduously studying Marx, Engels and Lenin. Isn't that going rather far in failing to recognize that 'capitalist state power' still exists in Cuba?

We have still not come to the end. There are ten countries, including the United States, in which Trotskyists sympathize with or belong to the IC. In all these countries, only the SLL holds this curious position on Cuba. Not a single other group agrees with them — not even those in France. Have the other nine, then, lost all touch with political realities? How is this to be explained? Have all of them 'degenerated' and 'betrayed' Trotskyism except Healy and his staff?

Let us also add that the Posadas group in Latin America would not touch the SLL position on Cuba with a ten-foot pole. Nor for that matter, not a single solitary Trotskyist in all of Latin America, whether with the IC or the IS, so far as I know. Can't any of the Latin-American Trotskyists recognize a 'Batista' when they see one? How can they be so far out of touch with the real world?

Since I mentioned the IS, the ultimate horror of 'Trotskyism Betrayed', let me concede that here the National Committee of the

SLL can draw some comfort. In their next solemn session they might have Slaughter or Healy read as encouraging news the following declaration by a prominent member of the IS:

Fidel Castro is at present the latest 'hero' discovered by the Communist Parties of Latin America, to whose regime they attribute the revolutionary gains of the Cuban masses. Fidel Castro, however, is only the Bonapartist representative of the bourgeoisie, who is undergoing the pressure of the masses and is forced to make them important concessions, against which his bourgeois teammates are already rising up, as has just been clearly shown by the opposition set going inside his own government against the — timid enough — agrarian reform.

The author of that statement, which the SLL position so obviously echoes, amplifies and expounds is Michel Pablo. It can be found on page xiii of his pamphlet *The Arab Revolution*. Unfortunately, the authors of 'Trotskyism Betrayed' cannot expect to build too much on this, since it was Pablo's position in June 1959 before Castro broke up the coalition government with the representatives of Cuban bourgeois democracy. Pablo long ago dropped that position, if position it was and not just a premature assessment. Pablo, whatever else you may think of him, has enough wisdom and ability not to insist on a position which is *that* untenable in face of the facts.

It seems, consequently, that the NC of the SLL has succeeded in finding an abandoned niche where they are doomed to complete isolation. It is theoretically possible that Healy and his closest collaborators are the only ones among all these who have not lost touch with the Cuban reality. But the force of the facts makes this most unlikely.

A New Type of Capitalism?

There still remain some vexatious theoretical problems of lesser order, all of which are opened up by the position of the National Committee of the SLL on Cuba, but of which not a single one is discussed in the document they submitted despite all the boasting and arm-waving about how the SLL leaders intend to bring theoretical clarity to the very much muddled world Trotskyist movement.

First on the Agrarian Reform. A basic criterion for a workers state in the economic sphere in an underdeveloped country, they inform us, 'is the *nationalization of the land* and thorough political measures

by the ruling power to prevent the growth of the kulaks. Neither in Egypt nor in Cuba has this been done. On the contrary, in Cuba, Castro has recently promised (under the impact of the food crisis) to give the land back to the peasants. So long as land remains alienable, so long will petty-commodity production continue and so long will Cuba remain a capitalist nation.'

Such a tangle of errors is included in this paragraph that one can scarcely decide which loop to pick up first. But let us be patient, for this is all the National Committee of the SLL has to say about Cuba's Agrarian Reform. To begin with, let us pull out the misleading reference to Egypt since we are dealing with Cuba. Second, it is not true that so long as petty-commodity production continues, the economy of a country will remain capitalist. Petty-commodity production and capitalism are not synonymous. That is why a workers state, on replacing a capitalist state, can safely call on the peasants to take the land. It is also the fundamental reason why Engels, and all genuine Marxists after him, have stood firmly on the principle that the peasants must not be forced into collectivization. That is also why nationalization of the land, while a very important and indicative measure, is *not* a basic criterion for a workers state and was *not* considered as such in designating Yugoslavia, the Eastern European countries and China as workers states, a position for which the National Committee of the SLL voted. Third, the addition of the criterion 'thorough political measures by the ruling power to prevent the growth of Kulaks' sounds queer as a basic criterion for a workers state in the *economic* sphere. In any case this new 'criterion', in this unexpected association was never even suggested in the discussion on Yugoslavia, Eastern Europe and China. Is the National Committee of the SLL perhaps thinking of revising the Trotskyist position on the character of these states by demanding that this new 'basic criterion' be added?

Not much is left of the SLL position in Cuba's Agrarian Reform; but, in compensation, the tangle is just about unwound. Only a snarl or two is left. Instead of giving 'land back to the peasants', the main course of the Agrarian Reform in Cuba is just the opposite. It is true that the Cuban government has proved quite sensitive to the will of the campesinos in this respect, contrasting wholly favorably to the course followed in all the countries where Stalinist methods were applied either directly by Moscow or under its influence. Thus the deeds to many farms have been handed out, especially in the Sierra

Maestra. Some co-operatives, too hastily formed, may have been dissolved, but the general line of development is clearly in the direction of a bigger and bigger state role. Thus, the most important co-operatives have now been converted into state farms. Good, bad or indifferent that happens to be the case.

On the *alienability* of land in Cuba, which is beside the point in this discussion, the National Committee of the SLL simply displays an ignorance in perfect harmony with the pattern of thinking which permits them to close their eyes to more important facts that stare them in the face. It so happens that the Agrarian Reform law specifies that the 'vital minimum' of land, to which a campesino gets a deed, 'shall be inalienable'. Exempt from taxes, this land cannot be attached and is not subject to contract, lease, sharecrop or usufruct. It can be transferred only by sale to the state, or through inheritance by a single heir on the death of the owner, or, in the event there is no heir, by sale at public auction to bidders who must be campesinos or agricultural workers. There is only one way in which the owner can even mortgage his land in Cuba and that is by mortgaging it to the state or to its specified institutions. Now that they have learned these facts will our British comrades still maintain that nothing essentially new has occurred in Cuba?

We come to the theoretical problem which is our reward for having opened up this tangle of errors. However you assess the Agrarian Reform in Cuba as a criterion in determining the character of the state, it was the swiftest and most thoroughgoing by far in the history of Latin America. How was such a radical reform possible under a regime that is not qualitatively different, as the SLL leaders allege, from the 'Batista regime'? Is this provided for in the classics of Marxism? How are we to explain it? Finally, are we for or are we against this Agrarian Reform? The National Committee of the SLL maintains a painful silence on this that is truly scandalous in leaders who consider themselves to be Trotskyists. But if, after a collective democratic discussion, they decide to vote yes, must they not also add that we should be reconsidering our attitude towards 'capitalist' regimes capable of such far-reaching measures?

We come to a related question. Castro's insistence on a thoroughgoing, radical agrarian reform blew up the coalition government in July 1959. The representatives of bourgeois democracy hastily stuffed stocks, bonds, dollars and pesos into handbags and followed the representatives of the oligarchy and the imperialist interests into exile

in Miami. Thus a new government came into being that proved capable of acting in a qualitatively different way from the previous one.

Let us note what this government did so that the National Committee of the SLL will understand better what we mean by 'the facts'. It carried through, as we have noted, the swiftest and most radical agrarian reform in the history of Latin America. It did this against the combined resistance of the Cuban landlords, Cuban capitalists, and American imperialists. This resistance was not simply verbal. The counter-revolutionaries fought with rifle and bomb and whatever the CIA and Pentagon could give them.

Against this powerful landlord-capitalist-imperialist resistance the new government armed the people of Cuba. Not just with speeches but with mass distribution of guns and the organization of a powerful militia. Against the mounting military measures taken by American imperialism, the new government turned to the Soviet bloc for comparably effective defensive military hardware. While this was going on, the new government initiated sweeping economic measures such as the establishment of controls on foreign trade and controls over capitalist management. Still more important, it continued the process begun in conflict with Batista's army and police of smashing the old state structure. Finally, some two years ago, in defiance of the wrath of the mightiest capitalist country on earth it expropriated capitalist holdings 'down to the nails in their boots'. This same new government proceeded with astounding speed to expand state controls into state planning and when the imperialists brought an axe down, cutting all major economic ties between the United States and Cuba, this new government, responding in heroic way to the emergency, tied its economy in with the planned economies of the Soviet bloc. Can such a government be described as differing only *quantitatively* from a 'Batista' regime? Accurately described, that is.

All right, have it your way. Let us grant that the difference is only quantitative and — for the sake of the confusion on which the National Committee of the SLL insists — let us stubbornly refuse to grant this quantitatively different government even a quantitatively different label. Our theoretical problems are only worsened — and in a qualitative way. We must then admit that reality has so changed that it has now become possible for a Batista-type regime to carry out such revolutionary actions in a series of countries. What has happened to capitalism to give it the possibility of taking such self-destructive

measures? Has it suddenly become rejuvenated? Has the death agony of capitalism really turned out to be a fountain of youth?

As in the case of Cuba's Agrarian Reform, we are also faced with a political issue that cannot be evaded — unless, of course, you counsel that we abandon politics. Are we for or are we against all these measures? If we approve them, are we then not compelled to admit that such governments are capable of a progressive role? Does it not follow, if they are 'a variety of capitalist state power' as the SLL leaders assert, that capitalism has not yet exhausted all its progressive possibilities? If this is so, a still more thorny problem arises. Does any barrier exist to prevent a capitalist government in an industrially advanced country from playing a similar progressive role? If a barrier does exist is it qualitative or simply quantitative? What, inside this new capitalist reality, determines the character of the boundary? On all these questions, which are raised in principle by the document flung so vehemently on the table, the National Committee of the SLL maintains the most discreet silence.

Let us consider for a moment the character of the Cuban economy today. 'The nationalizations carried out by Castro do nothing to alter the capitalist character of the state,' the National Committee of the SLL claims. Good; for the sake of argument let's see what happens if we agree not to change the label, whatever else has changed. We note that these nationalizations were not undertaken by either the capitalist or imperialist supporters of Batista. Nor were they undertaken by the representatives of bourgeois democracy. The bulk of the Cuban capitalists, such as they were, most of the landlords, and the corrupt assemblage of politicians who served as their agents are now to be found in Florida or any other land of the palm save Cuba. Thus we must add to the fact of 'mere' nationalization, the fact of expropriation of the Cuban and American capitalists and landlords. The National Committee of the SLL may stoutly deny this. None of the former property holders will. In addition, I think that, roughly speaking, 999.9 out of 1,000 observers who have taken the trouble to visit Cuba or study the events will put these two items down as incontrovertible facts.

To this must be added the fact that a planned economy has been installed that extends so far as to completely embrace the principal agricultural sphere — sugar. True, the planning may not be efficient. It may be hampered by lack of competent personnel, poor balancing, some bureaucratism, breakdowns and other faults. These are due not

only to lack of experience but to the direct sabotage of counter-revolutionaries and to the enormous pressure of American imperialism which seeks to throttle in the cradle this effort at planning. Nevertheless, in principle, the planned economy is operative in Cuba, has already achieved remarkable successes, and has clearly displaced private capitalism in all the key sectors of the economy. This is a fact, too.¹

Putting these three main facts together — expropriation of the bourgeoisie, nationalization of industry, and the institution of a planned economy — and adding to this combination the ‘capitalist’ label on which the National Committee of the SLL insists, what do we end up with? It’s inescapable: *state capitalism*. But, again, what is gained by such a label save indescribable theoretical confusion and the admission that capitalism still has great and progressive inherent possibilities despite all that has been said about its death agony? Moreover, we are not saved thereby from taking a political stand. Is this so-called state capitalism in Cuba better or worse than the private capitalism which it overturned? Yes or no? If it is superior, in what respect is its superiority apparent?

Finally, exactly what does the National Committee of the SLL propose on the *economic* level, which if enacted would entitle us to cross out the ‘capitalist’ label? Our haughty theoreticians disdain to answer in their document. We would appreciate, if it’s not asking too much, a plain and simple reply to that question.

China, Yugoslavia and Eastern Europe

Two whole years after the event, as we noted above, the National Committee of the SLL still refuses to recognize Cuba as a workers state. In their efforts to establish theoretical grounds for the dogmatic view that nothing has changed in Cuba and that it’s all a malicious ‘revisionist’ invention about the Batista regime being overthrown, they inevitably tear gaping holes in basic theory.

¹ Perhaps this is the place to file an objection to a declaration in the statement of the SLL, where the nature of the state in Cuba is considered, that nothing essential was changed by the Castro government: ‘What it did do was to clear out the old judges, administrators, bureaucrats, diplomats and policemen and replace them with people who supported Castro. The old institutions were filled with new personnel.’ This is dead wrong. The old institutions, including its personnel were committed to the preservation of private capitalist property interests. The new institutions, in contrast to the old, are committed to the preservation and administration of nationalized property.

Not openly and boldly, but in a covert way, they strike at the entire continuity of our theory since the time of Trotsky insofar as it relates to assessing the character of a workers state. They begin with Trotsky's analysis of the Soviet Union, attempting to cut that theoretical foundation away from the problem before us. 'But it is ridiculous to think,' they argue, 'that the question of the Cuban state can be resolved abstractly by "criteria" from this earlier discussion (with Schachtman and Burnham) even at the end of which Trotsky was still saying that the last word had still to be said by history'. What do they mean by that cryptic last remark? That Trotsky doubted or was not sure of the character of the Soviet Union? What do they mean by the epithet 'ridiculous'? Ridiculous by whose standards and on what grounds? The criteria used by Trotsky, abstract though they may be, happen to be the concrete theoretical grounds for every succeeding step in Trotskyist analysis concerning the problem of the character of the Soviet Union and the workers states that have appeared since then. To sever this connection prepares the way for revising everything accomplished in theory in this field since then — and also prepares the way for revising Trotsky's theory of the degenerated workers state. The National Committee of the SLL is taking here a most revealing step.

The mechanical thinking that feels an inner compulsion to cut the link with Trotsky's analysis, reveals itself in still another way. On page 12 of their document 'Trotskyism Betrayed' they seek to summarize Trotsky's position: 'The bureaucracy which usurped the government power in the social economy of Russia was a parasitic group and not a necessary fundamental class.' That sounds correct on first reading, but something is missing. What kind of parasitic group? What was its class colouration? We search the page in vain for an answer. Yet this is one of the most distinctive features in Trotsky's analysis. The parasitic layer is *petty-bourgeois*, a reflection of the peasantry, the remnants of the old classes, the elements who switched allegiance from Czar to the new regime — all these and the political-military administrative levels of the new government who, under pressure from the capitalist West, drifted from the outlook of revolutionary socialism or came to prominence without ever having genuinely understood or accepted it. What was new in this situation — and this is the heart of Trotsky's position on the question — was that a reactionary petty-bourgeois formation of this kind could, after a political counter-revolution, wield power in a workers state and even

defend the foundations of that state while being primarily concerned about their own special interests.

We come now to the question of why this point is important — of decisive importance, in truth — in solving the central problem posed by the spread of Soviet-type economies in the postwar period. However, let us first listen to the National Committee of the SLL:

The states established in Eastern Europe in 1945 were extensions of the Russian Revolution by the military and bureaucratic methods of the Stalinist leadership. They were possible under the circumstances of special difficulty for imperialism and the chaos in Europe consequent on the defeat of German capitalism. In fact the betrayals of international Social Democracy and Stalinism restricted the advance of the revolution to Eastern Europe (and later China). This perpetuates the essential conditions of the survival of the bureaucracy in the workers states. There was by no means the same dynamic in the foundations of the deformed 'workers states' as there has been in Russia in October 1917. Our movement's characterization of all these states was not simply a question of applying 'criteria' like nationalization to the finished product.

These six sentences constitute all that seems to have registered with the National Committee of the SLL of that rich collective effort of our world movement to solve the complicated problems posed by 'the facts' in those areas. Yugoslavia, a special case which gave rise to considerable discussion in the world Trotskyist movement, is not even mentioned. We will not cavil, however, in view of the fact that China was brushed off with three words (inside parentheses).

What is remarkable about this capsule treatment of an important chapter in the preservation and development of the theory of our movement is that although it concerns the decisive links of theory between Trotsky's analysis of the Soviet Union and the world Trotskyist movement's analysis of Cuba today, it does not contain a milligram of theory not even by way of historical mention! Such references as 'chaos', 'betrayals', 'circumstances of special difficulty', 'by no means the same dynamic', etc., indicate the general setting to which which theory must relate but not the points of the theory itself. The six sentences constitute in fact a shamefaced way of completely disregarding the theory of the character of these states. Thus, if we combine the previous operation of cutting away Trotsky's position on the Soviet Union by declaring it has no relevance to the Cuban discussion, we stand where? The answer of the SLL is to leap across all the intervening links to Lenin's abstract formulations of the *State*

and Revolution period. None of the arguments used against the pertinence of our referring to China, Yugoslavia and Eastern Europe apply to the pertinence of the SLL referring to Lenin! Why? Well, these are texts written by Lenin himself you see and you don't want to be against Leninism do you? Now do you? This methodology is, of course, the correct means for accomplishing one end — the conversion of Lenin into a harmless ikon.

Leaving nothing undone to make sure that the confusion is twice confounded, the National Committee of the SLL states on page 13 of their document, 'Our essential difference with the SWP on this question is, therefore, not over the 'criteria' of workers states. We do not accept such a framework for the discussion; if, in fact, we had defined a workers' state by the existence or non-existence of Trotskyist parties then this *would* be a lapse into 'subjectivism', but we have not done this.' A few lines further down on the very same page, however, we have done this. We read: 'Does the dictatorship of the proletariat exist in Cuba? We reply categorically NO! The absence of a party squarely based on the workers and poor peasants makes it impossible to set up and maintain such a dictatorship.' The latter sentence, then, excludes Cuba from being a workers state — and also China, Yugoslavia and the East European countries. It even excludes the Soviet Union since you cannot 'maintain such a dictatorship' in the 'absence of a party squarely based on the workers and poor peasants.'

Listen again to the National Committee of the SLL on why Trotsky's analysis of the Soviet Union is not relevant to Cuba: 'At every stage of his eleven-years-long work towards a "definition" of the USSR, Trotsky insisted on a rounded, critical perspective and not simply on the "normative" method of applying definition criteria.' Are we in a kindergarten for retarded children? It was precisely because Yugoslavia, the East European countries and China did not follow the norm that we could not use the 'normative method'. That was the big difficulty, if we may remind the National Committee of the SLL, and why we sought an adjective like 'deformed' to indicate that these workers states were not according to norm.

'The SWP method is the opposite', our analysts continue, 'taking certain "criteria" from the discussion of one particular manifestation of the revolutionary struggle in one part of the world as a unique stage in the development of the world revolution. They apply this criteria to another part of the world a generation later, to a particular sector at a

particular stage of the struggle. Thus nationalization and the existence of workers militias are sufficient to make Cuba a "workers state" and to make the Cuban revolution a socialist revolution.'

We protest! And not just over the misrepresentation of our position in the last sentence. It is the SLL method that is normative. They refuse to consider either the individual or the particular. They go back *two* generations to *the most general* norms of the workers state as defined by Lenin in the light of the writings of Marx and Engels. They then apply these *norms* to the individual case of Cuba. Since Cuba does not fit, their conclusion is that Cuba is not a workers' state. It is this method of thought which we claim is now represented in the positions that the SLL is pressing for adoption by the entire world Trotskyist movement. It is undialectical and completely mechanical. It measures facts by norms, and if they do not measure up, too bad for the facts.

What are the particular threads of theory to which Cuba must be related, if we are to proceed dialectically? In the case of the Eastern European countries, we held that the petty-bourgeois layer which has usurped power in the Soviet Union could, under certain conditions, export both their own rule and the property forms on which they were a parasitic excrescence. To do this they had to overthrow capitalist property relations as well as capitalist regimes. (At a certain stage they also liquidated native revolutionists who might have led independent currents.) The physical presence of Soviet armies in the occupied countries made it not too difficult to grasp the theory that reflected this process. In Yugoslavia, as has been pointed out before, it was more difficult. Partisans played the predominant role and in place of Soviet generals and Soviet secret political police, the Yugoslav revolutionists came to power. They were, however, of the Stalinist school with a strong nationalist colouration. Can a workers state be established by petty-bourgeois figures such as these? Without the intervention of a revolutionary-socialist party? The National Committee of the SLL voted yes. The theoretical position they approved was that a petty-bourgeois Stalinist leadership can take power and establish a workers state, not because it is a *Stalinist* species of petty-bourgeois leadership but because it is at the head of a revolution, involving both peasants and workers, a revolution that is of even greater relative strength because it occurs in the time of the death agony of capitalism and after the victory of the Soviet Union in World War II.

The next link was China. This particular case displayed even more novel features: years in which the Mao leadership existed as a dual power in which guerrilla warfare played a prominent role, eventually paving the way for full strength regular armies, the march on the cities, and so on. With all its differences, the key problem again was like the one in Yugoslavia, save that the direct role of the Soviet Union was more remote. Could a revolution be led by a petty-bourgeois formation — without prior organization of a revolutionary-socialist party — to the successful formation of a workers state in a country as vast and populous as China? There was long hesitation about this but 'the facts', which the National Committee of the SLL so lightly wave aside today in the case of Cuba, spoke so powerfully that the world Trotskyist movement had to accept the reality. The National Committee of the SLL, be it noted, did not contribute much to that discussion but they made up for the slimness of their writings by the alacrity with which they voted to call China a workers state. Perhaps it is only now that they are beginning to consider the implications of what they voted for? The strange part is that this difficulty in taking a Cuba Libre chaser after downing China in a single gulp arises over the fact that the Cuban leadership is in every respect superior to the Chinese, unless you consider Mao's Stalinism to be a virtue. Perhaps, with the help of Alcoholics Anonymous, the SLL leaders have learned to put up a hand with firm resolution, 'Thanks, but we don't drink!'

The position that Cuba is a workers state rests on the extension of the theory, as it was developed in the previous particular cases, to this new case. A contrary position must demonstrate either that the previous positions were fallacious or that nothing has really happened in Cuba. A half-way position, with which the National Committee of the SLL may be toying, is to hold that each individual case calls for its own special criteria — one set for Cuba, another set for China, etc. This would signify the complete breakdown of any scientific approach, not to speak of dialectics, and the enthronement of the most vulgar empiricism. The National Committee of the SLL has chosen the alternative of denying the facts. It has, however, gone far, as we have shown, in preparing the ground for shifting to the other main alternative; namely that everything must be revised back to 1940, if not back to Lenin.

On the other hand, the theory with which we were able to provide a rational explanation for the appearance of such unforeseen formations

as workers states deviating widely from the norms laid down by Lenin has proved its worth — and quite dramatically in the case of Cuba. I refer not only to its help in defending and extending the Cuban Revolution but in understanding why the Cuban issue is of such extraordinary explosiveness in world politics.

The position of the National Committee of the SLL utterly obscures this role, in fact denies it, for Cuba is seen as only one particular 'unique' case, unconnected with anything save the colonial revolution in general and perhaps the American elections in particular; hence incapable of playing any great or even unusual role. They overlook what is absolutely basic — the fact of a socialist revolution in the Western Hemisphere. In place of the revolutionary action which flared in the powder house of imperialism, the SLL leaders substitute the most barren academic schema: 'A Marxist evaluation of any movement insists upon an analysis of its economic basis in the modern world. This must begin from the international needs of imperialism.' How do these most generalized economic abstractions apply to the blaze in the Caribbean? 'We have tried to understand and discuss the Cuban question,' the National Committee of the SLL answers, 'in terms of our own analysis of the economic position of Cuba and the evaluation of the present struggle in Cuba and the rest of America.' This approach, worthy of a dogmatic instructor in an economics department, has led them to constantly underestimate Cuba politically; and the many painful surprises have taught them nothing.

Once you see Cuba for what it is, a workers state and the opening stage of the socialist revolution in the Western Hemisphere, as is made possible by linking it to the revolutions in Yugoslavia, Eastern Europe and China (the Cuban leaders are well aware of the latter tie), then it is quite clear why it plays such a spectacular role. The extension of the October 1917 Revolution into the Western Hemisphere is a *revolutionary action* far more decisive in the scales than the weight of Cuba's economy in North and South America. This revolution has something *qualitative* about it as a culmination of the overturns that began in Eastern Europe. With its signal that the stage is now opening for non-Stalinist revolutionary leaderships, it even appears as a major turning point in the whole postwar period. Wall Street, quite understandably from the viewpoint of its class interests, is not excited over the weight of Cuba as a particular country but as a bright flame burning amidst crates of high explosives. It can absorb the economic

losses in Cuba. It cannot absorb the political consequences of long continued existence of the revolution that caused these losses. Cuba in its eyes, to change the simile, has the peculiar shape of a fulcrum offering a point of support for a lever from the land of the October 1917 Revolution. Wall Street knows very well that not much weight is required in that lever to lift the entire Western Hemisphere and with it the world.

Thus U.S. imperialism views Cuba as of first-rate importance. This being the view of the most powerful capitalist class, the heart and center and main support of all the other capitalist sectors, its moves in relation to Cuba inevitably reverberate in every country. For all the weaknesses inherent in its size and economic and military position, Cuba thus occupies the center of the stage and becomes a general problem for all of humanity.

This is not all. By bringing forward a leadership of non-Stalinist origin, the Cuban Revolution has visibly hastened the eventual closing of the whole chapter of Stalinism. By impelling this leadership toward revolutionary-socialist views, the Cuban Revolution has increased in a marked way the actuality of Lenin's general norms. This would seem so graphically evident that the blind could see it in the measures taken by the Castro regime against Stalinist bureaucratism and in the debates resounding in the Soviet bloc over the meaning of 'peaceful co-existence' and how best to fight imperialism. 'Unique' Cuba, following the particular pattern of the buffer countries, Yugoslavia and China, has become a general concern for capitalism and the Soviet bloc, and given fresh inspiration to the partisans of Lenin's norms. Dialectics has provided us with a beautiful example of the interrelationship between the individual, the particular and the general.

In maintaining and developing in this way the theoretical positions staked out by Trotsky, we have not engaged in 'revisionism', as Healy and his closest collaborators charge. We have conceded nothing in our program, which continues to be based on the fundamental positions laid down by Lenin. We have, on the contrary, found it easier to find our way in the complex course of the revolutions that followed World War II. Our analysis enabled us to work out more skilful ways of finding points in these revolutions from which to bring the norms of Lenin to bear. We prefer to believe that this was Lenin's way both in spirit and in method.

The Proof of the Pudding

As the National Committee of the SLL can undoubtedly prove a thousand times over by quotations from 'Lenin and others', theory and practice are intimately interrelated. A bad theory is bound to be reflected in practice; and vice versa. Thus from the highly erroneous theory of the Cuban Revolution which the SWP holds, as the SLL leaders see it, certain disastrous consequences must inevitably follow. Prominent among these is a pro-Castro attitude and a vast overrating of the importance of the Cuban Revolution. These sickening symptoms, in the opinion of the National Committee of the SLL, show the cancerous 'degeneration' which the SWP has suffered. The alleged decline of the American Trotskyist movement is in turn to be explained as a product of the unhealthy environment of economic prosperity and political witch-hunting in which the SWP has had to operate throughout the postwar period.

It really is a curious dialectic, isn't it? The SWP displays its tendency to capitulate to American imperialism by standing in the forefront against all the witch-hunting of the American imperialist pack howling and clamouring for Castro's blood and the downfall of the Cuban government! On the other hand the National Committee of the SLL shows how much better it resists the imperialist pressure of Wall Street's junior partners in the City by sneering at the importance of the Cuban Revolution and calling Castro just another 'Chiang Kai-shek'. This proves that the freer and easier environment provided by British capitalism is more conducive to Leninist intransigence since the temptation to stray into sin is higher and the opportunities for it more numerous than in the USA, and these challenging objective conditions offer on the subjective side greater scope, under wise Leninist guidance, to stiffen and improve the character and consciousness of the cadres . . . or words to that effect.

Despite 'or rather because of' this sour, bilious attitude toward the goings on in Cuba — whatever they may be — The National Committee of the SLL is convinced that it is putting up a model defence of the Cuban Revolution. Following a paragraph reaffirming the need for the 'Construction of a Marxist party based on the working class and armed with the finest and latest (what are the latest?) weapons from the arsenal of Marxism,' the Committee declares:

'In conclusion we state that such a policy does not inhibit the struggle for the defence of Cuba against imperialist attack, nor does it

prevent episodic alliances with the Castroite forces in the struggle against the latifundists. On the contrary, it would immensely facilitate the tasks of defending Cuba and defeating landlordism.

'The defence of Cuba and Castro against imperialism is a *tactic*. Our strategy remains the overthrow of capitalism and the setting up of a real workers' state with *real* worker's power. This task still remains to be done in Cuba.'

Should we begin with the end and work back through this tangle? 'A real workers' state.' Then some kind of workers' state now exists in Cuba and the task is to make it 'real'. But that means capitalism has been overthrown. Our authors scramble to the alert. 'That's not what we mean!!' All right, let's skip it and take a look at how your reduction of the defence of the Cuban Revolution from a principle to a 'tactic' has worked out.

Before their policy had crystallized into a hardened sectarian dogma of refusing to recognize the victories of the Cuban Revolution, the British comrades organized a demonstration in behalf of Cuba that brought immediate response in Havana. The papers there gave it top banner-line coverage and reproduced big photos of the demonstrators with their placards. This action undertaken by the SLL proved to be only a flash in the pan. In place of sustained action, a literary campaign was substituted. Perhaps the SLL was too weak and uninfluential to do more. But the literary campaign has to be read to be believed. Utilizing as object lessons what it took to be the crimes and betrayals of the Castro government, it sought to provide, apparently, a healthy offset to the supposed deviations of the SWP. The theme of this educational material was 'Cuba Si, Humbug No'. This was the headline over what was passed off as a fundamental contribution, setting the tone and line of the press for the ensuing period. This key article took us everywhere in the world, to Siberia and Bolivia, through time and space, everywhere but Cuba. As I noted elsewhere, some of the American defenders of the Cuban Revolution thought that a typographical error was involved and that the title was really intended to read, 'Humbug Si, Cuba No'.

As late as a year or so ago, the SLL might possibly have recovered from the heavy penalties that were being paid for its ultimaticist abstentionist course. But they took a step that could scarcely be better conceived to block recovery of lost ground. They turned down an invitation from the Cuban embassy to attend a reception. This rejection was couched in the form of an ultimatum and put in such an

insulting way as to signify that the occasion was being utilized to slam all doors and to hell with any Cubans, Trotskyist-minded or otherwise, who might be extending a hand in their direction. The excuse for this ultimatum was a report that appeared in some South American newspapers of an attack on the Cuban Trotskyists (members of the Posadas group) which Guevara made at Punta del Este in the summer of 1961. The SLL did not inquire at the Cuban embassy as to the accuracy of the newspaper account. It did not then inquire — if the account had turned out to be accurate — whether Guevara would still stand on these remarks.²

It did not even leave open the possibility that there might be differences among the Cubans over the question of Trotskyism and that the opening of a door in Britain might be due to pressure in our direction. The National Committee of the SLL acted as if by reflex — not to explore, but to slam the door. That's what openings are for, ain't they?

Later, in response to suggestions from the SWP, the leaders of the SLL organized a campaign for aid to Cuba. This was very tardy, but it still might have opened some possibilities if it had been accompanied by a positive turn in the SLL press. This was not to be so. The campaign itself was conceived and executed in such unilateral, isolated fashion that not even the Cubans were consulted, despite the talk about 'episodic alliances with the Castroite forces'. Thus the SLL campaigned for 'food' for Cuba, without co-ordinating the campaign with the international one launched in consultation with the Cubans for 'medicines'. The result was that the SLL got its reply to the diplomatic note that had been sent to the Cuban embassy: disavowal of the isolated, unilateral SLL campaign for 'food'. The Cubans did not go for the 'tactic' of the SLL. The SLL leaders felt, in consequ-

²On one occasion, Guevara attacked the newspaper of the Cuban Trotskyists over TV. News of this attack was quickly disseminated, since there are many forces, including Stalinist-minded, who are interested in driving a wedge between the Cuban Revolution and Trotskyism. Only months later did we learn accidentally that on TV, the very next night after this episode, Guevara apologized to the 'Trotskyist comrades' for the misrepresentation of their views and said that he had been mistaken in his interpretation of what they had said. Even at Punta del Este, Guevara met with leading representatives of the Posadas group, and they gave banner lines to this interview, paying no attention to the alleged attack on them, as if this were inconsequential or had been garbled by the reporter who included it in his dispatch. Experiences of this kind taught us quite early in the Cuban Revolution how cautiously any reports in this area must be handled. Such considerations, of course, are meaningless to Healy. They don't show up in the crystal ball he reads in London.

ence, that they had no choice but to abandon their campaign. In this they were wise to recognize the reality: they had proved incapable in Britain of either leading or inspiring so much as a modest concrete campaign to aid the Cuban Revolution. Thus a departure from the principle of defending Cuba and Castro against imperialism — the principle of unconditional defence — had to be paid for to the damage of the SLL as well as the Cuban Revolution.

The SLL defense efforts were, consequently, reduced to their press. But here any campaigning was not only cut down in size, it was made to carefully reflect their theoretical concept of the Cuban Revolution. To read *The Newsletter* on Cuba is like exploring an empty vinegar barrel. Not much there and not very enticing.

How the centering of attention on the texts of Marxism, coupled with refusal to admit and to weigh facts, can separate a leadership from some of the main realities of world politics can be seen in vivid fashion by following the pages of *The Newsletter*. We need not go far back in the file; some fresh examples are available for study.

As American imperialism began its preparations for the naval blockade, *The Newsletter* handled the news in perfunctory fashion. The issue of September 8 reports the new aggression plans and correctly calls for 'assistance of the Cuban people in every way possible'. However, the temptation to spoil this with a jibe is irresistible: 'The true friends of the Cuban Revolution are not the 'radical tourists' flying back and forth across the Caribbean, but the working class movement throughout the world.' Among the 'radical tourists' happen to be revolutionists from the working class movement all over the world, especially Latin America, for Havana has become a kind of revolutionary crossroads of the world. The SLL leaders, of course, can be excused for not knowing this since it is within the realm of 'facts' about Cuba; moreover, they are not inclined to be 'radical tourists', especially in a place like Cuba.

In the September 15 issue Cuba gets a few inches on page three. It seems that the 'US State Department has been pressing other governments, including the British (that's alert reporting), to stop ships from taking goods to and from Cuba, in an effort to tighten the stranglehold of their economic blockade of the island'. This brief item gets the very correct but very perfunctory headline: 'Labour must counter US Cuban plans'. Labour must, of course, but *The Newsletter* is not much excited about it. Even the heavy pressure from the US State Department on the Macmillan government fails to kick off a

sharp reaction in the phlegmatic editor. Has this counter-revolutionary pressure, then, no meaning for British politics? Is the Labour Party to draw no lessons from the despicable role played by the Macmillan government in the Cuban crisis? Are the Labour Party ranks supposed to regard complacently how the bureaucrats knuckled under?

The September 22 issue gave Cuba a real break: a signed front-page story — but modestly at the bottom. 'Any resemblance between a real war danger and the present crisis in Cuban-American relations must be seen as pure coincidence.' The analyst presents his reading of the situation: 'The US government, and Kennedy in particular, are still smarting from the Bay of Pigs fiasco last year. Moreover this is election year in the US and Kennedy knows only too well that the only way to stay in the White House is by staying out of Cuba — and concentrating on Berlin.'

The author correctly notes that 'the State Department has a long-term plan whose sinister implications are becoming clearer every day. It hopes to starve Cuba into submission by intensifying the blockade and threatening sanctions against West European nations who continue to trade with and aid the Cuban nation'. These excellent sentences are, however, completely spoiled by the ultraleft prescription which is proffered to the Castro government: 'Any attempt to establish normal relations with the US government would undermine the Cuban liberation movement irretrievably in the eyes of the Latin-American masses.' The headline for this illuminating article is 'Cuba: hot air and wine'.

The commentator who wrote this, Michael Banda, is not to blame. He is only faithfully and very logically applying the line developed by the National Committee of the SLL, giving a practical demonstration of how thoroughly steeped he is in its method of thinking.

The September 29 issue of *The Newsletter* apparently did not consider the continuation of Kennedy's new aggressive moves to be newsworthy despite the mounting world tension. The editors have their own way of gauging the importance of 'the facts'; and, as we have seen, this does not necessarily coincide with the views of the rest of the world or even anyone else.

The October 6 issue continues to rate the Cuban Revolution and its defence as un-newsworthy. Perhaps it was just as well.

In the October 13 issue, Cuba managed to fight its way on to page two. Someone, obviously bored with the assignment, notes that 'The

past few weeks have seen a stepping up of the US efforts to tighten the economic stranglehold on Cuba.' It appears that the State Department is going to place a naval blockade on Cuba. The British government may get involved in this, but it's not too clear from the article just how. The abstract formulas about the vital need for 'assistance from the International Labour movement' are repeated. Finally we come to the section where we must bare our flesh to the needle. The plunger is pushed to the bottom. We are inoculated against the danger of placing the slightest confidence — not in the British, but in the Cuban government.

The aid, both military and economic, which the Cubans have received from the USSR, has enabled them to defy the attacks of US big business. But increased dependence on these supplies carried with it the danger of political pressure from Khrushchev for more 'responsible' policies to be followed.

The UN speech of Cuba's President Dorticos is a warning of the possibility of such moves. Dr. Dorticos declared his government had no intention of spreading revolution to the South American mainland, or of taking action against the US naval base at Guantanamo.

In the following issue, October 20, Cuba did pretty well in *The Newsletter*. A column on the front page noted that the pressure was being stepped up, a Cuban patrol boat having been sunk 'by a large exile ship'. The main danger was correctly seen to be 'the strength of American imperialism' and not the 'small groups of counter-revolutionary exiles'. Another danger was well handled by the author, Eric Neilson; that is, the readiness of the Soviet bureaucracy to compromise with the American imperialists. With almost prophetic insight the author wrote probably the two best paragraphs in many an issue of the paper:

This compromise could mean that Khrushchev is considering cutting off the supply of arms to Cuba, arms vital to the defence of that country against US imperialism.

Any such compromise must be firmly opposed by all those who claim to support the Cuban revolution against the reactionary forces which now threaten it.

When Kennedy had completed the mobilization of troops for invasion of Cuba, had stationed the fleet in the Caribbean, put bombers in the air carrying nuclear weapons and readied rockets and submarines

for the attack, he issued his ultimatum to the Soviet government. The world teetered at the edge of nuclear destruction. For once the National Committee of the SLL decided that 'the facts' outweighed their texts. Reality broke into the columns of *The Newsletter*. The top headline in the October 27 issue was awarded to Cuba. 'SAY NO TO YANKEE WAR.' A map even was printed on the front page showing that there is an island named Cuba and it lies off the tip of Florida and between the Bahamas and Jamaica, which are of special interest to British readers.

Even more, a big section of page two was used to reprint extracts from the speech by President Dorticos about which readers of *The Newsletter* had been warned in the October 13 issue. Now *The Newsletter*, veering completely around, praised what Dr. Dorticos had said: 'This very clearly exposes the preparations for war which have now entered a stage of open and undisguised aggression not only against Cuba but against the Soviet Union'.

In the main article Gerry Healy became so enthusiastic over the Cuban Revolution that he ventured to say these welcome words:

The Cuban revolution is a continuation of the great colonial revolution. Its defence cannot be organized within the framework of 'co-existence with world imperialism'.

To defend the Soviet Union is to fight for the extension of the revolution which gave rise to it in the first place.

The Cuban revolution is just such a revolution. That is why US imperialism wants to destroy it, and in doing so has now decided to attack the Soviet Union itself.

Splendidly stated! The existence of a workers' state in Cuba, extending the October Revolution into Latin America, is an unbearable challenge to US imperialism. That is why Wall Street is willing to risk nuclear war to crush it.

You would never know from the pages of *The Newsletter*, since such 'facts' are of little concern to them, but the British working people acquitted themselves well in this emergency. Hundreds of spontaneous and hastily organized demonstrations flared up throughout Britain. These became a significant factor in causing Kennedy to hesitate in reaching for the red telephone.

This impressive response of the British working people to the crisis over Cuba was a convincing demonstration that they are not nearly so insular in their outlook as the National Committee of the SLL. Our

'Leninists' were so far behind events that they could not even be said to be 'tail-ending'. To be a tail-ender you at least have to run after someone who does something or try to catch up with actions that are occurring. The National Committee of the SLL was dreaming about a different world than this one.

To close this gruesome chapter, we place in evidence the November 3 issue of *The Newsletter*. The Cuban crisis still rates a prominent place but the leaders of the SLL have obviously relaxed. The opening sentence of the front-page article by Gerry Healy reads: 'The defence of the Cuban revolution against US imperialism is now the acid test for the world Trotskyist movement.'

In a newspaper addressed to the British workers, it may be taken as eccentric to open the main article with a sentence of such narrow focus. Actually the audience which Healy specified is too broad. It would have been sufficient to cite the National Committee of the SLL. That's the public Healy has in mind anyway, isn't it? This strange article does not go after British imperialism for the treacherous role it played in the crisis. Instead it attempts to illustrate the thesis that 'Cuba is another grim warning of the predominantly reactionary nature of the Soviet bureaucracy and its politics.' Much of the article is a plodding repetition of the basic Trotskyist explanation of the nature of this bureaucracy and its opposition to revolution. When he gets to his point, however, on how the Cuban situation illustrates his abstractions, the author runs into trouble. 'In the case of Cuba, Khrushchev has provided Castro and his people with food supplies although in inadequate quantities.' On this, Healy's view of the situation is a little awry. Some of the shortages faced by the Cubans, such as pork and lard, could probably not be made up in the Soviet Union. In general the poor people in Cuba are eating better than in Batista's time, the children certainly, and hunger is not the main problem as of now. Where the Soviet role has been decisive is in supplying oil, tools, vehicles, machinery and military goods. The Cuban cause is very popular throughout the Soviet bloc and it is a considerable error to think that quite substantial aid has not been given.

However, Healy rests his case not on this but something rather unexpected:

The establishment of rocket bases in Cuba could not possibly defend the Cuban revolution. This can only be done in the immediate future by the

struggle to win over the solidarity of the American working class and to extend the revolution in Latin America.

Of course the Cuban government had every right to accept these rocket bases and sign such agreements as it wished with the Soviet Union.

But it was most inadvisable that it should have exercised this right by permitting Khrushchev to place under the control of Russian technicians rocket bases which were plain for all to see on the small island.³

Having a right and exercising it are two different things. One does not necessarily follow from the other.

Like the hero in the novel by Victor Hugo, Healy deserves to be decorated for that sentence about winning the solidarity of the American working class and extending the revolution into Latin America. And then summarily shot for his advice to the Cubans: 'Having a right and exercising it are two different things. One does not necessarily follow from the other.' If he objects to such a harsh penalty, the military court can well reply: 'Having a right to advise the Cubans and exercising it are two different things. One does not necessarily follow from the other'. We can hear Healy's immortal reply as he refuses a blindfold: 'What kind of right is it if you can't exercise it?'

The irony of his advice is that only a few weeks before, the ultra-left spurs were being dug into Dorticos for declaring that his government had no intention of exporting revolution or of taking action against the US naval base at Guantanamo. A couple of weeks before that *The Newsletter* shook its finger warningly against the Cubans considering 'any attempt to establish normal relations with the US government'. And only two issues before Healy's article, in the number that went to press on the eve of Kennedy's ultimatum, *The Newsletter* warned that Khrushchev might cut off Cuba's supply of arms, 'arms vital to the defence of that country against US imperialism'. *The Newsletter* alerted its readers to the evident dangers in that quarter: 'Any such compromise must be firmly opposed by all those . . .' etc., etc., Apparently Gerry Healy didn't get around to reading the column on Cuba that week. Or perhaps by 'arms vital to the defence of that country against US imperialism', with its stockpiles of nuclear 'deterrents', *The Newsletter* had something only quantitative in mind like 40,000 tons of bows and arrows and flint tomahawks. Thus the

³ How microscopic does Healy think the island is? The US resorted to U-2 spy planes and the violation of Cuban air space to discover them.

Kremlin betrayed by sending defensive equipment of too superior a quality.

Perhaps Healy is right, but the fact that the White House chose the rocket bases as the excuse for pushing to the brink of nuclear war was partly accidental. Before that they obviously weighed seizing on Soviet aid in building a fishing port as a cause for going to war. As I write this, the stationing in Cuba of planes capable of carrying bombs is the pretext for maintaining the blockade. If this today, then tomorrow in a new crisis something else. In every case it will be an instance in which the Cuban government exercises its sovereign rights. The real reason, of course, is that Cuba is a workers state, a fact which Healy cannot bring himself to admit. US imperialism, more realistically, has recognized its existence and consciously and calculatingly made it a major policy to end this standing affront, challenge and threat to the capitalist system. If a plausible pretext is lacking one will be manufactured. The facts are absolutely conclusive on that.

Healy's position is a concession to the pacifist view: don't provoke the warmongers! As if they are not always provoked by their intended victims, if for no other reason than by their weakness.

The major lesson to be drawn from this is that in an acid test what looked like 24-carat ultraleftism can reveal some surprising opportunist streaks.

Position of the French Section of the IC

The leading comrades of the French Section of the International Committee share with the National Committee of the SLL the view that Cuba is not a workers state. They differ on two fundamental points, however. Unlike the British comrades, they believe that dual power exists in Cuba; and they hold that the Castro regime constitutes a 'Workers and Peasants Government'. Moreover, in contrast to the SLL's top leaders, they recognize the logic which has compelled the majority of the world Trotskyist movement to consider Cuba to be a workers state. Their criticism is not against the justifiability of extending to Cuba the same basic approach that was used in the case of China, Yugoslavia, and the East European countries. What they maintain is that since Cuba is not a workers state — according to their estimate — something must have been wrong in the preceding position. We must, therefore, dump all the work done up to now in estimating the character of the state in China, Yugoslavia, and Eastern

Europe and start over again. What they propose as a substitute, they have only intimated; perhaps they will soon offer us something more substantial.

In a certain sense they have thus proceeded in a more sophisticated and methodical way than the National Committee of the SLL. They are prepared to acknowledge most of the facts which the British comrades consider to be an unbearable or indecent sight. They are willing to admit the consistency of the workers state position. Thus they rectify the most repelling crudities of the SLL position. With the same sharp eye for avoiding what is grossly absurd, they take what they consider to be valid in the views of their allies — that Cuba is not a workers state — and insist that it be carried to its obviously necessary conclusion; namely revision of the hard-won theory of the world Trotskyist movement back to 1948 and earlier. They state this quite frankly:

And we rejoice that the discussion on Cuba inevitably entails returning to this former discussion and the elaboration of a new analysis of the nature of the buffer states, of Yugoslavia and China, question on which we are 'revisionists' insofar as — the discussion on Cuba demonstrates it — these comrades today, in basing themselves on the characterizations adopted in 1948, at times place in question the very principles that served as the foundation structure of our international movement.

We for our part, acknowledge that this methodology is inherently superior to that of the National Committee of the SLL, since it recognizes in principle the pre-eminence of reality; and we will add that the British comrades might profitably study the coherence and lucidity with which their French allies argue their case in 'Draft Report on the Cuban Revolution'. It is regrettable that the authors of the Trotskyism Betrayed document chose to brush this contribution rudely aside, not even referring to it, still less discussing its views in their opus. However, the French comrades may, with good reason, have felt grateful for this lack of consideration.

As I see it, the position developed in the 'Draft Report' rests on four main errors: (1) Substitution of 'Workers and Peasants Government' for 'Workers State'; (2) refusal to recognize a qualitative change in the character of the state in Cuba; (3) misunderstanding of the main criteria used in characterizing the buffer states; (4) abuse of an analogy with the Spanish Revolution of 1936-39. I will consider these in their order.

The authors of the 'Draft Report' agree that the break up of the coalition government in Cuba in July 1959 marked a change of decisive character in the regime; it was qualitative. This position, in my opinion, is unassailable. The turn proved to be an essential link in the chain of Cuban events. The new regime that replaced the coalition undertook a series of measures, directed against the interests of the landlords, native capitalists and imperialists that clearly advanced the class interests of the Cuban campesinos and workers. These measures took effect in all fields, economic, social and political. Their outstanding characteristic was disarmament of the bourgeoisie and armament of the masses. Deep inroads were thus made in the old state structure. The correct label for such a government is 'Workers and Peasants', a petty-bourgeois formation foreseen long ago by Marxists. Our Transitional Programme noted the possibility of such governments appearing in our epoch, as well as the possibility of their going 'much farther' than they originally intended. When the Cuban 'Workers' and Peasants Government', in reply to the aggression of US imperialism, expropriated landlord and capitalist properties on a major scale, in September-October 1960, then instituted a planned economy and completed the destruction of the old state apparatus, it obviously went beyond anything foreseen in any of the theoretical or programmatic writings of Marxism in the period before World War II, including the writings of Trotsky. Whatever label may be put on the resulting state, we are up against a hard fact which Marxism must account for on pain of confessing incapacity to deal with reality. If our opponents will concede for the moment that what we have before us is a workers state of some kind or other then what is new in life and what must therefore be reflected in theory is that a 'Workers and Peasants Government', that is a petty-bourgeois government, can go so far as to establish a workers state.⁴

⁴ The conditions under which this has occurred, together with the limitations of the resulting workers states, that is, their 'deformation', have been discussed concretely in the cases of the buffer countries, Yugoslavia and China. The conditions which made possible a similar development in Cuba have been discussed but it is still too early to draw final conclusions on the limitations. As for what the particular pattern of these overturns of capitalism signifies for the general necessity in our epoch of constructing a revolutionary-socialist international, this question was raised at the time of the discussion over the buffer countries — most sharply, if I remember correctly, by leading comrades in the SWP. The general conclusions drawn at that time remain completely valid. First of all, it is far easier for the proletariat to come to power in a backward country than in an imperialist center. This was well understood by the Bolsheviks, but it is still truer today. The relative decline of world capitalism in relation to the rise of the

This is the precise point which the authors of 'Draft Report' balk at. And recognizing very clearly that this conclusion cannot be avoided in view of the fact that it involves the same principle operative in China, Yugoslavia and even Eastern Europe, they very logically extend their negative position backward to include those cases.

By doing so, however, they at once involve themselves in a self-contradictory stand. They insist, properly so, on 'underlining the importance of the rupture of the coalition between Castro and the bourgeois figures installed in the government after the flight of Batista'. This qualitative political change marked the appearance of a new kind of government. On the other hand they underline the importance of *not* recognizing any qualitative change in the economy or the state resting on that economy at any point up to now in Cuba.

It requires considerable dexterity to justify this self-contradictory stand. To the natural question that at once arises, 'What kind of state exists, then, in Cuba?' they offer an ingenious answer. If it is not a workers state, then it must be a capitalist state. Since this is scarcely demonstrable, the authors of 'Draft Report' maintain that what we have before us is a 'broken-down, decomposed, phantom bourgeois state, controlled by the group of men around Castro' (*'un état*

Soviet Union, plus the enormous revolutionary ferment on a global scale has made the grip of capitalism much weaker in the backward areas than it was even a few decades ago. Experience has demonstrated that forces which are socialist minded but not Bolshevik can come to power and undertake a series of measures that in certain circumstances go so far as to transcend private capitalism, providing the base for a workers state. Such a state, however, testifies to its specific origin by deviating from the Leninist norms. These new possibilities, however, have not eliminated the need for revolutionary-socialist parties. What they really demonstrate is the richness of revolutionary openings and therefore the bright perspective facing revolutionary socialism in these areas. Could anything be more instructive than the turn of the Castro leadership towards Marxism-Leninism in the very course of revolution and its acknowledgement of the need for a revolutionary-socialist party?

Likewise valid is the conclusion drawn in the 1948 discussion of the absolute necessity for construction of revolutionary-socialist parties in the advanced capitalist countries. In fact experience would seem to indicate that the difficulty of coming to power in the imperialist centers has increased if anything since the time of the Bolsheviks. This is due not solely to the perfidious role of the Stalinist, social-democratic and trade-union bureaucracies, but also to the lessons learned by the bourgeoisie in the defeats they have suffered. Consequently, to win in the imperialist centers, construction of a revolutionary-socialist party has become even more imperative. None of this, of course, is of much concern to the ultra-left sectarians whose politics consists of little more than parrot-like repetition of a stock of revolutionary phrases. To repeat these phrases in Cuba with a semblance of plausibility, they are forced to deny reality. In a country like Britain they make up for this by repeating them thrice.

bourgeois, delabré, décomposé, fantomatique, contrôlé par le groupe d'hommes qui entourent Castro'.)

What import this novelty has for Marxist theory is not discussed in 'Draft Report'. Perhaps the authors will return later to the profound meaning which phantom bourgeois states hold for our epoch. Meanwhile we are inclined to jog along with what the Castro government has succeeded in accomplishing, having at its control such a phantom in Cuba.

There might be dialecticians who would contend that if you break down and decompose something until nothing but the ghost remains, it is no longer the same, having really undergone a qualitative change. The authors of the 'Draft Report', to forestall such a criticism, argue that alongside Castro can be found the 'elements of workers power'. still appealing to the same leadership but 'in reality always increasing their pressure toward more radical measures'. As in Spain in 1936-37, the 'Draft Report' contends, dual power exists in Cuba.

Even if this were so, we would still be left with the phantom bourgeois state, this formless plasma of the spirit world. If, as materialists, we eliminate this wraith from consideration we are left with only a 'Workers and Peasants Government' to which the 'Draft Report' thus assigns the functions of a state. And this despite their recognition that it is a 'serious error in method to confound the nature of the state and the nature of the government'.

We come now to the second error, which, of course, flows from the first one. If Cuba is now a workers state, when did the qualitative change occur? In the SWP, the majority view is that the date was fixed by the massive nationalizations. This was the point of qualitative change. But the authors of the 'Draft Report', holding that no qualitative change has occurred, are compelled to dispose of all possible dates. Those involving power are rejected on various grounds without specifying the real one which is that a revolutionary-socialist could not in advance grant political confidence to the Castro leadership in view of the limitations of its declared programme. Fundamental economic criteria are likewise rejected, two grounds being advanced for this: (1) they are not sufficient in themselves; (2) even if they are sufficient in themselves this is true only if they are operative over a long period of time. These arguments really beg the question. Implied in them is the premise that the most drastic overturn of an economy has no qualitative meaning in itself, only a quantitative one. The admission that a long period of time would ultimately bring qualitative

considerations to bear alters nothing in the hidden premise, since it is not specified what economic measures, accumulating bit by bit would lead to the qualitative change nor what would constitute, *on the economic level*, the point of decisive change. Thus the protagonists of this view are left without a programme specifying what they demand in Cuba in the economic sphere that would mark the clear emergence of a workers state. All their demands are of a political character involving the nature of the power, the lack of institutions of proletarian democracy such as workers councils, etc. Consequently they end up like the National Committee of the SLL and the minority in the SWP with a mere political definition of the workers state. To justify this in Marxist theory they are forced to fall back to the generalized *norms* stated by Lenin before further concretization was made possible by study of the reality in a degenerated workers state.

This completely unhistorical approach calls for its payment in the history of our movement. It forces our French comrades to demand complete revision of our position on the series of deformed workers states. They argue that the destruction of the capitalist economy, the nationalization of the key sectors of industry and the introduction of planned economy were not sufficient to prove that the bourgeois state had been smashed and that it had been displaced by a workers state. They contend that two more essential criteria must be added.

We think, (*they say*), 'that it is precisely here that one of the weaknesses of our analysis of 1948 becomes evident, and we will return to this later. However, undeniably, in the case of the European buffer countries, the criterion of 'nationalization' is inseparable from the criterion 'cultural assimilation' with a 'degenerated workers state': it is because the Bonapartist state of the buffer countries is the instrument of the bureaucracy of a degenerated workers state that the Trotskyists were able to consider it as a deformed workers state, and the criterion 'nationalization and planning' is not, by itself, sufficient.

Precisely what is meant by 'cultural assimilation' is not indicated. Do they mean 'structural' assimilation? But that is just a condensed way of saying expropriation of the capitalists, nationalization and planning. Perhaps by 'cultural' assimilation they mean liquidation of independent political trends, a process brought to its culmination in the purge trials of 1949 and again in the suppression of the Hungarian uprising in 1956? Or is it something as vague as a phantom bourgeois state?

On the other point, the authors of the 'Draft Report' are, quite logically from their point of view, adding a political criterion to those we used in 1948; and, just as logically, making it *the decisive criterion*; 'it is because the bonapartist state of the buffer countries is the instrument of the bureaucracy. . . .', they say. Not so. We rejected the criterion of power in 1948 since it would have signified that we considered the buffer countries to be workers states *because* of Stalinism and not *in spite of it*. Otherwise we would have ended in a position inconsistent with our position on the Soviet Union itself. We specified that labeling the buffer countries as workers states did not thereby imply political confidence in the bureaucracy. We opposed its bureaucratic measures. We conceded absolutely nothing to Stalinism.

Had the criteria now advocated by the authors of the 'Draft Report' been adopted, what slippery footing we would have found! For example, so long as the Tito leadership remained a docile instrument, we would have had to call Yugoslavia a workers state. When it fought for political independence and broke diplomatic relations, thus no longer serving as the 'instrument' of the Soviet bureaucracy, we would have had to switch and say: 'Sorry, but a bourgeois phantom state is again haunting Yugoslavia.' And when Yugoslavia was able to resume relations, we would have had to report: 'Thank God, that ghost has been laid again.'

As for China — that would have been a spiritualist's paradise. When is a phantom not a phantom? Can you have half phantoms and quarter phantoms and so on ad infinitum?

The big advantage in such juggling of criteria, of course, is that you can avoid calling Cuba a workers' state. I would agree that in some instances, at least, the authors of the 'Draft Report' hit the nail on the head with their observation: 'The disagreements go beyond words. It is in fact in setting up a conception of the Cuban Revolution as a whole that each one chooses a definition which, at bottom, epitomizes his politics.' Of course, to maintain their novel position, the French comrades have to prove that no Soviet 'cultural assimilation' has occurred in Cuba and that the Castro regime is not an 'instrument of the bureaucracy of a degenerated workers' state'. Unfortunately, here our authors, seeking to establish a close analogy with the Spanish Revolution, depart from their admirable consistency and try to prove that the Castro government has gone a long way in succumbing to Stalinism; that is, in taking the road to a workers' state, according to the criteria they now advance.

The fourth major error in the 'Draft Report' is a concession to the Healy-Slaughter school of thought which can scarcely win our praise. For some obscure reason the French comrades insist on looking at Cuba primarily through the dark glasses of the defeated Spanish Revolution. An analogy has its uses but it inevitably breaks down if carried too far. Since the limitations of the analogy are not stated by the authors we are forced to determine them ourselves.

First of all, how can the countries themselves and the major situations confronting them be compared with much meaning? A key question in Spain was the colonies. The failure of the republican government to grant freedom to the Moroccans was more decisive in strengthening Franco than the military aid he received from fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. Cuba, on the other hand, belongs to the colonial world and has just won freedom from an imperialist power. The situation is not one of a civil war involving a fascist threat but of an attempt by imperialism to crush a workers state and restore colonial rule.

The analogy between the counter-revolutionary forces is thus not very close. In Spain, Franco was fighting for power. In Cuba, the native Franco, Batista, has been overthrown and the native counter-revolutionaries, as the Cubans have scornfully said many times, could be handled by the children if it were not for the US.

Cuba has a revolutionary-minded leadership which the Spanish workers and peasants lacked. This leadership came to power in revolutionary struggle, proving itself in action. It demonstrated that it had drawn correct lessons from the experiences in Guatemala and Bolivia and that it was capable of learning from the experience of the Chinese Revolution. Finally, this leadership has proved its awareness of the duality of the Soviet bureaucracy as a source of material aid and as a source of political danger. When such a leadership proclaims that it has become 'Marxist-Leninist', its words must be taken with the utmost seriousness even though it may not yet measure up to our norms.

To this we must add that the world setting today is completely different from what it was in 1936-39. In place of the entrenchment of European fascism, the Soviet Union has consolidated a position as one of the two primary world powers. The Soviet economic structure has been extended deep into Europe. China has become a workers' state. The colonial revolution has brought hundreds of millions to their feet. De-Stalinization has altered the capacity of the bureaucracy to impose

its will in flagrant fashion as in the thirties. The analogy breaks down here especially in leaving out of account such experiences as the rebellion of the Yugoslav CP, the uprising in East Germany, the attempted political revolution in Hungary and the current differences between the Russian and Chinese CP's. Where does the parallel to the break up of Stalinism exist in the Spanish situation? The revolutionary stream today is not running in the direction of Stalinism. In all of Latin America to one degree or another the Communist parties are in deep crisis over the Cuban Revolution — above all in Cuba. All these differences in conditions point unquestionably to the validity of the conclusion that the outcome of the revolution in Cuba is far more promising politically than it was in Spain.

An analogy cannot substitute for analysis of reality itself. It is a gross error in methodology to conclude that because the Spanish Republic was not a workers' state, *therefore* Cuba is not. To determine the general characteristics of the Cuban or any other revolution we must begin by considering it individually; that is, ascertain the facts; for, as we learn from Hegel, the individual is a combination and manifestation of the general. On doing this, we see at once that the analogy between the Spanish and Cuban revolutions is destroyed by the different outcomes of the two, which in turn confirms that different means were operative in the two revolutions. The Spanish Revolution was defeated for internal reasons, primarily the counter-revolutionary role of Stalinism. The Cuban Revolution was victorious, sealing its victory in the establishment of a workers' state. A revolutionist must be able to tell the difference between victory and defeat! The immediate future of this workers state does not hinge on the outcome of a civil war in the face of native fascism but on successful resistance to the diplomatic, economic and military aggression of a foreign imperialist power. Is that not so? For additional light on how best to meet this threat facing Cuba, the Spanish Revolution offers little. We must turn to other analogies such as the comparison with the Russian workers state when it was battling imperialist intervention.

As for the subsidiary points in 'Draft Report', these can be safely left aside. There is much quibbling about 'nationalizations' in general, for instance, which is beside the point in considering the specific nationalizations in Cuba. Undue credit is given Miro Cardona for actions taken while he was in government and their real import is

missed. Other errors of this kind could be cited. A major one, the alleged take-over of Castro's forces by the Cuban Communist Party has been sufficiently exploded by events. The meaning of the attacks on the Cuban Trotskyists is exaggerated and placed at the wrong door besides not being properly balanced against the ideological influence which Trotskyism exercises in a significant sector among the Cuban revolutionary vanguard.

The accusation that the appreciation of Cuba as a workers' state has led the SWP to adopt 'centrist, opportunist and liquidationist positions' is a premature announcement of our death. It also displays a rather disturbing lack of appreciation of the political logic flowing from the conclusion that a workers state has been established under a non-Stalinist leadership. This has opened up fresh and most encouraging perspectives for party building in both Latin America and the United States, although it has also brought some new and difficult tactical problems. The first experiences in this respect have already been favorably recorded both by the SWP and the Latin-American Trotskyists. If our French comrades are doubtful about the favorable reports on what has been gained in the main bastion of world imperialism, perhaps they will listen with more open minds to what our comrades in Latin America have to say about their experiences. These are much more pertinent to the discussion on the Cuban Revolution than the highly questionable analogy with Spain. The Latin-American Trotskyist view may also provide a good antidote for the ill-considered policy that would have us undo everything since 1940.

Cuba and Reunification

I have tried to demonstrate that the National Committee of the SLL proceeds in the Cuban Revolution from assumptions hardened into dogmas; that is, they brush aside or disregard facts that cannot be fitted into their preconceived framework and throw out of focus those that do seem to exemplify their preconceptions. Elevated into a principle, this subjective approach turns everything upside down — the Notion is made supreme over the mundane world of material events. We are not surprised that the same method is applied to the problem of reunifying the world Trotskyist movement. Nor are we surprised that the SLL leaders even take pride in their methodological consistency: 'The SWP criticism of the SLL starts from the Cuban revolution,' they observe. 'In doing so, it reveals its whole mistaken

method. We must begin from the need to establish Leninist parties in every country, and in the first place to defeat revisionism.’

Let us pause a moment right there. We are given a blueprint in which the subjective side is listed first; moreover, not programme in general but the ‘defeat’ of a challenge to the programme, still further, a specific variety of challenge — ‘revisionism’, by which they mean revisionism in the opportunist direction, not the ultra-left, (The SLL leaders seem to work from a revised copy of the general blueprint which conveniently leaves out the need to defeat ultra-leftism.) Next in order comes general application of the the general blueprint for establishment of ‘Leninist parties’ in ‘every country’. (Granting them the benefit of the doubt, we assume that they mean concretely by this the construction of the world party of the socialist revolution, the Fourth International.) Only after descending this ladder so we come to the need to establish the concrete development of the revolution, which in reality must constitute the foundation for everything else in Cuba.

This methodology is rigorously applied even in the structure of the SLL manifesto, ‘Trotskyism Betrayed’. The Cuban Revolution which constitutes the acid objective test for every tendency that proclaims itself to be revolutionary is subordinated and relegated to the mere level of one example among many, an example of minor importance in view of Cuba’s relative economic weight in the world. On the other hand, the struggle against revisionism, as interpreted by the leaders of the SLL, is given first place in the document both qualitatively and quantitatively. To justify putting the real problems that face the world Trotskyist movement upside down in this way, it is necessary to magnify the danger of ‘revisionism’ in inverse ratio to the reduction of the importance of the Cuban Revolution. In turn this necessitates construction of a kind of demonology inside the world Trotskyist movement symmetrical to the Holy Scripture they make of Leninism. Disregarding or misinterpreting facts — in perfect parallel to their approach to Cuba — the SLL leaders picture the relationship between the IS and the IC as if absolutely nothing had changed since 1953. Well, not absolutely. The SLL leaders acknowledge that some change has occurred. As they see it, the differences have — deepened.

To prove this they would have to demonstrate that the IS, instead of satisfactorily clearing up the political differences that appeared to us to lie behind the organizational dispute of 1953-54, had developed them into a system or at least gone far down that road. It is promised

that this will be done in the course of the projected discussion, but as yet little has been forthcoming beyond repetition of the points of difference of almost a decade ago.

A weakness of such glaring proportions in the SLL position requires compensation. Thus our dead-end factionalists picture the IS today as a monolithic group committed to revisionism with diabolical cleverness. However, since theory and practice are intimately related, as we know from Lenin and others, it is possible to expose these revisionist concepts which must lie behind them. Not even leaflets put out by this or that group of comrades in this or that local situation escape the sleuths. A phrase torn from a leaflet distributed at the Renault plant in Paris in defense of Cuba against US imperialism serves for elevation to front-page attention in *The Newsletter* in London, so hard-pressed are the leaders of the SLL to find evidence of the revisionism of the IS.

In this fantasia of ultra-left sectarianism, the course of the SWP takes on sinister meaning. The plain truth is that the SWP noted the facts concerning the declared positions of the IS on the important issues of the day. It noted its stand on the Hungarian uprising, on political revolution in the USSR, on de-Stalinization. It noted especially that the IS had assessed the main stages of the Cuban Revolution in the same way as the SWP, the Canadians and the Latin-American Trotskyists; that is, by utilizing the basic conclusions made in the particular cases of the buffer countries, Yugoslavia and China. Thus the real situation in the world Trotskyist movement was that the political differences had been narrowing for some time and new grounds for common action had appeared. Most important of all, the IS in its majority and the IC in its majority had passed the acid test of the Cuban Revolution. This opened a highly encouraging possibility for healing old wounds and reuniting the world Trotskyist movement on the most solid basis in its history. Whatever differences remained could surely be contained in a common organization under normal rules of democratic centralism. It was impossible to escape the conclusion that objectively the correct course was to press for reunification. The dispute over who was right in 1953-54 should not be permitted to stand in the way of joining forces in common assault on the problems of today. To proceed in a less responsible way would constitute a default in leadership. These simple, elementary considerations, which are ABC to Leninists, are given a different explanation by the leaders of the SLL.

According to their interpretation, the SWP, drifting into the wake of Pabloism, has decided to accept its revisionist views; that is, in the Cuban Revolution, for instance, to acknowledge the facts and assess them in the light of the Trotskyist analysis of the buffer countries, Yugoslavia and China. But this course, with its logical consequences, constitutes 'betrayal' in the eyes of the SLL leaders. How is such a miserable end to be explained in the case of the SWP had 'degenerated'; otherwise the SLL leaders are proved to be in error and how can that be, since they begin with the need to defeat revisionism? Thus the SWP is crossed off; or virtually crossed off. That is why members of the SWP are now privileged to read in the factional documents of the SLL, perhaps with some astonishment, that their party is racked by a deep crisis, having made opportunist concessions to the imperialist environment, above all in its approach to the Cuban Revolution. Not by accident, consequently, the SWP wants to unite with 'Pabloism'; and that, as the SLL leaders see it, is the real explanation for the present efforts of reunification.

The logical concomitant to the SLL view that 'revisionism' — as represented chiefly by the IS — constitutes the main danger facing the world Trotskyist movement, is that unification of the Fourth International is excluded. It is excluded until such time as the SLL view sweeps the ranks of the world Trotskyist movement and wins a majority. This confronts the SLL with a rather sticky contradiction. The elevation of anti-Pabloism into the First Commandment blocks unification. On the other hand, the desirability of winning a majority of Trotskyists to its views forces the SLL to consider how to gain a favourable hearing. Thus, while it bridles at the prospect of unification, it wants discussion. To get such a discussion, the SLL leaders are forced to recognize that the overwhelming sentiment in the world Trotskyist movement is in favour of unification. They must go even further and appear to bend with this sentiment. Hence the initiative they took in the IC to go to the IS and propose formation of a Parity Committee. In doing this the SLL leaders had to admit the eventual possibility of unification; more concretely they had to recognize the need and advisability of engaging in common actions with the IS whatever may be the views on unification, early, delayed or never at all.

In the process of reunifying the world Trotskyist movement, the proposal for a Parity Committee was objectively called for. The SWP did not look into what subjective motives the SLL leaders might have

had in making this proposal but weighed it on its objective merits, attempting in this case as in all others, to utilize the Marxist method of beginning with the reality of the situation. The IS responded in similar fashion to the initiative of the SLL leaders. Thus the Parity Committee was born.

No sooner did this committee meet, however, than the top leaders of the SLL began raising among IC adherents the ugly question of a new split. Naturally they point an accusing finger at the SWP and the IS. It is typical of dead-end factionalists to begin preparations for a split by raising the issue in the form of an accusation. In this case it also reflects the consistency with which the SLL leaders apply their methodology of inverted thinking.

The accusation has two variants: First, that 'the Pabloites consider their participation in the Parity Committee as a manoeuvre to obtain the support of the SWP'. That is, they 'are using the Parity Committee as a means to get closer to the SWP in order to drag it more rapidly into their orbit'. The 'Comment' containing this charge was 'approved unanimously' by the National Committee of the SLL after the very first meeting of the Parity Committee. Why then did the SLL leaders open the way to such a deadly manoeuvre? Why did they propose a Parity Committee if it would help the Pabloites in their Machiavellian scheme 'to get closer to the SWP'? Or did the well-meaning but bumbling leaders of the SLL fail to see such a possibility when they proposed the Parity Committee? They can scarcely argue that they failed to receive friendly notification. The SWP hailed the initiative as an important step toward reunification. The IS accepted it with the statement that it would participate in accordance with its declared aim of seeking early reunification.

Second, the SWP has in mind manoeuvring to present the discussion to be conducted under Parity Committee auspices 'as one which promises early unification, but that this is prevented by the attitude of the SLL and its co-thinkers'. Moreover that the SWP leadership is prevented from pressing for early reunification by its members and its past tradition; therefore it regards the Parity Committee proposals as a means of making an official approach to the Pabloites without appearing to break from the IC. However, according to this inside dope, the SWP has been preparing the political ground for such a break. Once again, then, why did the top leaders of the SLL obligingly facilitate such a dastardly move by proposing formation of the Parity Committee?

The fact is that most Trotskyists throughout the world, including the SWP and the IS, hailed the formation of the Parity Committee in good faith as a big step in the direction of reunification. Why the initiators of the Parity Committee should suddenly present it at its very launching as the vehicle of splitting manoeuvres cooked up by the SWP and the IS is difficult to conceive, unless we are again being presented with an example of inverted thinking.

What is most ridiculous and unbecoming in this pose is that the SLL top leadership has been developing political positions which in the key case of the Cuban Revolution are completely at variance with the rest of the world Trotskyist movement, including their closest allies in France. It is quite doubtful that they would seriously contend, in the light of the evidence, that their position on Cuba represents that of the majority of the IC. They are thus preparing the political ground for anything but an attempt to bring harmony among the adherents of the IC. On the contrary they have been placing the SWP, and anyone on the IC who thinks that the stand of the SWP on Cuba and unification has merit, under increasingly heavy fire. They have proclaimed that the SLL represents a separate tendency, one even that has declared war on all opponents to its positions. 'The Socialist Labour League,' they say, 'is not prepared to go any part of the way with this revisionism, and will fight it to the end.' And, 'It is in the construction of the revolutionary party in the USA itself that the necessity of defeating the SWP leadership's revisionism is most urgent.' In short, the political split has already been carried out by the SLL. As for relations between the SLL and the IS, it is superfluous to speak of a break, since the SLL leaders openly proclaim their hostility in the face of comradely overtures from the IS and are scarcely diplomatic about indicating that they visualize no reunification so far as they are concerned unless it takes place on the basis of their ultra-left sectarian views. But since this is unrealistic what course remains open but to go it alone and to begin as early as possible to prepare the grounds for it?

It is in the light of such considerations that we must evaluate their language which, while it scarcely displays much originality, carries not a small ballast of epithets, especially in relation to the SWP. We are offered the curious paradox of furious intensification of ultra-left factional war against all who hold the position that Cuba is a workers' state, the SWP, in the first place; while, bending to the pressure for

unity, Healy, with commendable civility, sits down with the representatives of the IS in the Parity Committee. By this public show, you see, he makes a kind of record in favour of reunification.

Is someone's duplicity showing? I do not think so. Deviousness is hardly the explanation. Comrade Healy happens to be a superb fighter who has been in many a bout. At the sound of the bell he has learned to start swinging at once with savage jabs and hooks, cunning counter punches and deceptive weaving. Sometimes this occurs when his opponent is not in that corner of the ring; sometimes, even, when Healy himself is not in the ring. One's admiration for such delicately poised reflexes is tinged with a certain pity. Please, won't the National Committee of the SLL consider adopting a very simple course to stymie the enemy's treacherous manoeuvres which they unwittingly facilitated? To save the SWP from being dragged away from the SLL into a fate worse than death, let Healy patiently stand by the American comrades. You, too, all of you, stay with them in their mistaken enterprise of trying to unify the world Trotskyist movement. All loyal friends and comrades, who have shared many vicissitudes over the years, go through the experience with them, painful as it may be. Block the splitters by the easy, sound tactic of accepting their offer to unify.

Even from the viewpoint of the narrow factional interests of the SLL this would seem much the wiser course. Certainly you have a much better chance of winning a majority of Trotskyists to your views by persuasion inside a united movement than by attack from the outside. You are doubtful about respect for your democratic rights in a united movement? But this betrays a feeling of extreme weakness in relation to the IS. Does this reflect the reality in regard to numbers or is it lack of political confidence? Or perhaps the internal regime of the SLL cannot be offered as a model example of what you mean by the 'democratic' part of democratic centralism? In any case, as the unification process continues, the problem of democratic guarantees for minority tendencies will certainly come up under the proper point in the agenda. From a realistic assessment of all that has been learned by both sides since the experience of a decade or so ago, there can be little question that this demand will be satisfactorily met within the general principle of adherence to democratic centralism. The conditions of 1951 or 1953 no longer exist.

On the other hand the leaders of the SLL may decide that they can best preserve the texts of Lenin in all their purity — the texts in which

Lenin fought revisionism — by drawing all the necessary organizational conclusions from their present isolationist political course. There are precedents for this in the British Marxist movement, including British Trotskyism. However, not one of these ultra-left experiments make very happy reading today — that is, if you judge them by the facts. A repetition at this time of day could scarcely prove happier.

In the school of Leon Trotsky and James P. Cannon — which is also the school of Lenin — I was taught that important as the books are and for all the time that must be put into mastering them, what is decisive is the revolution itself. A revolutionist who misses the test of revolution is a failure no matter how well he can quote the texts. That is why the Cuban Revolution — not the ultraleft preoccupations of the National Committee of the SLL — provides the yardstick by which to measure their pretensions to Leninist leadership.

We suggest that the National Committee of the SLL take another look at the Cuban Revolution. 'In the beginning was the *Word*' . . . The *Word*? . . . 'In the Beginning was the *Act*.'

DOCUMENT 5**Letter from James P. Cannon to Farrell Dobbs,
October 31, 1962**

Dear Farrell:

Now that the crest of the Cuban crisis seems to have passed, everyone is assessing its outcome. This is the trend of our thinking in informal discussions here.

We must keep our eyes on the main issues and not get side-tracked by subsidiary considerations. What was the situation?

1. The U.S. naval blockade was set for a clash with Soviet ships which could escalate into nuclear war. Kennedy gave clear notice that the U.S. would not stop at the use of the most forceful measures.
2. The Pentagon was ready to bomb and invade Cuba and crush its revolution. Newspaper accounts report that this was one of the alternative moves considered even from the start, and it was to be put into effect if Moscow did not yield on the missile bases.

In the face of these direct and immediate threats to world peace and the Cuban revolution, Khrushchev drew back, agreed to pull out the missiles, and dismantle the bases under UN supervision. He received in return a suspension of the blockade and public assurances that Cuba would not be invaded.

What else could he have done under the given circumstances? It would have been foolhardy to risk setting off a thermonuclear war and daring the U.S. to come and wipe out the Cuban bases in view of Washington's evident determination to go to the limit if necessary.

In our opinion Khrushchev sensibly backed away from such a showdown, thus saving the world from war and the Cuban revolution

from attack by overwhelming forces for a time. But this time is of decisive importance!

The retreat was unavoidable and the concessions, as we know about them, did not give up anything essential. Those who judge otherwise should tell us what alternative course the Kremlin should have followed on the military and diplomatic fronts at that excruciating point of decision. Should Khrushchev have defied the embargo or refused outright to withdraw the missile bases?

The crisis over Cuba is of immense importance. But we should not forget it is only one sector in a world-wide conflict between imperialism and the workers states which has witnessed in the past, and will see again, advances and retreats by one side or the other. As revolutionary realists, we have not criticized or condemned heads of workers' states or union leaders for retreating and making concessions when the balance of forces was unfavourable. Lenin traded space for time at Brest-Litovsk. As we know from our Minneapolis experiences, even the most militant leadership which is up against the gun may have to give ground before the insuperable power of the employer in order to save the existence of the union and fight another day.

The grim fact was that both the Soviet Union and Cuba not only had guns, but even more fearsome weapons, poised over their heads and ready to be used. For this reason we do not believe that Khrushchev's course was incorrect on the level of military affairs and state relations. To condemn it and cry 'betrayal' would only help the Stalinists get off the hook where they are really vulnerable. That is their policy of supporting Kennedy, Stevenson and other 'peace-loving' Democratic capitalist politicians. This attitude, flowing from the Kremlin's doctrine of peaceful co-existence, has again been exposed as criminal.

Although we should carefully watch their development, we should be cautious and not jump to conclusions about the relations between Castro and Khrushchev. The latter's unilateral decisions and divergent aims may have created friction between them but it would be unwise to substitute speculations for solid facts. Khrushchev's declarations have not indicated any abandonment of Cuba, and it would be difficult for him to do so with the eyes of China, the colonial peoples and the Soviet militants upon him. On the other hand, Castro deeply needs Soviet aid.

The principal point — and you make it in the editorial — is that the world, the socialist movement and the Cuban revolution have gained

time. The bombs are still there. But they were not dropped anywhere. And we are heartily in favour of that!

Despite gleeful claims by the American press that Kennedy's strong stand has given a stern lesson and severe setback to 'Soviet aggression', people unaffected by imperialist propaganda have, I believe, breathed relief over the settlement and thank Khrushchev for his sanity. Bertrand Russell and Nehru expressed themselves along that line.

We must remember that nuclear war would mean the greatest defeat for humanity and socialism. We must avert that terrible eventuality, not, to be sure by stopping the class struggle against imperialism, but by utilizing every means that will give the workers time enough to wake up and organize themselves for that purpose.

Jim Cannon

Chapter Three

Opportunism and Empiricism

In answering Hansen's position on Cuba, the leadership of the Socialist Labour League here takes forward the fight against the pragmatist method of the SWP. Hansen's view of Marxism as 'consistent empiricism' is exposed here for what it is — a rationalisation for worship of the accomplished fact and for capitulation to Stalinist and petty bourgeois leaderships. Adopted by the SLL NC in March 1963, this document was an important step in the struggle to defend and carry forward the International Committee.

DOCUMENT 6a***Opportunism and Empiricism*****SLL National Committee, March 23, 1963**

Only by learning to assimilate the results of the development of philosophy during the past two and a half thousand years will it be able to rid itself on the one hand of any isolated natural philosophy standing apart from it, outside and above it, and on the other hand also of its own limited method of thought, which was its inheritance from English empiricism.

It is clear from this passage that Engels considers empiricism to be a *barrier* to the dialectical conception of the world. Hansen's talk about 'consistent empiricism' is sheer nonsense. The point about empiricism, a reliance on 'the facts as they are perceived', is that it cannot be consistent.

Empiricism, and its transatlantic younger brother, pragmatism, refuse to admit the possibility of answering the question: 'What is the nature of the objectively existing external world?' They thus leave the way open to subjective idealism which explains the world in terms of mind alone. Empiricism, ignoring the history of philosophy, rejects the dialectical theory of knowledge as 'metaphysics'. Only the dialectical materialist view can explain the world, because it includes a materialist explanation of the development of our concepts as well as of the material world which they reflect. Empiricism must be *rejected*, not made 'consistent'. There are many sides to this methodological error of Hansen's.

Trotsky warned the SWP leadership in his last writings that they must encourage a determined struggle on the theoretical front against the 'American' philosophy of pragmatism, a more recent development of empiricism; unless this was done, then there would be no real Marxist development in the US. Today Hansen and Cannon are 'confirming' Trotsky's warning in a negative fashion. In the discussion concerning the future of the Fourth International, Hansen leads the tendency which calls for 'unification' with a revisionist tendency on the basis of purely practical political agreement on immediate tasks. From this point of view he rejects an examination of the history of the

split and of the differences between the tendencies. This is only part of his substitution of impressionism for scientific analysis (see *Trotskyism Betrayed* and C.S.'s reply to J.H.'s *Report to the Plenum*, International Bulletin No. 11).^{*} What is the methodical basis of Hansen's approach here? The dominant question for him is always 'what will work best?' — asked always from the narrow perspective of immediate political appearances. This is the starting point of pragmatism, the 'American' development of empiricism by Pierce, James and Dewey. It leads Hansen to advocate unity with the Pablo group because that will 'work' better as an attraction for people pushed in a 'leftward' direction, even if the causes of the split are never clarified. Such an approach, as we have explained in earlier documents, destroys the theoretical basis of the movement. The incorrect concepts and methods of our political work can only be overcome through conscious theoretical and practical struggle, not by sweeping them under the carpet.

Pragmatism and the Cuban Crisis

Cannon's letter to Dobbs,[†] summing up the Cuban crisis, could similarly serve as a model of the pragmatist method. After a lifetime of struggle for revolutionary Marxism, particularly against Stalinism, he denies that whole career in two pages with the kind of politics which Hansen's pathetic essay in 'theory' is meant to justify: 'What else could he have done under the given circumstances?' asks Cannon. What were these 'given circumstances'?

1. The US naval blockade was set for a clash with Soviet ships which would escalate into nuclear war. Kennedy gave clear notice that the US would not stop at the use of the most forceful measures.
2. The Pentagon was ready to bomb and invade Cuba and crush its revolution. Newspaper accounts report that this was one of the alternative moves considered even for (from?) the start, and it was to be put into effect if Moscow did not yield on the missile bases .

Cannon replaces class analysis of social forces and political tendencies with pragmatic prescriptions. The so-called 'given circumstances' (equivalent of Hansen's 'the facts') are the *product* of a policy of class-collaboration by Khrushchev and the Stalinist bureaucracy in

^{*} See Volume Three, Documents 19 and 21 — Ed.

[†] See Document 5, this volume — Ed.

relation to U.S. imperialism. We must evaluate Khrushchev and the Stalinist bureaucracy in relation to U.S. imperialism. We must evaluate Khrushchev's conduct as *part of the process which produced these circumstances*. Only in that way can Marxists work out their political programme in relation to other class tendencies.

Empiricism versus Revolutionary Politics

Indeed Cannon's letter on Cuba illustrates the *class* role of empiricism and pragmatism, those tendencies in philosophy which accept 'the given fact', etc. Inevitably this acceptance becomes what Trotsky once called a 'worshipping of the accomplished fact'. In effect this means accepting the forms of consciousness proper to those who are adapted to the existing structure, such as the bureaucracy in the USSR and in the labour movement. They develop their ideas as ways of rationalising and justifying their own position between capitalism and the working class. Cannon's justification of Khrushchev, like the recent contributions of Murry Weiss in justification of the Stalinist bureaucracy, and the constant avoidance of the questions of political revolution and construction of revolutionary parties in the workers' states by SWP spokesmen and the Pabloites, are an abandonment of principled revolutionary politics, flowing from the abandonment of dialectical materialism in favour of empiricism. Dialectical analysis insists on seeing facts in the context of a whole series of interrelated processes, not as finished, independent entities about which 'practical' decisions have to be made. In the sphere of politics, that means to see each situation in terms of the development of the international class struggle, to evaluate the policies of the various political forces towards this situation in terms of their relation to these class forces and to their whole previous course. This is why it is nonsense to pose the Cuban problem as Cannon poses it — 'What else could he have done under the given circumstances?' Taken to its logical conclusion, this type of argument can be used to justify anything. It is not even surprising, once the extent of this theoretical departure from Marxism is grasped, that Cannon utters an absurdity like ' . . . people unaffected by imperialist propaganda have, I believe, breathed relief over the settlement and thanked Khrushchev for his sanity. Bertrand Russell and Nehru expressed themselves along this line.' Who would have thought that at the same time, Nehru was head of a government engaged in armed conflict, with imperialist support, against the

Republic of China? In the course of that conflict mass arrests of Indian Communists were carried out. At the same time, Soviet fighter planes were being supplied to the Indian government by Khrushchev! No doubt Nehru praised Khrushchev (as well as Kennedy and Macmillan) for this piece of practical 'wisdom'. Perhaps Cannon will say 'What else could he have done under the given circumstances?' Cannon's method leads to this end not by a trick of logical development, but because the forces for whom he becomes the apologist are tied *in reality* to imperialism and its present needs. Trotskyism is no more an exception to the laws of history than any other phase in the development of Marxism and the labour movement. Once theoretical development stops, then the movement is subject to the dominant ideologies of the time, however gradual and subtle the process of adaptation — and however venerable the 'cadre'.

Hansen's Method

Hansen's document 'Cuba — The Acid Test' is therefore an important contribution to the international discussion. It states explicitly the *empiricist* and anti-dialectical basis in *method* for the opportunist tendencies in the SWP's politics as well as for their unprincipled and un-historical approach to the problem of unity and development of the world Trotskyist movement. From the beginning of the discussion, the SLL, described by Hansen as 'the ultra-left sectarians', have insisted that basic differences of method underlay the different political lines and attitudes to organisation. Hansen now confirms this. His insistence on 'the facts', as being the same for empiricism as for Marxism is effectively answered by Lukacs:

These facts are indeed not only involved in constant change, but also they are — precisely in the structure of their objectivity — the products of a historically determined epoch: that of capitalism. Consequently this 'science' which recognizes as fundamental to their value for science the immediately given form of phenomena, and takes as a correct point of departure for scientific conceptualization their form of objectivity, this science finds itself planted simply and definitely in the ground of capitalist society, accepting uncritically its essence, its 'objective' structure, its laws, as an unalterable foundation of 'science'. In order to progress from these 'facts' to facts in the real sense of the word, one must penetrate to their historical conditioning as such and abandon the point of view which starts from them as immediately given: they must undergo historical-dialectical analysis . . . ' (*History and Class Consciousness*)

In support of his capitulation to empiricism, Hansen quotes the verdict of Hegel.

Generally speaking, Empiricism finds the truth in the outward world; and even if it allows a super-sensible world, it holds knowledge of that world to be impossible, and would restrict us to the province of sense-perception. This doctrine when systematically carried out produces what has been latterly termed Materialism. Materialism of this stamp looks upon matter, *qua* matter, as the genuine objective world'. (*The Logic of Hegel*, translated from the Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences, p. 80).

Hegel's opposition to empiricism is *correct* in one sense. If 'empiricism systematically carried out' led to dialectical materialism, then why would Hegel, the Absolute Idealist, figure so decisively in the development of Marxism? The 'materialism' to which empiricism leads, according to Hegel, is of course mechanical materialism, which remains unable to explain the role of consciousness and the material unity of the world, including human action and thought. This 'defect of all hitherto existing materialism', as Marx called it, meant that it could *not* be consistently carried out, and it left the door open to dualism and subjective idealism. Hegel overcame the dichotomy of subject and object, introducing a unified conception of a dialectically interconnected whole, by making spirit the content of all reality. Marx had only to 'stand him on his head' to arrive at dialectical materialism. This is *in fact* how dialectical materialism developed, through *contradiction*, and not through Hansen's businesslike logical formula of 'empiricism systematically carried out'. The relation between empiricism and dialectical materialism has a history, which shows a struggle of dialectical materialism *against* the empiricists and their development in positivism and pragmatism. It is contrary to the method of Marxism to examine empiricism for its 'strong points'. As a trend in philosophy it has formed the soundest basis for pseudo-scientific attacks on materialism ever since Marx, and in politics it has always formed the philosophical basis for opportunism.

Hansen avoids this type of discussion by quoting Hegel and then introducing his own paraphrase of Hegel. Hegel said that empiricism systematically carried out issued in 'materialism', by which he naturally meant the materialism of his own day. We must surely appreciate historically what Hegel meant when he said that empiricism 'systematically carried out' led to materialism, which 'looks upon matter, *qua* matter, as the genuine objective world'. The vulgar materialism of

that time had a *metaphysical* view of the world, seeing the given facts of experience as fixed, dead, finished products interacting according to mechanical principles, with mind reflecting this reality in a dead, mechanical fashion. Hansen must surely agree that it was *this* kind of materialism which Hegel attacks here. He could hardly have had in his head the theory of *dialectical* materialism as the product of 'empiricism systematically carried out'. The dialectical materialist method of thought was born only *after* Hegel, through the struggle against Hegel's dialectical idealism. And yet Hansen, with a very clumsy sleight of hand, uses his quotation from Hegel to identify 'empiricism systematically carried out' with dialectical materialism:

I would submit that 'Lenin and others' did not bring from Hegel his opposition to empiricism on idealistic or religious grounds. On the other hand Marxism does share Hegel's position that vulgar empiricism is arbitrary, one-sided and undialectical. But empiricism 'systematically carried out'? This is the view that the 'genuine objective world', the material world, takes primacy over thought and that a dialectical relationship exists between them. What is this if not dialectical materialism?

'Facts' are Abstractions

The vital phrase 'a dialectical relationship exists between them' (matter and thought) is introduced from the outside by Hansen. It leaps over the whole development to dialectical materialism through the Hegelian school and 'standing Hegel on his head, or rather, on his feet'! All Hansen's respect for 'the facts' does not seem to have helped him to proceed from the simple 'fact' that ideas have a history as part of the social-historical process, and that the vulgar materialism of the bourgeoisie cannot be systematically developed into dialectical materialism by a mere stroke of the pen. It took some years of very hard struggle, of determined theoretical and practical grappling with the objective development of bourgeois society in the first half of the 19th century, to achieve that result.

When we attack empiricism we attack that method of approach which says all statements, to be meaningful, must refer to observable or measurable data in their immediately given form. This method insists that any 'abstract' concepts, reflecting the general and historical implications of these 'facts', are meaningless. It neglects entirely that our general concepts reflect the laws of development and inter-connection of the process which these 'facts' help to constitute.

Indeed the so-called hard facts of concrete experience are themselves *abstractions* from this process. They are the result of the first approximation of our brains to the essential interrelations, laws of motion, contradictions of the eternally changing and complex world of matter . . . of which they form part. Only higher abstractions, in advanced *theory*, can guide us to the meaning of these facts. What Lenin called 'the concrete analysis of concrete conditions' is the opposite of a descent into empiricism. In order to be concrete, the analysis must see the given facts in their historical interconnection and must begin with the discoveries of theory in the study of society, the necessity to make a *class* evaluation of every event, every phenomenon. The empiricist, who pretends to restrict himself to the bedrock of 'facts' alone, in fact imposes on the 'facts' an unstated series of connections whose foundations are unstated. With Hansen and the Pabloites, their new reality is actually a list of *abstractions* like 'the colonial revolution', 'the process of de-Stalinization', 'irreversible trends', 'leftward-moving forces', 'mass pressure', etc. Like all statements about social phenomena, these are meaningless unless they are demonstrated to have specific *class* content, for class struggle and exploitation are the *content* of all social phenomena. This discovery of Marx is the theoretical cornerstone which Hansen has lost, with all his talk about 'the facts'.

Empiricism: a Bourgeois Method

All this argument that 'the facts' are the objective reality and that we must 'start from there' is a preparation to justify policies of adaptation to non-working-class leaderships.

Empiricism, since it 'starts with the facts', can never get beyond them and must accept the world as it is. This *bourgeois* method of thought views the world from the standpoint of 'the isolated individual in civil society'.

Instead of taking the objective situation as a problem to be solved in the light of the historical experience of the working class, generalized in the theory and practice of Marxism, it must take 'the facts' as they come. They are produced by circumstances beyond our control.

Marxism arms the working class vanguard in its fight for the independent action of the Labour movement; empiricism adapts it to the existing set-up, to capitalism and its agencies in the working-class organizations.

'In the beginning was the deed', quotes Hansen. But for Marxists, action is not blind adaptation to 'facts', but theoretically guided work to break the working class from petty-bourgeois leaderships. To 'join in the action' led by such trends, merely seeking 'to help to build a revolutionary-socialist party in the very process of the revolution itself' is a renunciation of Marxism and an abdication of responsibility in favour of the petty-bourgeoisie.

Hansen says:

If we may express the opinion, it is an over-statement to say that anyone finds himself 'prostrate before the petty-bourgeois nationalist leaders in Cuba and Algeria' because he refuses to follow the SLL National Committee in thinking that a Trotskyist can clear himself of any further responsibility by putting the label 'betrayed' on everything these leaders do. It is an error of the first order to believe that petty-bourgeois nationalism — petty-bourgeois nationalism, has no internal differentiations or contradictions and cannot possibly be affected by the mass forces that have thrust it forward'.

In the first place, no one has said that there cannot be differentiation within the petty-bourgeois national movement or that they remain unaffected by mass pressure. Who has denied that? What is at stake is the method by which this 'fact' is analysed and what consequence it has for the construction of independent revolutionary parties to lead the struggle of the working class. Hansen and the Pabloites, on the other hand, use this 'fact' of 'left' swings of some petty-bourgeois nationalists to justify capitulation to those forces. Is this point separate from the differences over method and philosophy? Certainly not: Marxist analysis of the whole modern epoch has established that the political leaderships representing non-working-class social strata can go only to a certain point in the struggle against imperialism. The objective limits to their revolution lead them eventually to turn against the working class, with its independent demands which correspond to the international socialist revolution. Only a course of the construction of independent working-class parties aiming at workers' power, based on the programme of Permanent Revolution, can prevent each national revolution from turning into a new stabilization for world imperialism. The struggle to create such parties has been shown to involve a necessary fight against opportunists and counter-revolutionary trends within the movement, in particular against Stalinism which subordinates the working class to the nationalists,

bourgeois and petty-bourgeois, on the grounds of the theory of 'two stages', which conforms best to the Stalinist bureaucracy's line of an international understanding with imperialism. It is in line with these 'facts', facts established through the struggles and theoretical work of Lenin, Trotsky and others, that we evaluate the posturings and the actions of present-day political tendencies, and *not* by regarding the latter as facts 'in themselves' or as 'given circumstances' à la Hansen and J.P. Cannon.

Class Analysis is Needed

Hansen and the SWP leadership approach the whole international situation in this non-Marxist, empiricist manner. Hansen complains about the SLL ignoring facts, refusing to analyse 'new reality', since they don't seem to fit the prescriptions of Lenin and Trotsky. On the contrary, comrades in the SLL have made a small beginning in analysing the real class basis of the surface 'facts' of the present situation. Hansen is satisfied to *list* the 'mighty forces of the colonial revolution and the interrelated process of de-Stalinization'. We have published several articles (see *Labour Review* 1961 and 1962, articles by Baker, Kemp, Jeffries, and the resolution 'World Prospect for Socialism') beginning a *class* analysis of the relation of these two processes (struggles in the colonial countries and crisis in Stalinism) to the international revolution of the working class against imperialism. We have yet to find any such attempt in the publications of the SWP or the Pabloites. What we do find is a search for the most positive or progressive trends within the Stalinist and nationalist movements. This means taking *surface* 'facts', like the pronouncements of the Chinese or Russian Stalinist leaders, and ascribing to them positive or negative values. Germain, for example, arrived at the conclusion that apart from the idea of the revolutionary International, there existed 'bits' of the Trotskyist programme in a 'broken' way in the various Communist parties of the world, from Yugoslavia with its factory committees, through Italy, Russia and China, to Albania with its insistence on the rights of small parties! No doubt this is a good example of empiricism systematically carried out. It would be interesting to ask minorities within, say, the Albanian Communist Party what the 'pragmatic' consequences of this 'systematic empiricism' have been for them! (See also the 'critical support' for various wings of Stalinism in the IS Resolution on the 22nd Congress).

Was Evian a Victory?

But to return to Hansen's reply. It is of the greatest interest that Algeria is almost completely dropped from the argument. This is because the SLL's accusation about 'prostration' before nationalist leaders is best exemplified there.

In earlier documents Hansen made great play of the SLL's condemnation of the Evian agreement between the Algerian government and French imperialism. We said that this was a 'sell-out'. Hansen said that here was an ultra-left mistake, showing failure to recognize that at least Evian included national independence and should be welcomed as a victory. We proceeded from an analysis of the class tendency which has asserted itself through the FLN leadership in arriving at a compromise with French imperialism, preventing the Algerian people from going on to win their own revolutionary demands. Those who concentrated on the 'victory' and speculated about Ben Bella developing in the direction of Castro only helped Ben Bella to deceive the masses, and turned the energies of Socialists towards alliances with the bourgeoisie rather than the construction of an independent revolutionary party. We characterized this as a well-known form of opportunism, and we say now that by this kind of approach the Pabloites and the SWP are sharing in the preparation of defeats for the working class of Algeria instead of carrying out the responsibilities of revolutionary Marxists in constructing working-class parties. Pablo himself works as a functionary of the Algerian government in some technical capacity. By itself, this fact could mean anything or nothing. The important question is his political line and that of his organization. There is not the slightest doubt that Pablo's position in the administration will not be endangered by this political line (which does not at all mean to say that he may not be removed). Hansen's articles in *The Militant* and the campaign of the Pabloites on 'aid to the Algerian Revolution' are confined to an appeal to aid the poverty-stricken victims of the legacy of French imperialism. Instead of a campaign in the labour movement, we have a humanitarian appeal. Pablo and his friends even press for the organization of volunteer technicians and administrators to go to Algeria, take their place as servants of the Ben Bella government, and thus counteract the possibly reactionary influence of French and American aid and personnel. In this way the 'objective' conditions will be created for a move to the left rather than to the right on the part of Ben Bella. In the

course of all this, the Algerian Communist Party was banned, a new French aid programme was announced, and the direct control of Ben Bella's clique established over the Algerian trade unions. Meanwhile Ben Bella makes great play of tidying up the 'bootblack' racket and takes a 'firm stand' in telling the French to explode their bombs farther South in the Sahara. Are not these 'Trotskyists' conniving at the suppression of any democratic rights for the working class while the nationalist leaders carry out 'left' measures 'on behalf' of the masses? If this is not prostration before the national bourgeoisie, what in the world constitutes such prostration? Hansen claims that 'everybody knows' we need revolutionary parties, the only difference is on how to construct them. But in practice the Pabloites are not for the construction of such parties, they *avoid* the necessity of such construction. If objective developments in the 'new' reality will inevitably push petty-bourgeois nationalists towards revolutionary Marxism, perhaps the role of Trotskyists is only to encourage these background 'objective forces'.

Pierre Frank, prominent leader of the Pablo group, recently visited Algeria and reported his findings in *The Internationalist*, supplement to *Quatrieme Internationale*, No. 17, 13.2.63). There is hardly need to comment on the meaning of the following passages:

If the government is composed of variegated social and political elements, one must say nevertheless that the central nucleus, the decisive nucleus found at present in the Political Bureau of the FLN (National Liberation Front) is based on the poorest masses of the cities and above all the countryside. This is its main strength. But it cannot automatically head toward extensive nationalization of the economic structure without running the risk of catastrophic consequences. For some years, it will have to permit a development of bourgeois forces, to compromise in certain spheres with foreign capital and to create bastions in the countryside and the towns in order to pass later to the construction of a socialist society. This will not be done without crises or without international and domestic developments that will run counter to this difficult orientation.

To conclude: Everything is in movement. It is an experiment, a struggle that must be supported throughout the world, but which demands constant determination of bearings so that the development of the various forces operating on the terrain can be gauged. In this way we can contribute to this new revolutionary experience with its altogether specific traits, its difficulties and its potentialities, and help it move toward the socialist outcome.

At the level of methodology, this illustrates the extreme consequences of a 'contemplative' rather than a 'revolutionary-practical' attitude. To the former, *empiricist* recognition of the 'given circumstances', 'the facts' is a natural starting point (and finishing post). At the political level, it illustrates the capitulation to existing forces, existing forms of consciousness in the political movement, amounting in the end to support for the servants of imperialism, which flows from the abandonment of the dialectical method.

Who has Corrected Whose Errors?

Hansen says that we are harking back to the original differences of 1953 instead of demonstrating that the Pabloite revisions of that year have resulted in an opportunist course by the Pabloite 'International'. Because Hansen *accepts* the present position of the Pabloites on Algeria does not alter the fact that this course is an opportunist one. In any case, Hansen must still answer our question (See reply of CS to Hansen's Report to the Plenum. International Bulletin No. 11) in connection with this matter of 'correcting errors'. He advocates unification on the grounds that the Pabloites have corrected their course of 1953. But the Pabloite Executive Committee insists that unification is possible for the opposite reason — the SWP has overcome its failure at that time to 'understand' the programme of Pablo (Declaration on Reunification of the World Trotskyist Movement, June 23/24, 1962).

In the advanced countries too, we have drawn attention to the current policies of the Pabloites. Hansen pretends that our criticisms have amounted only to seizing on isolated statements of Pabloite sections; 'Not even leaflets put out by this group of comrades (the Pablo group) in this or that local situation escape the sleuths. A phrase torn from a leaflet distributed at the Renault plant in Paris in defence of Cuba against US imperialism serves for elevation to front-page attention in *The Newsletter* in London, so hard-pressed are the leaders of the SLL to find evidence of the revisionism of the IS'. (Cuba — The Acid Test.)

In the first place, our reply to Hansen's last Plenum report on unification (International Bulletin No. 11) goes through Pabloite material on the main political questions of today, and it is nonsense to say the SLL has made no general criticism. If Hansen wrote 'Cuba — The Acid Test' before reading this reply, perhaps he will now defend the Pabloites against what we wrote in it. Secondly, what is wrong

with examining the leaflets put out by Pabloite sections? It is precisely the way policies work out in the work of sections which illustrates most clearly our differences of method. Surely the section in Paris is a fair example of a Pabloite section — the nerve centre of the Pablo International is there. And is the Renault factory just 'this or that local situation'? It is a vital concentration of French workers. In 1953 was it not a leaflet put out in the Renault factory which came under the scrutiny and attack of the SWP when it made the public break from Pablo? Thirdly, if Hansen claims that the passage criticized by *The Newsletter* was torn from its context, why does he not produce the context and demonstrate our methods of distortion? He cannot do this; the phrase concerned put international working-class solidarity action on the same level as 'aid' given by the Stalinist bureaucracy. Hansen prefers to quote *not a single word either from the leaflet or from The Newsletter's criticism!*

(We omit here a short reference to the Italian section of the IS, as it was based on a faulty translation of an article in their journal).

Cuba and Spain

The major part of Hansen's attack on the 'ultra-left sectarians' is concerned with the attitude of the SLL towards Cuba. Hansen begins his document by trying to make an amalgam of the SLL and its IC supporters on the one hand, and the Posadas group which recently broke from the IS on the other. Hansen knows these are absolutely separate and distinct tendencies. He makes literally no evaluation whatsoever of their political content or the evolution of their present position. They are both opposed to 'unification', therefore, he implies, they must be responding to the same social forces and must be essentially similar. Here again we have an excellent illustration of the pragmatist method. The objective relations between these tendencies, their history, and their response to the major political problems, are ignored. It is *useful*, it 'works', to identify them with each other as saboteurs of unification — they are 'ultra-left currents'. Hansen reports that the Posadas group includes in its programme the prospect of a nuclear war against capitalism. This is thrown together with the SLL's opposition to characterizing Cuba as a workers' state. Posadas, says Hansen, must agree that Cuba is a workers' state, because it would be 'political death' to think otherwise in Latin

America. The differences are thus to be explained geographically. Politically the Posadas group and the SLL are the same — ultra-left sectarians, driven to this by their fear of unification. How is this cussedness to be explained? Hansen is unclear: the heading of the Trotskyist 'mainstream' (the SWP leadership and the Pabloite IS) towards unification comes from the 'mighty forces of the colonial revolution and the inter-related process of de-Stalinization'.

The Trotskyist movement has not escaped the general shake-up either. The Chinese victory, de-Stalinization, the Hungarian uprising were reflected in both capitulatory and ultra-left moods as well as strengthening of the main stream of Trotskyism. What we have really been witnessing in our movement is the outcome of a number of tests — how well the various Trotskyist groupings and shadings have responded to the series of revolutionary events culminating in the greatest occurrence in the Western Hemisphere since the American Civil War. The move for unification and the symmetrical resistance to it are no more than logical consequences to be drawn from reading the results, especially those supplied by the acid test of the mighty Cuban action.

Where is the explanation? Two opposite viewpoints are here 'explained' by the same thing. They were just different 'logical' results of approaching the same events. Could anything illustrate more clearly the barren consequences of refusing to deal with the *history* of the controversies and splits, and to probe to their basis in theory and method? Hansen found it more 'practical' to produce, by sleight of hand, an identification of his opponent, the SLL, with the views of the Posadas group.

The note by the French comrades, appended to this reply, raises similar points about the demagogic results of these methods of controversy. As they point out, their own document on Cuba comes under fire from Hansen but has not been issued to the members of Hansen's party. They also correctly indicate the unprincipled character of the argument which runs: nobody who counts in Latin America agrees with the SLL characterization of Cuba; therefore it is suspect and shows how stupid and sectarian they are. As the French comrades remark, the 'opinions' of the Soviet and Spanish people were often quoted in a similar way against Trotsky's characterization of the state and the ruling cliques in both countries. In addition, they take up Hansen's laboured jokes about their reference in an earlier document to a 'phantom' bourgeois state in Cuba. What Hansen must do is

explain why such a concept is a matter for joking, and in what way he thinks it departs from the *kind* of analysis made by Trotsky of the class forces in Spain in 1936-37. Either Hansen has forgotten, or he chooses not to remind his readers, of the concept advanced by Trotsky at that time of an 'alliance with the shadow of the bourgeoisie'. Perhaps he knows some good jokes about that too.

It would be pointless to take up every step in Hansen's documents in a similar way. His whole method is to argue from incidents and impressions, combined with the vaguest generalizations like 'the might of the colonial revolution' and the 'interrelated process of de-Stalinization'.

Our Record on Cuba

On the question of Cuba itself, Hansen raises no new arguments in the discussion and no new facts on the regime there. We see no need to reply in detail to Hansen's caricature of the record of *The Newsletter* in defending Cuba before and during the blockade of October-November 1962. Hansen concerns himself entirely with the pages of *The Newsletter*: we take every responsibility for everything written in our journal, but we would also point out that Hansen was in Europe during the crisis. He, and *The Militant* correspondent in London, made not the slightest effort to acquaint themselves with the campaigning activity of the SLL during the crisis. Hansen correctly says that there were many demonstrations against the blockade — and he *contrasts* this with the 'insular' *Newsletter*! This is nothing but a slander. SLL members were right in the forefront of every one of those demonstrations. They instigated and led a great many of them. The first mass meetings and demonstrations in Britain were led and addressed by our members. No one except the SLL organized a single factory-gate meeting against the blockade. Our comrades also fought tooth and nail to turn the protests especially into the Labour movement and to the factories. They had to fight resolutely against the right wing and the Stalinists in order to do so. They led these demonstrations against imperialism, and in defence of the Cuban Revolution, at the same time educating the workers and students in the role of the Soviet bureaucracy. They explained the causes of Khrushchev's contradictory policies, instead of joining Russell and the pacifists in praising his 'brilliant' diplomacy. In order to do this they had to fight the Stalinists, a fight which won the support of many

Communist Party members for Marxism. That could not have been done without training the SLL in the spirit of revolutionary Communist methods of work and a struggle against revisionism. How well would our comrades have performed had they been armed with the heritage of Pabloism — ‘the new situation restricts more and more the capacity of counter-revolutionary measures by the bureaucracy’ — or with Cannon’s apologia: ‘What else could he have done under the given circumstances?’; and calling up of Nehru and Russell, ‘unaffected by imperialist propaganda’, in his support? We are proud of our record in the Cuban events of last autumn, and we are ashamed of the identification of ‘Trotskyism’ with the capitulation to the Soviet bureaucracy of Cannon and the Pabloites. Hansen’s long list of quotations from *The Newsletter* is really only a mask for that capitulation.

Abstract Norms

Hansen’s case is basically the same as Pablo’s in 1953. ‘Objective’ forces pressing towards Socialism make it impossible for the Soviet bureaucracy to betray, and press even petty-bourgeois groupings to adopt a revolutionary path. We have seen above how in Algeria this means calling on Marxists to simply help along the ‘objective’ forces that will favour a course to the left by Ben Bella and his nationalist government. For all the talk of firmness against imperialism which is supposed to be involved in calling Cuba a ‘workers’ state’, the *actual* ‘defence’ of the Cuban Revolution by the SWP and the Pabloites was unable to even separate itself from the counter-revolutionary bureaucracy of Khrushchev! *This* is one of the things we mean when we say that Hansen is not analysing Cuba from the point of view of the development of the international class struggle, but by the application of abstract norms to isolated cases.

Hansen approaches the question of definition of the Cuban state by trying to relate it to the history of such discussions in the Trotskyist movement. The analysis of that discussion is certainly a vital part of the Marxist answer to the problems posed by Cuba today, but it will have to be along a different line to that taken by Hansen. He takes the SLL National Committee to task for ridiculing the imposition of abstract norms from Trotsky’s definition of the USSR to the economy and political system of Cuba today. He says that we thus ‘sever the connection’ between the present and the past discussion.

Hansen even says we have cut out Trotsky’s definition of the USSR

'by declaring it has no relevance to the Cuban discussion'. Is that the same thing as saying that the question of the Cuban state cannot be resolved abstractly by 'criteria' from this earlier discussion? It is always easier to demolish your opponent if you write his case afresh in your own terms. The real point of a historical analysis of the development of our concepts is to establish the way in which they scientifically develop by reflecting the objective world. Just as Trotsky's definitions of the USSR were hammered out on the basis of changing conditions in the USSR and in the world, of struggles against revisionist trends, and of the struggle to build a new International, so the historical threads of the discussion today must be seen as part of the struggle to build a revolutionary International able to lead the working class to power. The *whole* political line of the different tendencies in the Trotskyist movement must be the content of an analysis of their discussion on these questions. What looks like 'historical' analysis turns out in Hansen's hands to be the most rigid and unhistorical treatment.

Petty-Bourgeois Leaderships and the Working Class

For example, he criticizes *Trotskyism Betrayed* for failing to characterize the Soviet bureaucracy as a *petty-bourgeois* bureaucracy. Hansen's insistence on this point has a specific purpose: 'What was new in this situation — and this is the heart of Trotsky's position on the question — was that a reactionary petty-bourgeois formation of this kind could, after a political counter-revolution, wield power in a workers' state and even defend the foundations of that state while being primarily concerned about their own special interests'. It follows therefore that under certain circumstances petty-bourgeois formations will be forced to lead the revolutions of workers and peasants and abolish the capitalist state. Says Hansen: the SLL leaders accepted this for Eastern Europe and China, why not for Cuba? (They should even be more willing, he suggests, since 'Cuban leadership is in every respect superior to the Chinese'). We now see what Hansen means by 'continuity' in the discussion. Trotsky saw that a petty-bourgeois bureaucracy could lead and even 'defend' a workers' state. After the Second World War this petty-bourgeois formation could even take the leadership in the extension of the revolution and the establishment of new, 'deformed workers' states'. So why should the SLL strain at the notion that petty-bourgeois leadership can lead the establishment of workers' states in countries like Cuba? There you

have the whole of Hansen's playing with 'the history of the controversy'. He picks out from the history one aspect, the characterization as petty-bourgeois of certain social groups. This aspect is selected because it is the one essential to the justification of his present political course. Now it is, of course, absolutely essential that the characterization 'petty-bourgeois' be very precise. This class is continually being differentiated into the main classes of society, bourgeois and proletarian. Its various political representatives reflect this intermediate, dependent and shifting position. They are capable of no independent, consistent political line of action. Only if a petty-bourgeois intellectual *joins* the proletariat, in Marx's terms, can he achieve that independence and consistency of theory and action. The bureaucracy in the labour movement was often characterized by Lenin and Trotsky as petty-bourgeois in terms of its acceptance of the ideology of the middle classes, its going over, in the special conditions of rich imperialist countries, to the way of life and social functions of the middle classes. They formed part of the 'new middle caste' of society in the imperialist countries. In the USSR the bureaucratic ruling group consisted of the elements listed by Hansen — 'a reflection of the peasantry, the remnants of the old classes, the elements who switched allegiance from Tsar to the new regime — all these and the political-military administrative levels of the new government who, under pressure from the Capitalist West, drifted from the outlook of revolutionary socialism or came to prominence without ever having understood it'.

The term petty-bourgeois is not at all sufficient to characterize this bureaucracy for the purpose of the present (or any other) discussion. A *decisive* sector of the Soviet bureaucracy was Stalin's faction in control of the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet state. The historical relation between this party, this state, and the Soviet working class gave a specific character to the bureaucracy. It was not at all simply a question of relation between old, middle classes and a new governing elite. The existence of nationalized property relations established by a Soviet revolution, with the Bolshevik Party in power, gave us a historically-produced petty-bourgeois stratum at the head of the first workers' state, a group which represented, as Trotsky so painstakingly insisted, not the general laws of development of classes in the transition from capitalism to socialism, but the particular and unique refraction of these laws in the conditions of a backward and isolated workers' state. In extending this 'capacity' of the petty-bourgeois, as

petty-bourgeois, to defend and even extend workers' states, Hansen and Co. do precisely what Trotsky fought *against* in the discussion. Our French comrades are right to insist that the evaluation of the history of this discussion in the Trotskyist movement is more than a day's work, and the pre-condition of any useful results will have to be a much more serious and scientific handling of Marxist concepts than is displayed by Hansen with his easy identification of a 'petty-bourgeois formation' like the unique bureaucracy of the first workers' state with the petty-bourgeois leadership of the July 26th movement in Cuba.

Hansen on Permanent Revolution

In the coming months the French and British sections of the IC will publish contributions on the history of the discussion of 'workers' states'. Meanwhile we confine ourselves to differences in method to which Hansen draws attention, particularly in relation to Cuba. Nothing that Hansen says in 'Cuba — The Acid Test' answers the main argument in our section on Cuba in *Trotskyism Betrayed*. But before taking up particular points from Hansen's document it might be useful to state the general position from which we think Marxists must begin. One reason for doing this is that Hansen accuses us of treating Cuba only as an 'exception', and of seeing no continuity between past and present discussions on the character of the state. Castro set out as the leader of a petty-bourgeois nationalist party. His party has led a revolution and been able to hold power in Cuba. How has this been possible? What is its significance?

In the Russian Revolution, the petty-bourgeois (the 'democracy') could not resolutely seize the power on its own account, let alone 'retain' power, because of the strength of the proletariat and its ally the peasantry at that period. Given resolute revolutionary leadership, the working class proved able to overthrow the 'democracy' and achieve power. This power, in the view of Lenin and Trotsky, was an international breakthrough. It was seen essentially, in this backward country, as a power to be defended 'until the workers of Western Europe come to our aid'.

In this summary are contained the basic ideas of the 'permanent revolution'. Those countries who arrive at the stage of bourgeois-democratic revolution *late* cannot achieve this revolution under the leadership of the bourgeoisie. The latter, and its spokesmen in the

petty-bourgeois parties, are too incapable of an independent development. Their relation to international capital and their fear of the proletariat make their task an impossible one, and they will run to the support of reaction. The proletariat is the only class which can carry through the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. But in the course of its revolutionary actions and the creation of its own organs of struggle, there arise independent class demands. From the first stage of the revolution there is a rapid transition to *workers' power*. The condition for the maintenance and development of this power and its social base is the international socialist revolution.

Petty-Bourgeoisie in the Anti-Imperialist Struggle

The nations drawn into the struggle against imperialism now cover the entire world. The class composition of these nations varies enormously. In many of them, there is no industrial proletariat even to compare with the Russian proletariat of 1905, or the Chinese of 1919. In many of them, the development of industry has been forcibly restricted in the special interest of the ruling imperialist powers, so that the population consists almost entirely of a poverty-stricken peasantry. This peasantry is not at all identical with the 'peasantry' of Marxist writings in the 19th century. In many cases the majority of cultivators are landless sharecroppers and occasional wage-labourers. The special requirements of extractive and primary processing industries often create a special type of worker — migrant workers, spending half their time employed in mines or on plantations for low wages, the other half unemployed or back in small-scale cash-crop production or subsistence agriculture. The actual relationship of exploitation between international capital, banks, native moneylenders and merchants, landlords, etc., on the one hand, and the direct producers, peasants and workers, on the other, presents new and original forms. These forms are often hideous combinations of the ruthless drive for profit of advanced finance-capital and the backward social relations of feudal sheikhdoms and chiefdoms. At the political level, the peoples of these countries suffer the same deadly combination. All the horrors of modern war are visited upon them, either in direct conflict between the imperialist powers or through the equally effective 'pacifying' activities of the United Nations. In each case, we must see a particular combination of the forces and the laws analysed by Trotsky and Lenin in their work on imperialism and the Permanent Revolution.

Cuba is one of those countries where capitalist development has been almost entirely a function of foreign investment and control. The dependence of the economies of Latin American countries upon a single crop or resource (for Cuba, sugar) has often been described. The national bourgeoisie could never be an independent social force in Cuba. It could function only as a political or commercial executive for U.S. investments. Under these conditions the petty-bourgeois democratic ideologists could not long play their classical role in the bourgeois revolution, that of providing a political leadership tying the workers and peasants first to the bourgeois struggle against absolutism or for independence, and then tying these lower classes to the new regime. In the Russian Revolution the Social Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks attempted to do this. The leadership of the Bolsheviks over a proletariat concentrated in a few advanced centres, particularly Petrograd, in the vanguard of a peasant war, won Soviet power. The alternative would have been a repressive regime founded on the capitulation of the petty-bourgeois parties to the counter-revolution. Even in Germany and Italy, more advanced countries with much larger working classes, the failure of the proletarian revolution was replaced within a short time, not by bourgeois democracy, but by the naked oppression of Fascist regimes. Mankind had entered an epoch where the alternatives were Socialism or Barbarism, in the shape of Fascist reaction.

Capitulation to Soviet Bureaucracy

In the world today, we have a more advanced stage of the same situation. Not only barbarism but complete annihilation presents itself as the alternative to Socialism. This fact on a world scale, together with the preservation of the workers' state under bureaucratic domination in the USSR and the setting up of similar regimes in other backward countries (Eastern Europe and China), have led some 'Marxists' to view the present situation as qualitatively different. The Stalinists have concluded that the threat of war and the power of their own military forces make practicable a strategy of peaceful competition with the leading imperialist powers, and peaceful and Parliamentary roads to Socialism within the individual nations. This is quite clearly not a *theory* but an ideological apology for the actual capitulation of the Soviet bureaucracy, determined above all to preserve its privileges by balancing between the working classes and imperialism.

The current Sino-Soviet dispute raises these questions for discussion throughout the Communist Parties. Never was there greater need for theoretical clarity and decisiveness by the Trotskyist movement, for only the scientific development of the theory of Permanent Revolution can provide any answer to the problems raised. In our opinion the revisions of Trotskyism by Pablo, leading to the split in 1953, and now manifested in opportunist policies for the advanced countries, the workers' states, and the colonial countries, were a political capitulation to the forces which stand between the working class and the overthrow of imperialism. The power of the Soviet bureaucracy, and the slowness of the European and U.S. labour movements to resolve the crisis of leadership in the 1930s and 1940s, had an impact on the ideas of Pablo and his group which was not interpreted scientifically, in a class way, but impressionistically. This abandonment of the dialectical method, of the class criterion in the analysis of society and politics, resulted in the conclusion that forces other than the proletariat organized behind revolutionary Marxist parties would lead the next historical stage of struggle against capitalism. We have seen how Hansen explains this for China and Eastern Europe. We remember Pablo's insistence that the Stalinist parties in countries like France could lead the working class to power. We have seen since then the 'rehabilitation of the revolutionary peasantry' by Pablo and the current belief that petty-bourgeois nationalist leaders can lead the establishment and maintenance of workers' states. In Cuba, even an 'uncorrupted workers' regime' has been established, according to these 'Marxists'. All this is possible because there is a 'new reality'; as Hansen says: 'To this we must add that the world setting today is completely different(?) from what it was in 1936-39. In place of(?) the entrenchment of European fascism, the Soviet Union has consolidated a position as one of the two primary world powers. The Soviet economic structure has been extended deep into Europe. China has become a workers' state. The colonial revolution has brought hundreds of millions to their feet. De-Stalinization has altered the capacity of the bureaucracy to impose its will in flagrant fashion as in the thirties . . .'

The similarity here to the analysis of the 'new situation' presented by the Stalinists is remarkable. They, too, discuss at the level of 'the strength of the Socialist camp', 'the colonial revolution', 'the defeat of fascism' and 'the growth of the Soviet economy'. They, too, try to protect themselves from the formation of new revolutionary parties by

claiming that it is *their* defensive reaction of 'de-Stalinization' which assures the future of the Communist movement. Those who refer to Lenin are 'dogmatists'! Capitulation to the bureaucracy in political questions will eventually involve a descent into their methods of thinking, in narrow empiricism and pragmatism, combined with demagogic generalizations. This is the type of thinking which underlies the present revisionist barrier to the building of the Fourth International.

The SLL's Position on Cuba

Let us briefly now summarize the 'refutations' made by Hansen of our position on Cuba as stated in the document *Trotskyism Betrayed* and see how they stand up.

1. We criticized the 'normative' method of applying separate 'criteria' abstractly and unhistorically without specific historical and class analysis. We demanded instead a class analysis of the political forces and of the government and state in Cuba. Hansen replies by accusing us of ignoring the historical continuity in the discussion on the class character of the USSR, China and Eastern Europe and Cuba. We have seen above the way in which he establishes this 'continuity' — by finding in it justification for acceptance of petty-bourgeois formations as leaders of the working class. We have tried, in anticipation of future analysis, to lay down the general Marxist framework for a discussion. We have suggested that the analysis carried out over the last two years in *Labour Review* form the basis for a class evaluation of the nationalist and Stalinist forces in Cuba and other countries.
2. We stated categorically that the new unified party (IRO) of Castro and the Stalinists could not be a substitute for the construction of a revolutionary Marxist party in Cuba. Hansen does not take up this question at all. He presumably defends the position stated earlier by Cannon, that the Trotskyists should take a loyal place within the IRO. Hansen replies to the French comrades that in their writings, 'The meaning of the attacks on the Cuban Trotskyists (by government officials and spokesmen) is exaggerated and placed at the wrong door besides not being properly balanced against the ideological influence which Trotskyism exercises in a significant sector among the Cuban revolutionary vanguard'.

He still must explain the clear statement of Guevara that no factions shall exist in the IRO, whose 'democratic centralism' will thus be of the Stalinist type. He must explain who is responsible for the attacks on Trotskyists. And he must not ask us to take seriously his gentle hint that the SWP or someone else has secret influential friends by Castro's side. When did that become a Marxist argument, and what has it got to do with the question whether a Marxist party can be built? No doubt we will also be told that in Algeria there is 'ideological influence' by Trotskyists like Pablo in 'a significant sector among the revolutionary vanguard', but we find it difficult to get excited about that. Hansen had the opportunity in this part of the argument to expand on his earlier theme: 'We all know the ABC — we need revolutionary parties — but the question is how to go ahead and build them'. But he has *nothing* to say except that it is 'exaggerated' to defend the Cuban Trotskyists from attack by the State apparatus and that it should be remembered we have some friends in there.

3. We stated our opinion that the dictatorship of the proletariat had not been established in Cuba, and that therefore the label workers' state was wrong. Hansen does not take the question head-on — or perhaps this is one of those old 'norms' of Lenin which are too old fashioned to apply. To our argument that the state machine remained a bourgeois structure *despite* the absence of the bourgeoisie, Hansen replies only with attempted ridicule, despite the fact that, as the French comrades have pointed out, this involves him in the necessity of revising Trotsky's conclusions about Republican Spain in the thirties (*Spain — The Last Warning* 1936). The SLL, says Hansen, should revise their opinion because: the *imperialists* disagree about it being a bourgeois state; the 'people' of the USSR and the other workers' states disagree (!); the Cuban people disagree; other Marxists disagree; and finally, the present SLL position was once stated by Pablo himself, before he learned better. All these arguments amount to precisely nothing (see the letter from F. Rodriguez, in this bulletin).

Hansen does not take up at all the question of Soviets or workers' councils as the form of State power, and the meaning of a 'militia' without such workers' self-government. He does not say how this 'militia', controlled in fact through the army by the centralized state apparatus, differs from 'the people in arms'. Is it not a fact that the arms supply is regulated through the army and *not* through the

militias? Through the State apparatus and *not* through workers' councils or committees? Why does not Hansen take up our argument that the old state machine was not smashed but was staffed with personnel from Castro's own movement, later supplemented by the Stalinist bureaucrats? Is it a 'norm' from Marx and Lenin which must now be dropped? We insist that so long as the petty-bourgeois leadership of Castro keeps hold of this state machine, bureaucratically independent of any organs of workers' power, in control of *force* in Cuban society, then it will function as the main hope for the re-entry of the bourgeoisie into Cuba, nationalization notwithstanding.

4. Essentially connected with the last point was our characterization of Castro's government as a Bonapartist regime resting on bourgeois state foundations (*Trotskyism Betrayed*, p. 14). Certainly Castro has leant heavily on the proletariat and the poor peasantry up to now, but he also is careful to preserve a relationship with the rich peasants, and the exigencies of the economy may force him to rely on them more and more. Hansen should think out how far he is prepared to go with Castro in such an eventuality. Already Pablo, with whom Hansen wants to unite, has been working out a theoretical line to justify Ben Bella's insistence that in Algeria the peasants are more important than the workers. If Hansen is to answer the case for saying Castro is a left Bonaparte, balancing between imperialism and the working class, then he must give an alternative explanation for the absence of proletarian democracy in Cuba. If Cuba is an 'uncorrupted workers' regime' how do we explain the absence of workers' councils? What explanation is there other than the preservation of the independence of the State power by Castro and his movement, *against* the working class as well as against imperialism? Stalin's regime was also characterized by Trotsky as a Bonapartist one. Does that mean that Cuba, like the USSR, is therefore a workers' state? No: we say that Stalin's was a bureaucratic regime resting on the proletarian state foundations conquered by the Soviet workers in 1917; Castro's is a Bonapartist regime still resting on bourgeois state foundations. If the Cuban revolution can be successfully defended from foreign invasion, then the next stage will be a short period of dual power, with the workers and peasants led in their Soviets by a new revolutionary party behind the programme of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

5. Hansen makes no reply to our statement: 'The attack on

Escalante was motivated by a desire to keep power centralized in his own hands and not by hostility to bureaucracy or any other such thing'. (*Trotskyism Betrayed*, p. 14). Hansen still writes as if it does not need proving that Escalante was removed from office as a step against Stalinist bureaucratism. But we must repeat that he leaves several points unanswered. What is the significance of the fact that the majority leadership of the Cuban Stalinists also condemned Escalante, and that *Pravda* welcomed his removal as a blow against 'sectarianism'? Does it mean that they are now taking their place in Castro's crusade against Stalinism? But would not this imply that the Stalinist movement is reforming itself along the right lines? Or does it mean that the Cuban CP and *Pravda* decided to humour Castro for the time being, acknowledging his strong position in Cuba itself? In that case the nature of the relation between the July 26th movement and the Stalinists should be exposed by the SWP, and its implications for the nature of the new 'united revolutionary party' recognized.

The main basis for interpreting Escalante's removal appears to be the speech of Castro 'Against Sectarianism and Bureaucracy'. In this speech Castro gave many examples of favouritism and bureaucratic discrimination in the State administration. Escalante and his group, according to Castro, used their power to staff the state apparatus at all levels with their own (Communist Party) nominees. All this seems to be very fine, but if the speech is read carefully, and compared with earlier speeches and writings, it becomes clear that there is more there than meets the eye.

In condemning Escalante's appointments, Castro repeatedly remarks that the men appointed were not proved revolutionists but Party intellectuals, some of whom were under their beds while the revolutionaries were risking their lives against Batista's regime. The clear implication of this part of the speech was to assert the leadership of the July 26th group over that of the Communist Party, and to *threaten* the Communist Party with calling up the sympathies of the people behind the 'real revolutionaries'. It was probably against this very real danger to their own bureaucratic positions that the Stalinists decided to join in the attack on Escalante and cut their losses. It is very interesting to compare this speech with Castro's equally well-known one, also published by the SWP, in which he claimed to have always been at least close to communism. In this latter speech, made at a stage when he was more dependent on the Communist Party for the staffing of the State bureaucracy, Castro almost apologized for whatever

hostility he had shown to Stalinism in his earlier career. He explained that only his 'lack of understanding' prevented him from being a Communist; he thus glossed over the betrayals of Cuban Stalinism in the past. He called upon the militants of the July 26th Movement to learn Marxism from the old hands of the Communist Party. What else can we call these rapid changes in emphasis except the adaptation of a Bonaparte to the changing necessities of preserving his domination? Could anyone suggest that they bear any relation to a serious or revolutionary evaluation of Stalinism as a political trend?

In this matter, do Castro's speeches to the populace bear any relation to the process of 'educating the masses' at which he is supposed to be so adept? An article from Hansen on this question would be interesting. In 'Cuba — The Acid Test' he makes only the briefest references to the question: 'the alleged take-over of Castro's forces by the Cuban Communist Party has been sufficiently exploded by events' (p. 28).

Hansen chooses here to ignore the point that even if he was right about the significance of Castro's actions 'against bureaucratism' this would largely confirm what had been said about the dangers to the Cuban revolution of Castro's dependence on the Stalinists in staffing the State apparatus. He makes no analysis of the actual relations between the July 26th Movement and the Communist Party, and simply refers once again to 'the measures taken by the Castro regime against Stalinist bureaucratism' (*Cuba — The Acid Test*, p. 16) as if nobody could question their 'revolutionary' or progressive character. But a reading of Castro's own speech makes the matter quite clear. In condemning the bureaucratic appointment to State positions of Communist Party members by Escalante, Castro is defending *not* workers' rule, proletarian dictatorship, but the independence of *the State machine*. He insists in so many words that *the state* must have the right to place all personnel. These officials will be loyal *to the State* and not to any outside organization. The assertion of the worth of the July 26th fighters against those who were 'under their beds' is a justification of this independent power of the centralized state apparatus itself, under the direct control of Castro's government. Guevara's speeches against workers' control in industry, and the attacks on the Cuban Trotskyists, are in the same line.

6. Hansen repeats all the arguments about nationalization carried out by the Castro government, without introducing anything new to

the discussion. We had indicated that nationalization today could mean many different things, and was often carried out on a large scale by bourgeois governments, particularly in backward countries. The longer capitalism continues in the absence of proletarian victory in the advanced countries, the more capitalist economy will have to adopt measures which conform to the character of modern industry, division of labour and communication, yet still restricting the economy within the contradictions of capitalism. Hansen makes a terrible hash of the argument at that point. He says: if nationalizations like those in Cuba can be carried out by a bourgeois state, doesn't this lead you to the conclusion that capitalism can still have a progressive role? This is only the argument of the revisionists ('Capitalism can make itself work') stood on its head. Hansen is taking at their face value the claims made by the governments and capitalist spokesmen for such changes. The fact is that the economy of Cuba, or Israel, or Egypt, or any other country, will be *hampered* by such a framework from becoming part of the rationally planned international economy of Socialism. Does the use of atomic fission prove that science and industry can still advance under capitalism, and that Marxism is wrong? Or doesn't it demonstrate that every technological advance, so long as imperialism is not abolished, turns into its opposite, i.e., that all development involves greater economic and political contradictions?

Hansen does not take up the relevance of his criteria of 'nationalization' for say, Egypt or Burma, where a military-nationalist government recently nationalized the banks and many foreign holdings. Perhaps these will have to be called workers' states, since if somebody else (bourgeois or petty-bourgeois governments) nationalized these enterprises, that might imply further progressive roles for the capitalist class and the capitalist system. We raised the question of the SWP's evaluation of these states in our earlier document, but Hansen gives no reply. On the question of nationalization of the land, one small point will show the incompleteness of Hansen's presentation. Hansen says that the alienability of land (whether it can be bought and sold) is 'beside the point in this discussion' but takes the opportunity to attack the SLL for its 'ignorance of the facts on this question'. He goes on: 'It so happens that the Agrarian Reform Law specifies that the "vital minimum" of land, to which a campesino gets a deed, "shall be inalienable". Exempt from taxes, this land cannot be attached and is not subject to contract, lease, sharecrop or usufruct. It can be

transferred only by sale to the state, or through inheritance by a single heir on the death of the owner, or, in the event there is no heir, by sale at a public auction to bidders who must be campesinos or agricultural workers'. Now a very interesting omission from this passage (a passage whose only meaning is that the Castro government has tried to create a stable, small and middle peasant class in Cuba) is that besides the vital 'minimum' there is also the possibility of much larger holdings, *up to a maximum of 1,000 acres*. Between the minimum and the maximum, the land can be sold on the market. Hansen's correction of our 'ignorance' here may perhaps serve as a model of how to start with 'the facts'.

7. Finally, we raised the question of a new revolutionary party in Cuba. Hansen ignores this completely. He prefers the 'facts'.

Hansen's Silence

In this reply to *Cuba — The Acid Test* we have restricted ourselves to the methodological principles raised by Hansen, and to a number of illustrations of the differences between us on these principles, particularly on Cuba. Other questions which we took up in *Trotskyism Betrayed* are ignored by Hansen, and we await his reply. For example, we took several pages to answer the accusation of 'subjectivism' in our evaluation of the world situation. Taking up Trotsky's *Transitional Programme* and the International Resolution of the SLL (*World Prospect for Socialism*) we showed that our evaluation of the relation between leadership and the objective contradictions of capitalism was the same as Trotsky's. Hansen makes no attempt to return to the attack on this point; perhaps he thinks it enough to say that 'the world setting today is completely different from what it was in 1936-39'. We also made a detailed reply defending our characterization of the Algerian leadership and the Evian sell-out. Once again, nothing from Hansen in reply (see above). What kind of discussion is Hansen going in for? We try to take up all the points raised, to carry them to the end, and Hansen simply drops them. Such discussion soon becomes profitless. Similar treatment is given to the question of the Leninist approach to party-building. We tried to establish, from the documentary evidence, the falseness of Hansen's claim that Lenin and Trotsky had built the Party primarily through flexibility and unifications. We pointed out the essential theoretical firmness and the ability to insist

on splits characteristic of Lenin, and Trotsky's recognition of this essence. Hansen replies not a word.

Finally, we took up once again the relation between the revolution in the advanced capitalist countries and in the backward nations. We especially insisted on the political implications of the SWP's statement that 'the pronounced lag in the West, this negative feature (was) the most important element in the current reality'. All the talk of the revisionists about 'favourable objective forces' amounts *in fact* to the opposite of what it appears. Times are good, and getting better, but *for what?* For the construction of revolutionary parties around the programme of the Fourth International? No! For the emergence of Marxists from the petty-bourgeois political groupings, a development which Trotskyists should direct all their efforts to supporting! This is the most that can be gathered from Hansen and the Pabloites. Their 'deep entry' and their silence on the principled questions of new revolutionary parties, Soviet democracy, and the political revolution, are designed to find ways of 'getting in on the act'. Someone else is going to do the job, and at the moment the Stalinist bureaucracy and the nationalist leaders are getting on with it. As for the advanced countries: 'In fact experience would seem to indicate that the difficulty of coming to power in the imperialist countries has increased if anything since the time of the Bolsheviks'. This is used to back up Hansen's agreement that the construction of revolutionary parties is an 'absolute necessity in the advanced capitalist countries'. In the advanced countries it's difficult: you need Marxist parties. But in any case the 'epicentre' of the revolution is elsewhere, and there it can be done by someone else. In effect the 'parties' of Hansen and the Pabloites in the advanced countries become cheer-leaders for the petty-bourgeois nationalists in Algeria, Cuba, etc. Hansen chooses to ignore the line of those Pabloites in Europe who 'keep their heads down' in the Social Democracy, hoping to be discovered as the core of some future centrist parties, rather than constructing independent parties in opposition to the reactionary leaderships.

Hansen's document, *Cuba — The Acid Test*, is a serious warning to Marxists. It parades as a serious contribution to an international discussion, yet ignores a whole series of vital questions raised immediately before, questions concerning the whole record and orientation of Bolshevism.

In place of this, Hansen insists on 'the facts', and in particular, the fact of the Cuban Revolution. Into this part of the discussion he

introduces nothing new except a demagogic distortion of the SLL's position and a crude attempt to gain something from the different evaluations of the Cuban state by the French and British sections of the IC.

All this indicates that Hansen is running away from the fundamental political questions. His insistence on 'The Acid Test' of Cuba is a plea for 'commonsense' to override theory. It is this which underlies the wholly different concepts of building the International now dividing the SWP and the SLL. Without revolutionary theory, no revolutionary party.

The great benefit to be derived from *Cuba — The Acid Test* is that it makes explicit the foundations of this abandonment of revolutionary theory, of dialectical materialism. Hansen has now placed out in the open his defence of empiricism as a method, a method which has a natural expression in the politics of opportunism. It is to these politics that Hansen's method now leads. It is for this reason that he and Cannon drive for unification with Pabloism, whose opportunist and liquidationist revisions of 1953 have not been in any way corrected. All that has happened is that the theoretical stagnation of the American Trotskyists has led them inescapably to the same end.

Addendum

It is characteristic of the Castro regime that not a single leading body of the ORI is elected. While Castro inveighs against sectarianism and dogmatism in the party, he is at the same time responsible for the installation of an autocratic and self-perpetuating bureaucracy.

For example, the 'reorganizing process' in the ORI is carried out by the National Board — which is appointed. Who reorganizes the National Board? Presumably Castro. There is no freedom for dissident tendencies and no provision for minority representation.

All policy decisions are made behind closed doors by a small clique of Castro and his supporters. There is no democratic debate and little discussion. For instance, during the last missile crisis, it transpired that 'some people' in the ORI favoured UN inspection. Who these people were and what chance they had to express themselves we do not know. We had to wait until Castro spoke to get what facts we could.

Again recently the workers of Havana were treated to a piece of organizational skulduggery without precedent in the revolution. This

was the decision to dissolve the acting Provincial Committee (37) of Havana, its executive board and Secretariat. It was replaced with a small Provisional Executive Board (11) with 'limited functions considered indispensable at this stage'.

The ostensible — and official — reason for this arbitrary action was the failure of this important leading organ to carry out the 'reorganizing work' but the real reason was probably a political one — the elimination of the remnants of Escalante's forces in the ORI.

The Provincial Committee — one of the most important in Cuba — has no right of appeal to any Congress of the ORI for the simple reason that there has been no democratically convened Congress, and there is little prospect of seeing one in the future.

At the same time, too, all the party organizations in the Province of Havana have been placed under the direction of eleven Regional Commissions which are not subject to election and renewal.

The bureaucratic centralization going on in the ORI is the antithesis of working-class democracy and is the surest symptom of Bonapartism in the revolution.

We do not wish to make a fetish of democracy — nor do we wish to minimise the importance of the bullet vis-a-vis the ballot in a revolution. But dictatorship if it is to remain popular and viable must be tempered by the widest democracy. Comrade Cannon in his own inimitable style expressed this thought succinctly when he wrote:

When the founders of scientific socialism said the workers must emancipate themselves, they meant that nobody would do it for them, and nobody could. The same holds true for their organizations, the instruments of struggle for emancipation. If they are really to serve their purpose, these organizations must belong to the workers and be democratically operated and controlled by them. Nobody can do it for them. So thought the great democrats, Marx and Engels. (*Notebook of an Agitator*, p. 239, Pioneer Publishers 1958).

We cannot say more.

DOCUMENT 6b**Letter from Pierre Broué to the leadership of the SWP, February 14, 1963**

Dear Comrades,

I have received, as have a certain number of other Frenchmen, Joe Hansen's text 'Cuba, An Acid Test', which constitutes an answer to the positions maintained on Cuba by the SLL and the French.

I am glad that an international discussion should begin in this way, on a question of such importance. We shall discuss it again between ourselves, in order to answer some of Hansen's objections in detail. However, I should like, straight away, in the name of my comrades, to make a few points which seem to preface any dialogue, as they deal with the conditions themselves of a discussion of an international scale, that is to say with workers' democracy itself.

1. The international bulletin of the SWP published Joe Hansen's text in reply to our text and to our theses. The comrades of the SWP who will read it will thus know the answer to texts which *they have not seen*. For our part, we have acted differently, and have published for our comrades, the texts of the SWP before ours.

2. This lapse in the understanding of what workers' democracy should be, is even more deplorable as comrade Hansen has a very peculiar conception of the way in which an honest militant should put forward the ideas of his comrades, when he does not share them. I had a moment of anxiety, while reading his text, and wondered if our comparison with Spain had been so badly presented that Hansen could have criticised it as he did, in good faith. But this is not so: we mentioned Spain to show an example of a bourgeois state — the republican state — broken by a revolution, and resuscitated by the alliance between the bourgeois and Stalinists. If Joe Hansen wants to discuss this point with us, he will have to revise the analyses which our movement made at that time, and he will have to tell us that Trotsky was wrong to speak of the 'alliance with the *shadow* of the bourgeoisie', 'with political *spectres*' (*Works*, Vol.3, p.536). It is

without pleasure that we read Hansen's jokes about 'spectres', for before writing our text, we re-read Trotsky's lines in the History of the Russian Revolution on the 'semi-spectral dualism of power' (Vol. 1 of the Reider edition, p. 306). It seems to us that Comrade Hansen, if he has any consideration for the members of the SWP, should explain to them either that he is not very familiar with Trotsky's thought, and that the comrades he mocks are more so than he is, or that he invites us all to condemn without remission, those of Trotsky's writings which we have just mentioned.

3. We have not got the same conception as Joe Hansen has of what constitutes 'consideration' towards comrades: Hansen laughs at the 'spectres' which Trotsky taught us existed and that it was just as well to recognize, and refrains from saying, as he laughs at us, that we are following Trotsky in speaking of half or quarter-spectres. On the other hand he reproaches us with not having told our comrades things that we do not know. If, in fact, we said that we would return to certain questions at a later date, it was because our work is not yet complete. We prefer work to gossip, and we think that we have shown more consideration for the comrades than if, like Hansen, we had spoken either of a text that they have not been able to read, or of things we did not know or of which we were not certain. The leaders of the SWP will soon receive our text on the USSR after Stalin, and we hope that, this time, the comrades of the SWP will have it too: we believe, in fact, that it will arm them better to understand and consequently to practise what constitutes the defence of the USSR, which the analyses of *The Militant* and the contributions of Murry Weiss in defence of the bureaucracy cannot do.

4. We congratulate comrade Hansen on seeing that we have differences with the comrades of the SLL on the question of Cuba. Our agreement with them on fundamental questions is, in fact, so profound that in reading superficially as he seems to do, he could have overlooked their existence. However, we are sorry that the arguments that Joe Hansen puts up to the comrades of the SLL are so feeble that they can hardly help to make them revise the points of their analysis that we consider debatable. In fact, how can Hansen be taken seriously when he invokes against the SLL the opinion of the 'peoples' of the USSR, Poland, Hungary, etc . . . as it is expressed in the columns of the press which is edited by the bureaucrats, or in the meetings where they alone speak? The same opinion of the 'peoples', as he says, called Trotsky a spy and a murderer, and called the Trotskyists

'Hitlerites' . . . And did not the Spanish 'people' in the social-democracy and Stalinist meetings and writings also condemn the 'Trotskyists', accusing them of calumniating, even of assassinating their 'revolution'? At that time, no serious militant in the Trotskyist movement thought of criticising Trotsky for his analysis, and of suggesting that in order to explain the contradiction between the opinion of the 'people' and his own, resort must be made to a psychosis of mania, etc. . . . as comrade Hansen does today. If Hansen really wants to criticise our comrades of the SLL, who have turned to Lenin for the definition of a workers' state — see the number of lines that Trotsky devotes to the definition of the USSR in *The Revolution Betrayed* — he must first of all explain why the construction of a 'pure' workers' state was possible in a backward country at that time, and why it no longer is in Cuba today, and why he is reduced, as he has been for the last two years, to awaiting a speech by Castro, announced but not in evidence, on the new institutions, in order to know what workers' democracy is today. We fear that Hansen may have forgotten that a revolutionary Marxist *must change the world*, and not analyse the way in which it changes by itself under the influence of those unconscious and objective forces which he calls 'the facts'.

5. Finally, if our text had been published for all the comrades of the SWP, we presume to think that there would have been at least one to understand that it was a typing error that substituted 'cultural assimilation' — which is meaningless — for 'structural assimilation', which was a frequent expression of Trotsky's pen during the polemic of 1939-40, as in our ranks just after the war. Hansen would thus have been spared the ridicule of devoting so many lines to a copying mistake.

However, despite bad procedures and futile lawyer's manoeuvres, Joe Hansen's text puts up some serious objections to our theses. We are getting down to work to answer them, and we shall try and publish all the texts again, his and ours, hoping that you will do as much. It is only in this way, in our opinion, that the leadership of the SWP will prove that it intends a discussion which can made the world movement progress, and that it is not one of those who, with the words of unity on their tongue, in reality are preparing a split in the obscurity of a discussion in which the texts of each are not known to all.

Yours fraternally,

Francisco Rodriguez

Chapter Four

'Reunification' and the final rejection of discussion

In the first half of 1963, the International Committee and the SLL tried to exhaust every possibility of checking the course of the SWP and its collaborators, with the purpose of ensuring a full discussion of all the major political questions. But the SWP even chose cynically to ignore the agreed decision to hold a Conference of all supporters of the International Committee before any 'unity' discussions be held in Conference with the Pabloites. The correspondence in this chapter is the record of these two irreconcilable political lines. Even after the 'reunification' the International Committee still sought a framework for the maximum clarification, and this was refused (Documents 19 and 20).

DOCUMENT 7a**Letter from Capa (Argentina) to G. Healy,
March 6, 1963**

Dear Comrade Burns,

After a number of experiences which would take a very long time to relate, I have become aware of the position among our own forces and of the discussion which is going on between yourselves and the New Zealand comrades. The comrades here did not want to say anything officially about the discussion until they knew my views and those of the other comrades in this continent.

Recently through a letter from Paris we have learned that a meeting of great importance for the future of the IC is being prepared for the middle of April. I ask you to write to us about it, and, as general secretary, do the maximum to get the members of the IC to accept a postponement of the meeting at least until the end of June or ideally, until August or July. I make this request for the following important reasons:

1. You know already that our long struggle against Pabloism began even before your own. A discussion about unification with them proposed by the New Zealand comrades should take place with our direct participation. For this we must all know fully the different positions and we should be able to intervene directly and personally in the discussion to resolve these problems. I firmly believe that you, yourselves, will be the most ardent defender of this right of my comrades and of myself personally, as a full member of the IC, to have the maximum possible opportunity of taking part in this meeting. The fact that this conference is taking place in your continent is a very

great advantage for yourselves, the Europeans, and as a compensation for this, some real concessions should be made to those who are not resident there. I leave the carrying out of this request in your hands.

2. The movement in our continent underwent a series of very grave difficulties during the whole year 1962. As a consequence of these we have only been able to re-establish contact again during the past few months. Between now and the middle of April we cannot guarantee that we shall be able to re-establish all our contacts and organize our participation in the conference. If you fix the date as suggested, especially for July or August, we undertake to send a delegation which would be representative of four or five countries at a minimum. All that we need is time. We depend on you to give it to us.

I do not doubt that you will do everything you can to have our request agreed to and thus to guarantee a representative conference, fully democratic and which will bear fruit, in which an important sector of our forces, our own, will intervene.

Fraternal greetings to Mike, yourself and all the other old comrades.

Capa

P.S. For obvious reasons I am not sending you any information about the situation, although it is extremely interesting. I hope that we shall meet in July or August to exchange information fully about the situation.

DOCUMENT 7b**Letter from G. Healy to Capa, March 25, 1963**

Dear Comrade,

We were overjoyed to receive your letter of March 6, 1963 and to learn that despite all your difficulties our movement in Argentina appears to have more than vindicated itself in the revolutionary struggles of the past year.

Your letter arrived during a session of our National Committee and it was possible to have it immediately translated and submitted to the Committee for discussion. You will be pleased to learn that our Committee voted unanimously to agree to a postponement of the international congress organized by the International Committee to the last two weeks in August, 1963. We are recommending this to a meeting of the International Committee which will be held next Sunday, March 31.

Naturally, we are very much interested in your political opinions on the present very serious differences between ourselves and the New Zealand section. We hope you will submit a document on the perspectives of your section in relation to world problems in time for it to be studied before our congress meets.

Now that we have re-established communications, we shall be sending you all available material in the international discussions.

With warmest regards to all your comrades,

Yours fraternally,

G. Preston

DOCUMENT 7c

**Letter from Joseph Hansen to G. Healy,
March 19, 1963**

Dear Comrade Preston,

There are a couple of items I should like to take up.

(1) When I received the mimeographed copy of your letter to Comrade Germain concerning an unfavourable development in relations among the Trotskyist youth in Britain and indications that this may lead to the withdrawal of the SLL from the Parity Committee, I got in touch with Comrade Frank to determine what he knew about the incident you mention. He was completely in the dark. I got a similar response from Comrade Germain with the added information that he had not received the original letter which you addressed to him and which was presumably sent to him from your office, so that this was the first he had heard about it. In view of the rather far-reaching implications of what you say about the SLL possibly withdrawing from the Parity Committee, the IS decided to send comrade Frank to England in an effort to ascertain the facts. They also asked me if I would care to go there at the same time so that I would be in a position to draw my own independent conclusions. I agreed to this and plan to arrive in London on Wednesday, March 27. As soon as I get settled with a room I will give you a ring.

(2) I received a carbon copy of a letter to Comrade Burns from Comrade Capa in Argentina. Also one to you from Comrade Dowson of Canada. Both of them ask about the possibility of a postponement of the IC Congress.

Besides the problems they raise, I would like very frankly to raise an

additional consideration. As you know, the IC reached agreement some time ago to put on the agenda for discussion at the IC Congress the question of early reunification. Since then the SWP Political Committee has issued a statement putting in succinct written form what it considers to be the main points of political agreement that make reunification on the basis of these points and suggests that a reunification congress be held immediately following the IC and IS congresses. On the side of the IS, the response to this statement is quite positive. They welcome the suggestion for a reunification congress and express agreement with the points in the statement of the Political Committee. I hope that the proposals made by the SWP meet with equal approval from the SLL leadership and that you will decide to participate vigorously in the effort at early reunification.

Whatever your decision, as one sector of the IC, may be to this, a practical problem is raised. If an early reunification is decided upon by the majority of delegates at the IC congress, as seems likely, and they decide to join with the delegates of the IS in a congress that would reunify the overwhelming majority of the world Trotskyist movement, it would be highly advantageous for a number of obvious reasons to hold the two congresses closely together. Not least of these reasons are finances and the need to return as soon as possible to revolutionary duties in such areas of extremely active class struggle as Latin America. I therefore add my voice to that of Argentina and Canada and strongly urge that the IC congress be postponed to some time in the *last two weeks of May*.

Since the next meeting of the Parity Committee has been postponed until next month and its continuation even put in question by your letter to Comrade Germain, it is difficult to consider the question of co-ordinating the two congresses in a normal joint gathering of IC and IS leaders. I therefore checked again with the representatives of the IS about the date of their congress. This will come close enough to the two-week bracket I suggest to enable us to solve the problem. I asked them about the possibility of a later date for their congress than the one they have scheduled. While they would derive certain advantages from a postponement for a few months, it is not feasible for them primarily because of the prohibitive costs involved in holding any gathering during the tourist season. They already have a financial problem because of the size of the gathering they expect and cannot swing something that would be more costly.

We can discuss this further next week when I am in London.

However in order to save time, which is now growing quite short, I am sending copies of this as well as the letters of Capa and Dowson to the various IC sections in hope it will expedite reaching a quick decision in favour of the last two weeks in May which, despite some inconvenience, seems me to be the best possible date for all concerned in view of the complications.

Fraternally,

Joseph Hansen

DOCUMENT 7d

**Letter from G. Healy to Joseph Hansen,
March 29, 1963**

Dear Comrade Hansen,

Your letter of March 19 provides us with the opportunity to return in written form to some of the thoughts concerning unification which we expressed in our conversations at the January meeting of the International Committee.

Before going on to these, I would like to say how grateful we are for your thoughtful action in contacting Pierre Frank with the copy of our letter to Ernest Germain. This is the second unfortunate experience we have had with this address. Towards the end of the third week in January, we wrote to him regarding the time of arrival of our delegation to discuss with his comrades. Unfortunately, this letter did not arrive either, so on February 3 our people wasted half a day without being able to contact anybody. It seems clear that some letters posted to this address arrive, and others, especially some of the important ones, do not.

Over the last weekend we have had a meeting of our National Committee and you will be pleased, I am sure, to learn that the news that a special commission was at last going to meet in connection with the activities of certain elements in the British movement posing as supporters of Trotskyism was regarded as satisfactory by all the comrades. Of course, now that the commission is meeting, we shall continue with the work on the Parity Committee as in the past.

We called for such an international commission originally at the February 3 meeting of the Parity Committee because we could envisage a situation where incidents such as this might require intervention. We are glad to learn that you will be here in the capacity of

'independent observer' since this will enable you to listen to the witnesses and examine the evidence that we produce.

We are all aware of the nature of the serious differences which exist between the Socialist Labour League and the Socialist Workers Party. The fact, however, that these are being at present discussed within the international movement should not prevent us from talking in an objective way about our political and organizational responsibilities. What we have to say now is mainly related to these.

After the end of World War II, we were all part of a unified international movement. At the time of the third world congress in September 1951, we were still all unified and yet by the December of 1953 our movement was split from top to bottom by the activities of Pablo.

There have been comrades who, after the split, suggested that there should have been more discussion at the time. But this was, of course, something that it was then too late to rectify. May I suggest that it would be equally erroneous now to rush into an early unification without adequate discussion and preparation.

The explosive, unprepared nature of the split of 1953 is only one of a series of similar incidents which have continued within the Pabloite camp. Cochran, Clarke, Lawrence and Mestre resigned, also without much discussion, after the Pabloite fourth congress in the summer of 1954. Last year the Posadas group which included practically the whole of their cadre in South America suddenly broke away, once again without adequate discussion.

There is now another deep-going crisis inside the same organization. You, yourself, reported to us that you had listened to a discussion on their International Executive Committee lasting for 20 hours on their internal situation. You told us that this was very heated and that Pablo had announced the formation of a faction.

At this meeting Pablo apparently denounced Germain as the leader of a right opportunist tendency which was guilty of misapplying his theory of 'entrism sui generis'. He charged Germain with the fact that the majority of one section had succumbed to this deviation.

When the vote was taken, Germain, Frank and Maitan were able to muster a two to one majority against Pablo. According to you this was the first meeting of its kind that had been held for three years, since Pablo was imprisoned. Much of the discussion was heated because, in your opinion, what was really involved was 'Pablo's personal methods of leadership'. In the course of the same meeting they decided to set

up an international control commission to examine the charges on both sides.

This is hardly encouraging soil on which to prepare the foundations for a serious reunification at short notice. We feel sure that many comrades in the international movement will want to read and study all sides of this most interesting development. How can you elect a stable leadership from people who are appearing before a control commission?

Another explosion might well occur at any moment now, the circumstances of which can be just as obscure as the Posadas split.

It would be wrong to hastily involve sections in Latin America into a unification on the grounds that they appear to agree with you over the designation of Cuba as a workers' state. This does not at all mean that they agree with Pabloism and its activities in the international movement. The Chilean section, for example, has asked that two main documents be prepared which could be utilized in exploring the possibilities of unification. These will require some time and collective discussion within the ranks of the International Committee.

Replying to the letter from Comrade Capa, the National Committee of the Socialist Labour League unanimously agreed that the IC international congress should be postponed until the last two weeks in August 1963. We are extremely interested in what our Argentinian section has to say. The postponement requested is a bare minimum since we hope to be able to discuss in written form some of their opinions beforehand.

If you rush into a unification now with the crisis inside the Pabloite ranks and confusion over Pabloism in our own ranks, not only will you run the danger of further splits and explosions such as in 1953, but we may very well be saddled with a leadership which will be nothing more than a continuation of the old clique of the past. In what way will the leadership of this early unified movement be different from the past so far as political ideas are concerned? If it is necessary for the Pabloites to have an international control commission to sort out their own affairs, then a real case can be made out for a similar commission to sort out some of the happenings from 1953 onwards.

The SWP convention will take place some time in June or July and yet you appear prepared for an international unification before this convention pronounces on your differences with us. Have we not the right to attend your convention and present our point of view with the hope that some comrades would give it consideration?

We are holding our national conference early in June and we will certainly invite a delegation from the SWP to come and present their point of view on their differences with us to the conference.

There are minorities in the SWP who have opinions on international matters and yet before they can present them to your conference, you want to present everybody with a *fait accompli*. We say that this is not the way to educate and prepare the international movement for real unification. It is, in fact, dangerously close to the old Pabloite methods that led to the split of 1953.

The Socialist Labour League has always fought for international reorganization and unification. We propose that the first step is to clarify politically the forces of the IC. We have produced a number of internal bulletins and articles towards this end. These have not yet been adequately studied in Latin America, or, for that matter, in the US and Canada. We have exchanged a few bulletins through the Parity Committee with the organizations of the International Secretariat, but this is only a beginning. There is, as yet, no evidence that this material has been discussed in their sections, or for that matter in some of those affiliated to the IC.

You talk about the need for delegates to return home from an early reunification to continue with their revolutionary obligations. But how can they successfully tackle their revolutionary obligations if there is no proper political preparation of this unification conference? Surely, the highest point of all our political work at the moment is the preparation of this international conference.

For our part, we will find it impossible to agree to unification on the terms set forth by you and the SWP. We will not take the responsibility of again committing the political and organizational mistakes of the past. We do not agree to a reunification congress on the dates you suggest.

We explained all this to you at the IC in January and you assured us that no one on your side had any intention of closing the door on relations between our two tendencies. We told you that if you rushed the question of unification that this may well precipitate a definitive split. Yet you appear to be doing just this.

We, on the other hand, suggest the following procedure.

Let the two separate international congresses go forward with an exchange of delegations supporting a joint resolution urging the organization of the discussion. Let the Parity Committee continue organizing joint work where possible, distributing the material that is

available internationally from both congresses and the publishing of the contributions of all comrades.

We suggest that in order to remove organizational and factional disagreements and to allow the groundwork for the most favourable political relations between the tendencies, that the constitution of an international control commission be agreed at the two congresses. This commission would investigate, just as the IEC commission is doing, all charges and counter-charges, thus allowing the Parity Committee to continue with its work of organizing joint activity as well as the discussion.

If this is agreed and the discussion organized thoroughly, we can prepare an international conference of the two tendencies for sometime during September or October 1964, certainly not before. If properly prepared, this conference would be in a position to discuss all the questions affecting the differences between the tendencies and the work of the various sections.

It would not be so much a unification conference, although a unification may very well arise as a result of it. It would be a conference whose prime purpose would be to make a balance sheet of the discussion that had already taken place, and then work out the next steps towards reorganization and reunification.

The Socialist Labour League would leave no stone unturned in its efforts to obtain genuine unification at that conference.

We hope that after further consideration we will arrive at an agreed solution to these problems.

Yours fraternally,

G. Healy

DOCUMENT 7e

Letter from Joseph Hansen to G. Healy,
April 13, 1963

Dear Comrade Healy,

First of all, in response to your letter of March 29, let me express appreciation for your effort at presenting in a succinct and reasoned way your position on the question of early reunification of the world Trotskyist movement. I shall try in a similar way to explain our reactions to the points you have raised.

I take it that you intend your letter to serve both as a rejection of the suggestion that the international conference of the International Committee be held some time in May and as a declaration of your opposition to the March 1 statement by the Political Committee of the SWP 'For Early Reunification of the World Trotskyist Movement' which suggests a principled basis on which the world Trotskyist movement could unite in the immediate future. If I understand you correctly, you refer to this statement when you write: 'For our part, we will find it impossible to agree to unification on the terms set forth by you and the SWP'.

Exactly what items in the suggested basis for reunification you find it impossible to agree to remains unknown to me, since you do not discuss the matter in your letter. The International Secretariat on the other hand considers this set of concrete points to be acceptable.

The rejection by the SLL of the proposed basis for reunification leaves us with a difficult problem. Before indicating a course of action that could lead to an adequate solution in the circumstances, I should like to state, for purposes of clarification, how the reality of the overall situation now appears to us.

On the side of the IC, the available evidence shows that a clear

majority are in favour of reunification without any further delays. The Argentinians, Austrians, Canadians, Chileans and Chinese have recently recorded their opinions on this. The Peruvians and Uruguayans, so far as I know, are of the same view. In a recent communication, the Japanese comrades indicate that they doubt that the IS is free from 'revisionism' but that the 'Political differences between the IC and IS should be resolved through internal discussions after the reunification'. While they do not state specifically that they favour 'early' reunification, that is clearly the logic of their position and they have accepted an invitation from the IS to attend the IS Congress as observers. As for the SWP, you are well aware of its strong stand in favour of early reunification. It is quite true that differences exist among this majority over tactical procedure. These differences, I am convinced could be resolved in a conference without great difficulty. In any case, it appears that all nine organizations are in agreement on the main question which is the advisability and feasibility of early reunification of the world Trotskyist movement.

In opposition to this stand, the SLL appears to be backed by only the comrades of the *La Verité* group and scattered individuals here and there, including a small group in the SWP. Obviously you represent a minority position in the IC.

On the side of the IS no sizeable group — since the split of the Posadas tendency — has expressed opposition to early reunification. At most, some comrades have expressed doubts about certain sectors of the IC, but have not felt that these doubts required postponement of unification. In case you are interested in the bearing such doubts might have on the stability of a reunified movement, the strongest ones relate to past positions on Algeria and to such matters as democratic guarantees for minorities in the British sector in case of fusion of the two sides, a question that is better answered, in our opinion, by participating in common activities in a common international organization than by additional years of discussing, partly in public, whether the doubts are justified or not.

Whatever the existing differences and nuances, both political and organizational, may be on both the IC and IS sides — and some of these are undoubtedly important — it is evident that the overwhelming majority of the world Trotskyist movement is in favour of early reunification. In view of this prevailing sentiment it would seem eminently reasonable for that majority to go ahead and unify. As for the minority who oppose early reunification, they clearly confront the

problem of defining their attitude toward a united movement and determining whether the wisest course is not to participate in the unification under the rules of democratic centralism.

It may be argued that the remaining differences are of such vital importance as to override the obvious advantages of joining in the unification. Situations have occurred in the history of the Marxist movement where the majority betrayed fundamental principles and it was necessary for a minority to stand alone and conduct war without compromise against all other tendencies. If this is your position, as it may be, judging from certain statements in your documents, then you cannot be much interested in whether the majority unites or does not unite since it would be a fifth-rate question in relation to issues requiring a stand like that of Lenin in 1914. More likely, however, your real position is that a split occurred in 1953 which was not thoroughly prepared; and you are opposed to healing that split if it simply means trying to glue the old pieces together again — some of the pieces aren't worth the effort and the glue isn't strong enough. Thus everything will just fall to pieces again. At best the project is a waste of time; at worst it can seriously disorient the movement.

However, this leaves you with the problem of explaining why the sentiment for unity has become so strong, why it is expressed from such different quarters and why it has succeeded in gaining such a large majority. Even if you seek to account for it as a case of 'betrayal' or of 'degeneration' what are the fundamental reasons for such a widespread phenomenon?

We see the reality in quite a different way. The situation of 1953 no longer exists. The same pieces no longer exist. A lot has changed in the past ten years.

First of all, as you yourself note, the wing which showed a tendency to capitulate to Stalinism, and which so alarmed us in 1953, split away. It disintegrated completely. The IS did not follow them but rejected their course. This was completely to the credit of the IS; it became a key factor in preparing the ground for reunification. Since 1954 the IS has gained new forces. I have met typical representatives in various countries. They are genuine Trotskyists, make no mistake about it.

The adherents and partisans of the IC have also changed since 1953. They have grown stronger, have undergone enriching experiences, have brought forward new comrades of leadership calibre. Not least in this respect has been the British sector of the IC.

Thus it should be clear that what we are trying to bring together is not the broken pieces of 1953, but the movement as it has grown and developed since then.

The composition of forces on the two sides, which I have merely alluded to here, indicates that the reunified movement will be far stronger than it was in 1953 and of quite different internal pattern. If new differences appear — as they surely will in a living movement — they are bound to cut across the groupings that go back to 1953. Proof enough of this is provided by the internal differentiation which has appeared among both IS and IC forces in the past three years.

As to the political differences that existed in 1953, these, too, in our opinion, have not remained fixed and frozen. On all the questions of the day the positions of the two sides *in the majority* have become indistinguishable. It requires no detective work to discover this. The basic positions are stated ones, published in the press, ascertainable to anyone who can read. They have now been codified by the Political Committee of the SWP in its statement 'For Early Reunification of the World Trotskyist Movement'. If these are accepted as a common platform for unification, the completely principled character of the unification should be self-evident.

Finally — and this is most important of all — the two sides have been drawn together by the fact that they find themselves fighting shoulder to shoulder in the Cuban Revolution. Active participation in a revolution is the ultimate test for a revolutionary. It was so in the Russian Revolution of October 1917 and it has been repeated each time that Revolution became extended, the latest instance being Cuba. The majority of the Trotskyists participating in the Cuban Revolution, particularly in its extension in the rest of Latin America, feel that unification would strengthen our capacity to seize the opportunities now open to us — open not a year from now, or two years from now, or some time in the distant future, but at this very moment.

For all Trotskyists who have reached a common position on the basically socialist character of the Cuban Revolution, the discussion has been completed. Not only has the time come for action, we have already been engaged in action and on a common line since Cuba became a workers state. We are not opposed to continuing the discussion with comrades who are still hesitant about recognizing Cuba as a workers state. But why can't the discussion continue in a unified movement which would also have the advantage of strengthening our common action?

In addition to this there are many openings in the colonial revolution as a whole, in the de-Stalinization process and in the revival of the class struggle in the industrially advanced countries in which maximum gains for Trotskyism could be made by a united movement.

To summarize: as we understand your position, you consider it illusory and dangerous to attempt to heal the split of 1953. Our position is that this objection is irrelevant. We propose to unite the movement that has developed in the decade since 1953 and which stands on common basic principles today, including a common appreciation of a living revolution in which both sides are participating. We recognize that differences will remain but we are convinced that they are of secondary character and that they can be resolved more easily and more fruitfully inside a united movement than by maintaining the division of our forces.

In the light of these general considerations, the series of objections to early reunification which you raise lose force. However, I propose to take them up one by one in order to examine their specific validity.

(1) You argue that some comrades have 'suggested that there should have been more discussion' at the time of the 1953 split. As an advocate of the general value of discussion and as a participant in some not unimportant ones, I could agree with the comrades who have suggested this. While the discussion in the SWP at the time was voluminous, it is probably true that on the international plane it was inadequate. I would hold, however, that the final judgment on this and related questions can well be left to the historians; or at least to a later time in the reunited movement.

(2) It does not follow at all 'that it would be equally erroneous now to rush into an early unification without adequate discussion and preparation'. However, there is not much point to debating the logical consistency between your premise (inadequate discussion in 1953) and your conclusion (that early reunification now is 'erroneous'). Nobody, so far as I am aware, has proposed 'to rush into an early unification without adequate discussion and preparation'. The SWP raised the question six years ago. The IS raised it even earlier. After the first attempt at unification failed, it was raised again. In fact it has been a perennial topic of discussion internally on both sides for a long time, intensively so during the past year. Common work is being carried out in some areas. The experience of the Parity Committee, as

you yourself note, has been fruitful even though limited in scope. If I am not mistaken, in the SLL itself the question of unification is not exactly new. Wasn't it under active discussion as early as 1957, six years ago?

(3) Your argument that splits have occurred in the IS 'without much discussion' and that this places early reunification in question remains obscure to me. First of all, I am not familiar enough with the internal history of the IS to determine whether there was 'much' or 'little' discussion and if there was little whether this was the fault of the IS or of the splitters. You mention two cases, one nine years ago and one last year. The 1954 instance spoke favourably for the IS, since, as I noted above, it was the wing of our movement which went soft on Stalinism that split away. As for the 1962 split of the Posadas group, this involved such key issues as the advocacy by this group of 'preventive' atomic war. The IS again took a correct stand. Although the SWP has not taken an official position, the Militant has severely criticized the Posadas position. I have not yet had the opportunity of reading an SLL statement on the Posadas position but I would be much surprised if you should find any merit in it.

It should be added that it seems somewhat one-sided to apply the argument only to the IS. Has the IC existed for ten years without splits or 'incidents'? Have all these been accompanied by 'much' discussion?

(4) Your next argument, the one about 'another deep-going crisis' inside the IS, seems to me to go counter to your previous one. Is a twenty-hour discussion in an International Executive Committee meeting then too much of a good thing?

In my report about the IEC meeting, which I was privileged to attend as an observer, I mentioned that the main discussion was on such questions as the Algerian Revolution, proper appreciation of the relationship between the colonial revolution and the proletarian revolution in the industrially advanced countries, the danger inherent in nuclear war, and so on, and that it was a rich and informative discussion such as might be conducted in the sections of the IC or in the SWP. The possible danger of a rightist deviation occupied some attention and led to sharp polemical exchanges but not to such exaggerated charges as has been bandied about by some of the participants in the current IC discussion.

I do not understand your references to the IEC setting up a control commission. You seem to draw from this bare fact an invidious meaning. You do this without knowing what was referred to the commission, whom it involved or what political importance, if any, might attach to the points in dispute. Does it not occur to you that this may involve nothing more than certain questions of fact related to revolutionary activities in which there was mutual agreement that such matters were better handled in a smaller body, in a leisurely way, and without any polemical heat?

The fact that the IS is now conducting a warm discussion on such questions as the Chinese-Soviet dispute, the problem of nuclear war, the relative role of the colonial revolution, the necessity, difficulties and dangers of entryism in certain countries, etc., is no valid argument against unification. On the contrary it demonstrates the ideological vitality of the IS. The existence of tendencies shows that it is not monolithic. Still more, it should attract the IC forces who are especially appreciative of opportunities to engage in discussion. In a unified movement the possibility of participating in the debate now confined to the IS would be opened — and under the most favourable circumstances of being heard.

Elsewhere in your letter you express reservations over the slowness with which material submitted by the SLL is circulated among the IS forces. Your desire to bring the SLL viewpoint to the attention of the IS comrades, in other words to participate with them in reaching positions, is completely understandable and shared by all of us, just as the IS has similar feelings toward us. But this view speaks powerfully for early reunification!

(5) From the discussion going on in the IS, you deduce that 'Another explosion might well occur at any moment now, the circumstances of which can be just as obscure as the Posadas split'.

No guarantees can be given by anyone that there won't be new 'explosions', including explosions on the IC side. How best can this possibility be countered? By early reunification. How else do you propose to dampen the powder and persuade dead-end factionalists on both sides to stop tossing lighted matches? Both sides should follow active policies of countering fresh splits, of seeking to block them from occurring *even on the other side*. The most effective way to do that is obviously in a unified movement.

(6) Besides the danger of 'further splits and explosions' you argue that in an early reunification 'we may very well be saddled with a leadership which will be nothing more than a continuation of the old clique of the past'.

Your fears on this point do not seem to us to have any real basis in the new situation as it has developed since 1953. There is not much point to arguing this at length since our estimate and yours, as I indicated at the beginning, are quite different. However, both estimates can be put to the side so far as the practical question is concerned. I call your attention to the following two paragraphs in the March 1 statement by the Political Committee of the SWP:

Early reunification, in short, has become a necessity for the world Trotskyist movement. Naturally, difficult problems will remain in various countries where the faction fight has been long and bitter. But these problems, too, can best be worked out under the conditions of general international reunification, so that it is possible for the outstanding leaders of both sides to begin the job of establishing a new comradely atmosphere and of removing fears which have no real basis in the situation in the world Trotskyist movement today. After a period of common fraternal activity in an increasing number of areas, we are convinced that what may appear at the outset to be insuperable local problems will be solved by the comrades themselves through democratic means.

We think that it should also be possible for a reunified organization to bring in recommendations for subsequent consideration and adoption which, without breaching the centralist side of democratic centralism, would remove any doubts that might still remain as to the guarantee of democratic rights contained in the statutes.

These two paragraphs deserve your most serious attention. The IS for its part will, I am convinced, agree to all the specific guarantees needed to allay any fears about arbitrary interventions in national sections and so on.

(7) In response to my pointing out the need for delegates to return home as soon as possible to continue with their revolutionary obligations, you suggest that this cannot be done successfully if there is 'no proper political preparation of this unification congress'.

Your premise is, of course, that 'no proper political preparation' has taken place. On this we disagree.

On the basis that there has been proper political preparation, I

urged a telescoping of dates so that delegates could attend an IC conference; observe the IS congress, if mutually acceptable arrangements can be made; and also participate in a reunification congress if the IC conference so decided. The comrades I had especially in mind were those in Latin America. They happen to be deep in situations of the utmost importance to the fate of the Cuban Revolution, of the revolution in their own countries and of the world Trotskyist movement. These situations exist right now. The key to a correct orientation in these developing revolutionary struggles is proper understanding of the Cuban Revolution. On this crucial issue all the comrades in Latin America are aware that their position, that of the SWP and that of the IS are identical in all essential respects. This is one of the main reasons why they stand for early reunification. So far as their main revolutionary tasks for the coming period are concerned, the political preparation has been completed. What they need now is the backing of a united world Trotskyist movement — not an indefinite 'discussion' among warring factions for the next year, or two years, or three years, about who was right in 1953, important and interesting as that question may be.

(8) You, of course, have a different opinion and this leads you into arguing, 'It would be wrong to hastily involve sections in Latin America into unification on the grounds that they appear to agree with you over the designation of Cuba as a workers' state. This does not at all mean that they agree with Pabloism and its activities in the international movement'.

Naturally it 'does not at all mean . . .' What it does mean is that they have taken a fresh look at the forces of the IS in Latin America, especially after the Posadas split, since they found themselves working side by side with the IS comrades in defence of the Cuban Revolution and on the basis of a common appreciation of that Revolution and the workers state that emerged from it. There is no force mightier than a living revolution in bringing dedicated revolutionaries together despite important differences.

In Britain, which is remote from the scene of revolutionary action, the Cuban Revolution unfortunately is seen through insular eyes. Thus a discussion for the next years on the meaning of the 1953 split appears much more important than the problem of properly appreciating and engaging in the opening of the socialist revolution in the Western Hemisphere. The Latin-American comrades are entitled

to a more sensitive response to the conclusions they have drawn from experiences.

(9) You refer to the scheduling of an SWP convention this summer and to the fact that the SWP appears 'prepared for an international unification before this convention pronounces on your differences with us'. You raise the question of your right to attend our convention and to present your point of view before the delegates. You also suggest that there are minorities in the SWP who have 'opinions on international matters and yet before they can present them to your conference, you want to present everybody with a *fait accompli*'.

But the SWP has strongly favoured reunification for six years! In fact, for several years following 1957 we were under the impression that the leadership of the SLL agreed with us on this and that the main obstacle to reunification came only from the side of the IS. Later, in the light of fresh evidence, we reached the conclusion that lack of will for reunification existed on both sides and that so long as this remained the case for unification, desirable as it was, was not feasible. We stated this publicly in official resolutions. It is now clear to us, and has been for the past year, that the IS is strongly in favour of unification. It is also now clear that the majority of the IC favours unification. Moreover both sides favour it on the basis of the same general principles on which the SWP was built and on which it still stands.

The majority of the SWP proposes to act in accordance with the basic principles of the party and on an issue which it has advocated for six years. What is undemocratic about that?

Your suggestion, on the other hand, if adopted by the SWP would violate the elementary principles of democratic centralism since it proposes that the SWP majority should not act because a minority or minorities oppose it.

By acting in accordance with its estimate of the situation, the SWP majority violates none of the rights of the minority. They have full right to publish and advocate their views inside the party in accordance with the rules of democratic centralism.

In this particular instance the implication that the democratic rights of the minority or of a fraternal organization would be infringed by taking action is all the flimsier, since their democratic rights would be fully guaranteed in a united world Trotskyist movement.

Moreover, even if your argument were correct about the majority of the SWP being morally bound not to take any further action in the

course it has followed for six years until it first hears a delegation from the SLL and the representatives of the minorities at its convention, what about the sectors of the IC who have declared for early reunification and who constitute a majority in the IC without counting the SWP? If they go ahead and carry out the policy of unification which they favour, all the SWP convention could do is express approval or disapproval. But this is all it can do in any case, so far as their actions are concerned. They are not bound by the decisions of the SWP. Surely you do not suggest that it would be undemocratic if these sectors of the IC go ahead without waiting until the SWP reaffirms once again a position it has consistently advocated these six years!

Finally even if the other sections of the IC were to bow to this thin argument and ask the IS to postpone its congress so that reunification could be co-ordinated after representatives of the SLL and the SWP minorities have been heard at the SWP convention, this would change little. You do not suggest such an arrangement since to do so would imply that the SLL leadership would abide by the decision of the SWP convention or independently consider joining in the reunification immediately following the IS congress. You exclude early reunification under any circumstances. In face of this declared stand, you are quite correct in refraining from suggesting in any way that the IS congress should be postponed. The truth is that in return for acceding to your argument, you offer absolutely nothing to the IC sections who favour early reunification except an effective way of blocking achievement of their aims.

I come now to your suggested procedure. You readily acceded to Comrade Capa's suggestion that the IC conference be postponed to August. You overlooked the fact that he was also amenable to a June date. You disregarded our request for a late May date, although I think that Comrade Capa would agree to that date if it was the most feasible for all concerned. But in choosing the August date, which Comrade Capa had suggested as being ideal *organizationally*, you advanced a whole series of *political* arguments that represent a position completely opposed to the one on which Comrade Capa stands and with an aim completely opposed to Comrade Capa's, who wants to facilitate an early reunification. In accordance with these political arguments, which represent the minority position of the SLL leadership and possibly some 'minorities' in the SWP, you propose a procedure which would block early reunification. In fact, anyone studying

all the qualifying phrases can only conclude that you view unification at best as merely a remote possibility so far as it concerns the SLL.

First you suggest organization of an international control commission. 'This commission would investigate, just as the IEC commission is doing, all charges and counter-charges, thus allow the Parity Committee to continue with its work of organizing joint activity as well as the discussion.

'If this is agreed', you continue, 'and the discussion organized thoroughly, we can prepare an international conference of the two tendencies for sometime during September or October 1964, certainly not before. If properly prepared, this conference would be in a position to discuss all the questions affecting the differences between the tendencies and the work of the various sections'.

'It would not be so much a unification conference, although a unification may very well arise as a result of it. It would be a conference whose prime purpose would be to make a balance sheet of the discussion that had already taken place, and then work out the next steps towards reorganization and reunification'.

Take another look at the if's, and's and but's. First a control commission is to be set up to 'investigate . . . all charges and counter-charges'. If this is satisfactory, it will allow the Parity Committee to continue. 'If this is agreed' and if the discussion is organized 'thoroughly' then an international conference can be held in the fall of 1964. 'If properly prepared' this conference 'would be in a position to discuss . . .' Out of all this, unification 'may very well arise . . .'

And who is to judge if this series of hurdles has been properly cleared? Let us assume that it will be the majority of the world Trotskyist movement whose decision will be recognized and accepted. But all the evidence shows that the majority is prepared to render its decision *right now*. To oppose this with such a series of qualifications is to cling in reality to the perspective of maintaining the split for the next years if not longer.

This perspective of continuing the split seems incorrect to us. In fact from our viewpoint — which we recognize you do not share — it is unprincipled. We therefore find the course you suggest to be unacceptable.

By way of exception we do find ourselves in agreement on one point. This is that there should be an exchange of delegations between the two congresses. As you will recall, this was taken up in the Parity Committee and the IS accepted the IC proposal for an exchange of two

delegates from each side. The IS, not having the power to make a final decision, said that they would strongly recommend it to the IS congress.

On receiving a letter from the Japanese comrades, I learned that the IS sent a direct invitation to them to attend as observers. I checked about this with the IS representatives. They said that they had been surprised that the IC wished to confine the exchange of delegations to only two people. They are quite willing to recommend that delegates from all sections of the IC be invited to attend their congress as observers.

In light of this and the situation as a whole, we are now consulting as rapidly as possible with all sections of the IC who have indicated that they favour early reunification. It is quite important, we think, that the delegates have an opportunity to meet the IS delegates personally and to observe their congress so as to be in better position to judge its political positions. This, too, is part of the process of 'clarification' and 'preparation'.

We also think it highly advisable to have a preliminary consultation among the IC delegates before they attend the IS congress. Comrade Peng has suggested that a formal call be made for an international conference of the IC sections who favour early reunification, the conference to be held at the latter part of May. The purpose of the conference would be to consider the situation as it now stands and to decide what steps to take.

It would be excellent if the next date for the regular IC meeting, sometime in June, I believe, were now reconsidered, set for the end of May and converted into a full international IC conference with the question of reunification as first point on the agenda. This would fit in very well with Comrade Peng's proposal which I imagine most sections will respond to, in any case, with a favourable decision.

What we suggest in short is:

- (1) that a meeting be held at the end of May by representatives of all sections of the IC which favour early reunification;
- (2) that other sections of the IC consider the advisability of participating in this gathering so as to convert it into a full IC conference;
- (3) that if this is agreed upon, the first point on the agenda be the question of early reunification.

I believe only one more point remains to be clarified. In your letter

where you state your opposition to the basis of unification proposed by the Political Committee of the SWP in its statement 'For Early Reunification of the World Trotskyist Movement', and your disagreement on holding the IC conference in May, you bring up the question of relations between the SWP and the SLL. You say:

We explained all this to you at the IC in January and you assured us that no one on your side had any intention of closing the door on relations between our two tendencies. We told you that if you rushed the question of unification that this may well precipitate a definitive split. Yet you appear to be doing just this.

I fail to see any contradiction between seeking to unify that world Trotskyist movement and also seeking to maintain comradely relations between our two tendencies. In fact, the thoroughly principled way in which we have approached the problem of reunification, excluding all manoeuvres at anyone's expense, requires us to seek to maintain friendly relations with all Trotskyists — and to seek to establish friendly relations where they do not already exist. We are out to help unite the world Trotskyist movement on a principled basis, not to maintain an old split, still less to precipitate new ones. At the same time we understand very well that in some countries an early fusion of organizations is not feasible and that unification on an international scale raises very difficult local questions in such countries although it should bring an immediate amelioration of relations where factional hostility remains unduly sharp. In the case of Britain we have always held the SLL and its preceding formations in highest respect, have prized its achievements and have tried to demonstrate this appreciation in every possible way. We have not changed in this. Despite the recent appearance of deep differences, especially over such issues as evaluation of the importance of the colonial revolution and correct tactics toward it, our policy has been to do everything possible to maintain comradely relations, to avoid a split, and to refrain from taking our differences into public although this was very difficult in relation to the Cuban Revolution where we felt that some of your public statements were very damaging. We see no reason to change this policy. I repeat, we want to help unify the movement on a principled basis, not precipitate new splits.

However, successful maintenance of this policy does not rest solely with us. It requires reciprocity on your part. Doubt is cast on your good will by such declarations as 'We told you that if you rushed the

question of unification that this may well precipitate a definitive split. Yet you appear to be doing just this'. A more positive approach would be an assurance — if your organization is not yet prepared for unification — that you will nevertheless make every reasonable effort to collaborate despite your differences, that you wish the united movement success, and that you are prepared to continue to work in a comradely way in bodies of mutually agreeable composition and scope such as was tested in the Parity Committee. It appears to me that the united world Trotskyist movement would have every reason to welcome such a declaration of policy and to go more than halfway in meeting it.

In closing I cannot help but express once again my conviction that the world Trotskyist movement is now confronted with a decision as important historically as was the founding of the Fourth International in 1938. The leadership of the SLL could play a central role in assuring full success in reunifying our movement. I hope that the SLL will yet help celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth International by sending a full delegation to the reunification congress.

Fraternally yours,

Joseph Hansen

DOCUMENT 7f**Letter from G. Healy (for the SLL) to
Joseph Hansen, April 25, 1963**

Dear Comrade Hansen,

Your letter of April 13 does not contain any new political arguments that would alter the implications of the present differences between us. It simply reveals your intention to go ahead and organize a conference of the IC amongst sections which you declare support your position on reunification. Even if such support for a reunification with the Pabloites in June were true, the least we might expect is that the sections of the IC should give consideration to our proposals of March 29 before rushing into an undertaking that will split the forces of the IC. Apart from your letter, we have received no intimation from these sections that you claim are in your 'majority' that they agree with you.

You and comrade Peng have, in fact, presented us with an ultimatum in the following paragraph:

What we suggest in short is (1) that a meeting be held at the end of May by representatives of all sections of the IC which favour early reunification; (2) that other sections of the IC consider the advisability of participating in this gathering so as to convert it into a full IC conference; (3) that if this is agreed upon the first point on the agenda be the question of early reunification.

At the last meeting of the International Committee, you offered no political or organizational objections whatsoever to the postponement of the international conference. Comrade Capa pleaded for such a postponement in order that four or five Latin American representatives could attend. The best date for this, he suggested, would be late August. We agreed because we want to have at our disposal in written form the opinions of our Latin American comrades on the international problems and, what is more, we want the right to try and

convince them of our positions. It is nonsense to suggest that we wanted to manoeuvre with comrade Capa's letter in order to impede those who wanted early unification.

Our political differences are well-known. We consider that the line and methods of the SWP leadership have their roots in a basic revision of Marxism — a pragmatist rejection of dialectics. We consider that the preparation of the IC is a most serious political question and that your ultimatum is, in fact, an attempt to manoeuvre a unification towards a date mutually satisfactory to the Pabloites.

You do not really desire a discussion at an IC conference with the Latin American comrades present. Instead, you make your own estimation of what you consider to be your 'majority' and call a conference where *this* and not the actual discussion between all the IC representatives will be recorded.

Both you and comrade Peng remained silent at the last IC when the representatives from France and Britain outlined the political reasons for postponing the conference. It is now obvious that you had at the time an agreement with the Pabloites to push for an early reunification, where you could present the IC on a platter as it were to the Pabloite conference, with the SWP as the hero of the piece. Of course, what you are trying to do is to evade the growing crisis inside both the SWP and the Pabloite camps.

At the very moment that you are talking about this reunification, Murry Weiss declares in New York that the Cochranites were right in 1953. Arne Swabek, who agrees with you on Cuba, demands from your SWP majority that they apply the same standards established by them for Cuba to China. Milton Alvin, a strong supporter of your majority against Swabek, declares that it is a Stalinist canard to suggest that the political revolution against the bureaucracy entails its violent overthrow.

It is also clear that the longer discussion continues, the more these differences are going to come into the open, not only in the SWP but in the Pabloite organizations as well. If you rush into unification, you will only make matters worse.

It is not enough for you to stress the 'sentiment' for unification. The great danger today arises from the considerable political confusion within our movement as a result of the Pabloites, the split of 1953 and now the capitulation of the SWP to Pabloism. Any unification carried out on the basis of such confusion will only accelerate the splitting and disintegration of our forces in the next period. What the Trotskyist

movement needs is a thoroughgoing discussion which will lay a firm foundation for the reorganization of the Fourth International.

We are not impressed by 'sentiment' which is directed towards a unification at the expense of principle.

We ask you to halt this move towards a split and agree to our proposals for holding the international conference of the IC late in August or early in September.

We ask you not to call a conference of your own faction of the IC. If such a conference takes place, and is followed by a reunification with the Pabloites, we shall consider it as a hostile political act. It will most certainly tend to sharpen the international split, something which we want to avoid.

Unification can, in our opinion, only be carried out after there is adequate discussion under conditions where the closest working relations are established through the medium of the Parity Committee. We urge you once more to consider seriously the proposals contained in our letter of March 29. We proposed a control commission as a practical way to overcome organizational grievances arising from the split. If you feel that this may impede developments towards an international conference of the tendencies in October 1964, then we will withdraw it. Whilst the SLL cannot say in advance whether or not this conference would lead to a reunification, as a responsible organization within the Fourth International we would do everything possible to work towards such a goal.

We do not share your view that all that is necessary is to carry out a unification and then commence the discussion afterwards. Our experience of past unifications emphasizes that where a unification has been achieved after a period of bitter hostility between the groups involved, it is essential that a period of time elapse before discussion reopens. A unified movement, if it is to have any chance of success must have some peace in the initial stages, otherwise the experiences of joint practical work cannot be brought to bear in resolving the outstanding differences.

If you go ahead and split the International Committee, this would automatically cancel the proposals contained in our letter of March 29. We would then be required to make a new assessment of the situation to see if it were possible to arrange joint activity and discussion between our respective organizations.

Yours fraternally,

G. Healy National Secretary

DOCUMENT 8a

**Letter from Farrell Dobbs to G. Healy,
May 7, 1963**

Dear Comrade Preston:

We take note that in the document published under the imprimatur of the International Committee of the Fourth International, International Bulletin No. 13, the National Committee of the Socialist Labour League makes the charge that the SWP is guilty of suppressing the document issued by the French comrades entitled: 'Position of the French Section of the International Committee on the Cuban Question'.

The NC of the SLL states, page 14: 'The note by the French comrades, appended to this reply, raises similar points about the demagogic results of these methods of controversy. As they point out, their own document on Cuba comes under fire from Hansen but has not been issued to the members of Hansen's party'.

We wish to call to your attention, that in reply to the letter from Comrade Rodriguez, which you now 'append' to the SLL statement, we sent the following letter:

F. Rodriguez
S.P.E.L.
Paris XI, France

March 7, 1963

Dear Comrade Rodriguez:

This will acknowledge your letter concerning Comrade Hansen's reference to your 'Draft Report on the Cuban Revolution'. Comrade Hansen's article was submitted from abroad. When it arrived we did not have immediate access to your 'Draft Report'.

Later a copy of your document was obtained from a member of the minority

in our party who supports the SLL position. It is now being translated and mimeographed. When that work is completed the 'Draft Report' will be published in our discussion bulletin.

It would be helpful to have copies of such material sent directly to us here at the national office of the party.

Comradely yours,

(Signed): Farrell Dobbs

The document in question was published in our International Information Bulletin No. 1, April 1963, and circulated to our membership.

Our letter to Comrade Rodriguez was sent airmail under date of March 7. The SLL document in your Bulletin No. 113 is dated March 23, some two weeks after the dispatch of our letter which must have reached Comrade Rodriguez a few days after it was mailed. Yet you not only 'append' the Rodriguez letter to the SLL document but you fail to mention our reply.

Which raises several questions in our minds: Did you consult Comrade Rodriguez prior to the publication of his 'appended' letter in your bulletin? If you did, was the information contained in your March 7 communication kept from you or did you simply disregard it? Was the SLL National Committee familiar with the contents of our March 7 letter when they made the charge of our 'suppressing' discussion material in their document of March 23 or did they simply disregard it?

We seriously question the practice of rushing into print with such 'charges' without even bothering to check your facts which could have been obtained by asking us. Since your bulletin No. 13 has been circulated to the world movement we respectfully request that you provide all those who have received your bulletin No. 13 with a copy of this letter.

Fraternally,

Farrell Dobbs

National Secretary

cc: British and French Sections
International Committee

DOCUMENT 8b

Letter from G. Healy to Farrell Dobbs,
May 16, 1963

Dear Comrade Dobbs,

Your letter of May 7 has just been received.

The contribution *Cuba — The Acid Test* written overseas by Joseph Hansen referred to the Draft Report of the French PCI. It was, we believe, comrade Hansen's duty to have sent you a copy of that report so that the two documents could have been submitted to your membership for consideration. It was, we feel, your duty to have requested from him a copy of their report if you had not already received one, so that you could circulate it to the membership, thus giving them an opportunity to study it alongside the document of comrade Hansen.

Comrade Hansen completed *Cuba — The Acid Test* on November 20, 1962. Presumably you received it either late November or early December. As far as our records go, this document was published by you somewhere around the weekend of January 12, 1963. Copies began to arrive in Europe by airmail between January 12 and January 19. You had approximately six weeks to obtain a copy of the Draft Report of our French comrades, but you did nothing about it. Will you please tell us why?

The letter of comrade Rodriguez refers to the copy of Hansen's document which he received from you somewhere between approximately January 12 and 19. The paragraph 14 of our document 'Opportunism and Empiricism', to which you take exception, and which is a reply to Hansen, is in our opinion entirely accurate.

We received a copy of the letter from comrade Rodriguez to you and published it as a contribution to the political discussion. We did not

receive any copy of your letter to him of March 7. Even if we had, we fail to see how it would have altered in any way what we had already written.

You advise us to 'check facts'. Our reply to that is that you should have checked Hansen's facts by asking him to send you a copy of the French document.

In your letter to comrade Rodriguez of March 7, you say:

Later a copy of your document was obtained from a member of the minority in our party who supports the SLL position. It is now being translated and mimeographed. When that work is completed the 'Draft Report' will be published in our discussion bulletin.

But these facts are not accurate. A comrade wrote to the SLL for a copy of the French Draft Report and they sent him a copy *already* translated into English. Had you written to them, they would have done the same.

We understand that you have already circulated within your party a document from comrade Peng attacking the Socialist Labour League, but you have not thought fit to send them a copy of the translated version. Nor have you even considered that they might want to reply to him.

You should stop looking for petty scandals and get on with the important task of conducting a serious political discussion. This is especially urgent now, since you are busy advising your supporters in the International Committee to split during the coming few weeks and unify with the Pabloites.

The important issues before our movement will be decided in the political discussion and not in titbits of factional gossip and flimsy allegations.

Yours fraternally,

G. Preston

DOCUMENT 8c

Letter from Farrell Dobbs to Tim Wohlforth,
May 14, 1963

Dear Comrade Wohlforth:

The party leadership has not received IC Bulletin, No. 14 to which you refer in your letter of May 13.

This appears to be another outrageous situation of the kind we experienced in having to obtain from you a copy of the French document on Cuba. Although the French document had been made available to you, the secretary of the IC didn't bother to furnish us with a copy.

Once again you, as spokesman for a minority within the party, have been supplied IC material which has not been made available to the party leadership. We can only conclude that there is a factional liaison between you and the secretary of the IC which is being carried on behind the back of the party.

Our movement has always looked with disfavour upon such practices.

Comradely,

Farrell Dobbs

DOCUMENT 8d**Letter from G. Healy to Farrell Dobbs,
May 22, 1963**

Copies to:

All IC organizations, T. Wohlforth, J. Robertson, A. Fox, E. Germain, J. Hansen.

Dear Comrade Dobbs,

We have just received a copy of your letter of May 14 to comrade Wohlforth.

The theme of this letter is a continuation of that contained in your letter under date of May 7. Both letters contain allegations which are completely untrue, and can be most easily disposed of. For almost 12 months a Parity Committee consisting of representatives of the International Committee and the International Secretariat has been endeavouring to organize a discussion which will not just be confined to the leaders of the various tendencies, but which will draw in rank-and-file Trotskyists in all parts of the world.

What possible contribution can your letters of May 7 and May 14 make to this discussion?

Your own organization is within a few weeks of its biennial convention. The immediate effect of these letters will be to create an atmosphere of suspicion and hysteria which will sharpen the factional alliances on secondary organizational matters thus confusing and beclouding the important political issues.

We believe that this type of practice belongs to the past of the movement. It has got nothing in common with the opinions of those who want the Parity Committee to function in a way that will facilitate the reunification of the world Trotskyist movement. These include many members of the SWP, the SLL and many others inside the ranks of the International Secretariat.

Please let us try once more to approach the problems of the world movement in as reasonable and as objective a way as we can. We feel

that this is necessary in order to emphasize the extremely complex nature of the issues involved.

In 1953 there was a deep-going split which we consider was the outcome of a revisionist rejection of Marxism by Pablo and his group on the International Secretariat. You, at that time, organized a split based upon your Open Letter to All Trotskyists issued in November 1953. This split took place in an atmosphere of confusion because the ranks of the international movement were not sufficiently clear on the issues involved.

Early in 1954 we proposed a Parity Committee to recommence the discussion and endeavour, if possible, to work out direct methods of collaboration. You at first agreed to this, but you then requested us to break off our relations with the Parity Committee and discontinue the discussion with the International Secretariat.

In 1956 you proposed a unification on the basis of a parity in the world leadership because you said you did not trust the organizational methods of Pablo and his group. We suggested to you that this approach had serious shortcomings because it did not allow for adequate political discussion beforehand. The International Secretariat did not accept your proposals and there matters stood for the time being.

From 1956 onwards, it became clear to those of us who studied your press and publications that the SWP was very rapidly developing methods of work and thinking similar to those of Pablo. We hesitated to raise these matters with you at first since we hoped that they would be corrected in the course of time. However, this did not take place and the political differences between us became more serious.

Early in January 1961 we opened a written discussion with you. This discussion was entirely a one-sided affair. An examination of the records shows that not only did you not submit our documents over this period for the consideration of your membership, but you failed to reply to us on the important questions which we raised.

By February 1962 it became clear that to all intents and purposes the policies of the SWP were indistinguishable from those of Pablo and his group. A new complication was developing in the world movement and it appeared that the problems had now to be tackled in a different way. Previously it was our hope that this could be achieved by first of all a clarification within the forces of the International Committee and then an approach to the International Secretariat for discussions on the political documents of our movement and theirs.

We now felt that it was necessary for the IC to go ahead to open a discussion with the International Secretariat through the medium of the Parity Committee.

When we made this proposal we were aware that a lot of problems had to be surmounted. Firstly, there was the existence of a revisionist current led by Pablo. Now there was yourselves who had positions which were similar, but who at the same time claimed that you disagreed with his methods. Then there were the differences between important sections of the International Secretariat. One of these, the Posadas group in Latin America, had already split.

Within the International Committee there were differences over, amongst other things, the estimation of Cuba. Inside your own organization there was a minority which claimed agreement with us on some questions and disagreement on others.

What was needed and what we still feel is needed most in the international movement is not a combination of blocs and alliances for limited factional purposes between the tendencies but a discussion which will reach into the ranks and encourage new leaders to come forward within the international movement, thus assisting those who have borne the brunt of this work since the end of the war. We need, in addition, a thoroughgoing examination of the experiences of the national sections on such questions as entry in the social democratic and Stalinist parties.

We saw the international discussion not as a medium for creating new divisions or for making it impossible to effect a serious unification, but as a medium whereby the problems of the world movement as a whole would be brought up for review in a way that would facilitate the emergence of a new leadership.

To rush into supporting a unification such as you are doing now clarifies nobody and leaves the issues very much as they were. It simply presents a front which has no real substance. True enough such a measure may temporarily attract fresh elements but it cannot train and develop them. The moment serious political differences emerge then the crisis will begin all over again. Our insistence upon an international discussion has always carried with it the necessity for joint work carried out seriously between the tendencies.

These proposals for the development of the international movement are, of course, only temporary. They can either lead to a definitive split between the tendencies or to a reunification. We hope that the latter course will become possible but it is too early yet to say.

That is why we have to be extremely patient with all the developments within the movement and avoid utilizing incidental difficulties and organizational grievances in a way that would prevent the movement from developing.

Since the formation of the Parity Committee there have been quite a number of issues which could have been used in this way. But thanks to the maturity of both sides this has not been the case until this recent unfortunate attack which you have launched upon comrade Wohlforth.

Let me cite a few of the problems that arose.

Firstly, there is the problem of language translation of international bulletins. This has not yet been resolved but it must be if the real discussion is to take place. Meanwhile, some of the tendencies have an advantage over others.

A delegation of Belgian comrades visited our National Committee and participated in a weekend of discussion last December. The discussion was sharp but that has in no way prevented further discussion being organized. We planned a return discussion in Belgium early in the new year. Two of our comrades travelled there, but unfortunately no one met them on arrival because our letter announcing the times never arrived. This meant that they had to spend the best part of a day doing nothing. Such an issue might have caused friction just as in the case of the international bulletin which you claim has not arrived, but if it had the matter would have rightly been condemned as stupid and petty.

We had a very serious crisis develop with the IS sympathizing group in Britain which could not be explained in writing because of legal reasons. We were in great difficulties as to how to convey to the comrades what was involved, so we urgently requested that they arrange a sub-committee to discuss the matter. We stressed with them that unless something was done we might have to reconsider our attitude towards the Parity Committee. This caused certain misgivings amongst members of the IS which were quickly cleared up when they arrived in Britain and learned why we had made such an urgent request. Because of goodwill on both sides we were able to achieve a settlement of the dispute.

We were also aware that comrade Hansen was engaging in long discussions with the IS in Europe. He attended the meeting of the IEC towards the end of last year. We could have felt this was wrong because he did not beforehand seek the opinions of the IC about such a

step, but we accepted his report in the spirit in which it was made and avoided friction on a matter which could not have helped anybody.

Your paper, *The Militant*, has been carrying a considerable amount of material reprinted from IS sources. We strongly object to the line of these articles and we could protest since you are still formally associated with us, but we haven't done this.

When comrade Hansen's bulletin *Cuba — The Acid Test* arrived in Europe everyone as far as we know, apart from ourselves, received copies by airmail. A fortnight elapsed and we wrote to you for a copy. If we had been as touchy and factional as you are in your letters, we may have suggested that you deliberately avoided sending us a copy (see appended correspondence). But we did not do this.

You are now splitting from the IC and organizing a factional gathering of former IC supporters to have a fusion. We consider that you are making a serious mistake which we shall speak about in a few days, but we have always recognized that such alliances might well take place in the course of struggle for clarification.

We propose to continue the discussion through the Parity Committee even though we feel that your split is completely unjustified. We feel that you should have waited until the International Committee holds its congress and then debated the political issues before the comrades with whom you have been associated for the past ten years.

Although the ultimate goal of our movement will suffer a reverse as a result of this action, we shall still continue to press for a genuine and thorough discussion within the international movement for the purpose that we have already outlined.

The bulletin No. 14 which you complain in your letter to comrade Wohlforth you did not receive was despatched to you from this office on May 4. Of course, we sent comrade Wohlforth a copy. He is part of our international tendency. We have always sent him copies of such bulletins, just as when we were collaborating with you in the course of the struggle against Haston and the RCP leadership you always sent us such documents.

We do not object when you send the IS documents. Then why should you object when we send comrade Wohlforth documents? It may be that the bulletin was mislaid in the post, the same as we have experienced at other times. If that is the case then it could be easily remedied and another one is on the way.

You know very well that we did not handle the distribution of the French comrades' 'Report on Cuba'. They send such documents out

themselves and we are sure that they sent one to you. Surely if this were lost and you had not received a copy when you received comrade Hansen's document, the correct procedure would have been to write to them or to comrade Hansen for a copy.

We are not sympathetic to minorities who do not carry out seriously the work of the national sections, even if they support us politically. When comrade Fox came here last autumn, we assisted him in drafting the memorandum which was presented to you on November 13, 1962. We are reproducing this memorandum (see appendix).

When this comrade returned to the US, the memorandum caused a split within their tendency. We have continuously tried to explain to all of the comrades in the Wohlforth and Robertson groups that they must abide by the terms of this memorandum. If other tendencies support us in other sections, we shall adopt the same attitude.

You knew already from reading that memorandum that we are in political agreement on most questions with comrade Wohlforth. Why do you raise a scandal now about these matters?

We are asking you to permit the international movement to develop this political discussion which it so badly needs. We are asking you to allow the SWP rank and file to participate in a pre-conference discussion that will be free from threats and factional declamations which in any way may cut across the political discussion. Your national conference cannot terminate this discussion, because it will continue to be organized from the Parity Committee.

We shall in no circumstances stand idly by and allow any kind of organizational measures to be taken against comrades Wohlforth, Art Fox or any other tendencies including Shane Mage or Robertson whose desire is to seriously participate in the international discussion.

It seems strange that when comrades of all tendencies are seriously striving to organize an international discussion which would lead to agreement on world problems you should now embark on a course in relation to comrade Wohlforth and others that will not only confuse the political questions but may well lead you to take organizational measures against them.

If you persist with your present course then we shall refer the matter to the Parity Committee so that a sub-committee can be set up to investigate your actions.

Yours fraternally,

G. Healy

DOCUMENT 8e**Correspondence between G. Healy and
Farrell Dobbs, January – March 1963**

January 30th, 1963

Dear Farrell,

Joe's reply to our document 'Trotskyism Betrayed' has not been sent direct to the section here.

Up to the time of writing, no copy has arrived, although we have been informed by friends in Europe that they all received copies by airmail two weeks ago.

We feel sure that there must be some mistake in despatch and we hope you will be able to put this matter right at once. Would it be possible to let us have a copy by airmail?

Best wishes,

G. Healy

* * *

February 1, 1963

Dear Gerry:

Your note of January 30th just this minute arrived.

There must have been some inadvertent slip up in transmission of your copy of Joe's document in answer to 'Trotskyism Betrayed'. The comrades are certain they put one in the mail, but to make sure you get it quickly we are sending another copy under separate cover by air mail.

Comradely,

Farrell

February 20th, 1963

Dear Farrell,

Thank you for the airmail copy of the document which arrived safely. Will you please send us a copy of the bulletin you have produced containing 'Trotskyism Betrayed'.

Yours fraternally,

G. Healy

* * *

March 12th, 1963

Dear Farrell,

I wrote to you some weeks ago asking for a copy of our document 'Trotskyism Betrayed' in the form that it has been circulated in the SWP. I assume that you have been too busy and overlooked the matter. I would deem it a favour if you would give it your immediate attention and let me have one.

We have now completed the draft of our reply to comrade Hansen and this is considered to be very important in relation to the stage which the international discussion has reached. The draft of this reply is in the hands of our National Committee members and will be discussed by them on March 23 and 24. It will then be sent to you immediately and we would like to know if it will be submitted to your membership for their pre-conference discussion.

Best wishes,
Yours fraternally,

G. Healy

DOCUMENT 8f**Call for the Reorganization of the Minority Tendency in the SWP**

1. The tendency expresses its general political agreement with the tendency of the International Committee which has agreement around the 1961 International Perspectives Resolution presented by the Socialist Labour League. It must, therefore, begin from the standpoint of its responsibilities towards the political struggle of this tendency in relation to the construction of the revolutionary party in the United States.

The tendency recognizes that the building of the SWP as a revolutionary party depends on and derives from its adherence to the revolutionary international perspective and approach.

2. The tendency must pay particular attention to the development of a perspective for work in the United States in relation to the trade unions and the Negro movement. The main political work of the tendency within the party will be to patiently explain the nature of Pabloite revisionism and liquidationism as a method, and its relation to the problem of developing a concretely revolutionary perspective for the work in the trade union and Negro movement.

3. The tendency must recognize that the SWP is the main instrument for the realization of socialism in the US. There is no other organization outside the party which can decisively aid the struggle for socialism at the present time. Our comrades must therefore work as loyal party members; contribute to all aspects of the work, literary and practical, taking part in all the party's electoral activity and sub drives and accepting the administrative decisions of the leadership even though we might be very much against them.

Members of the tendency must recognize that the SWP is their party and they must speak as people who are responsible for their party. The difficulties of the party must not be exploited in a factional way. These must be seen as the overhead price for lack of political

clarification. Since the responsibility for this clarification now rests squarely on the shoulders of the tendency, to make factional capital out of the party's difficulties would be nothing more than shelving that task which is the main purpose for the existence of the tendency.

The tendency must not make premature characterizations of the leadership of the SWP except of those, such as Weiss and Swabeck, who have clearly revealed their Pabloism in theory and practice.

The centre group which is, of course, the majority cannot be described as a finished tendency in the same way as the Pabloites. To be sure there are elements of centrism in its thinking and activity, but these do not predominate. To characterize the SWP majority as a finished centrist tendency is to give up the political battle before it has begun.

We must believe that by common work and political discussion it will be possible to win a majority of the party to adopt a correct line on Pabloism and for the building of the revolutionary party in the United States.

4. The present tendency shall dissolve and shall re-establish itself on the basis of the preceding points.
5. Only those comrades who accept this outlook can be considered a part of the tendency.

DOCUMENT 8g**Letter from G. Healy (for the SLL) to E. Germain
(for the IS), May 23, 1963**

Dear Comrade,

The National Committee of the Socialist Labour League has now considered the invitation from the International Secretariat to attend your international conference early in June.

Our committee has decided unanimously not to send representatives to this conference for the following reasons:

1. The Socialist Labour League urged the International Committee to set up a Parity Committee to enable a discussion to be organized between the sections affiliated to the International Secretariat and the International Committee. The main purpose of this discussion was to clarify the outstanding political disagreements between the two tendencies so as to enable the international movement to ascertain whether it would be possible to organize a reunification of our tendencies.
2. This discussion is only now beginning in a number of sections but has not yet involved the rank and file of the movement in a way that can help the education and preparation of an international leadership able to enjoy the confidence of the world movement. We consider that the organization of this discussion is in itself the most important political task in front of our movement. It involves an all-round development of the world forces in a way that will reject the revisionist trends which are now prominent in our midst.
3. It follows that if such a discussion is to have effect, it must have

the support of the leadership of the various sections. This was, in fact, one of the main conditions set forth in the original Parity Committee proposals.

We know for certain that this is not the case inside the SWP which although for legal reasons not a member of the IC or the IS, nevertheless exerts influence on forces within our movement.

Whilst we are still in the early stages of an international discussion, the SWP has now organized a split within the International Committee for the purpose of reunification with the International Secretariat. This is contrary to point 3 of the motion agreed at the first meeting of the Parity Committee last September, which says that: 'The Parity Committee calls for the ending of all factional splits within the participating sections while the international discussion is proceeding'.

The SWP has in the past as well as now developed an attitude towards the international movement along the lines of manoeuvring its various sections towards adaptation to the internal policy requirements of the SWP. It is not in any way concerned with the daily life and activity of our movement. It is essentially a nationalist tendency which whilst it uses internationalist phrases considers that it has the right to do what it likes within the international movement. This is clearly shown from its relations with the International Committee.

A conference of this committee is to take place during the first two weeks of September 1963. We urged the SWP and those who support it to discuss their differences at that conference, yet before the conference they organize a split.

We further proposed that this international conference should get together with yourselves through the medium of the Parity Committee and organize an international conference of all our forces during October 1964. Yet they prefer to split the movement rather than accept this procedure.

4. It is also clear that you have been involved with them in the organization of this split. Both yourselves and the SWP not only regard the problem of political clarification as an entirely secondary one, but you go out of your way to place emphasis once more on the organization of a unification which cannot but encourage a repetition of the disastrous results of the past. We shall under no circumstances ever enter such a unification. We consider that it is merely the substitution of organizational measures in order to avoid facing up to the real political tasks.

5. We recognize that the SWP is motivated by a most serious internal crisis. This evasion of political discussion has now led to an almost complete theoretical disintegration of the majority leadership. Elsewhere we have given factual evidence of this course which has not and cannot be disputed by them. (See IC Bulletin No. 13). Their action in splitting the International Committee is simply a manifestation of this crisis. They hope that by getting together with you they will form an effective bloc against Pablo within the ranks of the International Secretariat.

Thus once more we are witnessing a repetition of their past mistakes in relation to the international movement.

Finally, it also becomes very clear that since both yourselves and the SWP ignore our appeal for an international discussion, that you envisage a leadership elected from the representatives of the old clique. Minorities within your organizations will enjoy about as many rights as they had in 1953. Only this time you will be joined by the SWP in your attack upon them. Constitutional rights count for nothing when no serious attempt is made to resolve the political differences.

The National Committee of the Socialist Labour League will be submitting proposals to its forthcoming conference in relation to our attitude towards your movement after your June conference. We feel that discussion can continue to be carried out on the basis of the existing Parity Committee, although the immediate effects of such a discussion have been greatly weakened by the splitting action of the SWP. This, of course, has to be ratified by our conference and by the international conference of the IC early in September.

The National Committee of the Socialist Labour League is urging all sections of the International Committee to reject the splitting policies of the SWP and to follow the SLL in not sending representatives to your conference. Had this split not taken place then we would have been agreeable to an exchange of delegations between your conference and ours.

Yours fraternally,

G.Healy

National Secretary,
Socialist Labour League

DOCUMENT 9a**Letter from G. Healy (for the SLL) to the National Committee of the SWP, June 12, 1963**

Dear Comrades,

It was with deep regret that the delegates and visitors to the Fifth National Conference of the Socialist Labour League took note of the failure of your committee to send fraternal greetings to our conference. This is the first time since the founding unification conference of the English Trotskyist movement in March 1944 that you have taken such action, even though you had major political disagreements for a number of years with the old leadership of the Revolutionary Communist Party.

In the past we have always regarded your greetings as a recognition of the revolutionary ties which existed between our organizations. It is well known that several members of the leadership of the Socialist Labour League, including myself, grew up and developed with knowledge gained from the books and writings of the leaders of your party. We feel, therefore, that your decision not to send greetings is in line with your political hostility towards us. It is a continuation of the shabby accusations contained in recent letters from you. (See IC Bulletin No. 16).

We can only conclude that you wish to sever relations between the SLL and the majority leadership of the SWP. By the time you read this letter you will have joined forces with the Pabloites and the existing split will have become more serious.

This rather sad state of affairs is not of our making. Early in 1961 we started a discussion with you in order to see if it was possible within the framework of the International Committee to learn and to teach one another in a way that would strengthen the international Trotskyist movement.

We were unable to convince you on such an approach, because, as you know from copies of letters which we have and you have, comrade Cannon advised against a discussion. It is the same Cannon who is now busy in the background whooping up the petty organizational

scandals which he requires to make the split complete. He knows as well as we do that the letter to your Political Committee over the Cuba crisis reveals that despite his long and heroic defence of Trotskyism, he has at last capitulated to the Pabloite disease. Indeed, your Political Committee could not support this letter. But instead of seriously discussing your differences before the membership you have deliberately kept them in the background in your conference preparations.

You have deliberately avoided a serious discussion, yet you are engaging in a constant offensive against us behind the scenes, within your leadership. You are getting ready to expel the Wohlforth minority, although it has loyally carried out every decision of your party. Such is the political degeneration of the SWP.

You have now come to the conclusion that the 'sectarian SLL' is not worth the writing of a letter of greetings to its conference. You have found new allies. You publish an attack on the SLL from comrade Peng which you say is an act of 'fraternal courtesy to the Chinese section of the International Committee', but who has heard of the Chinese section since the split with Pablo in 1953?

Peng refused the IC the corresponding address of this section. During the ten years of the functioning of the committee he never once gave a report of the life and work of that section. Until this recent bulletin from him you yourself have not produced a single report from the Chinese comrades. In other words, this section is resurrected only at times when it suits the leadership of the SWP in factional alliance with Peng.

We who know this man are fully aware that he has no understanding whatsoever of the daily life and political work of our sections. We have never heard him make a single contribution on the national problems of any section over the past ten years. To hide behind the 'authority' of such a man in struggle against the SLL can only be described as an act of political bankruptcy on your part.

We note that one of the criticisms which he laid against the SLL was that it did not really wage a struggle against Pabloism in Britain. Here we would like to publish for all to see a section of the correspondence between yourselves and us on this matter. [Documents 9b and 9c]

Peng talks about our 'internal regime' and 'Healy's organizational methods'. 'The list of expulsions in the past few years makes depressing reading', he says. 'In one instance expulsions occurred on the eve of a national convention'. You know very well that these are misrepresentations and lies from beginning to end.

You publicly defended the steps we were forced to take in relation to Peter Fryer. You are aware that Pablo came to England especially to organize these refugees from the class struggle and that he spent considerable sums of money trying to encourage them to go into public opposition to us. He published their most slanderous documents against us. He joined hands with the most reactionary forces, including the right wing of the Labour Party, to 'expose' the SLL. You know all this and, in fact, you opposed it, but you now publish Peng's lies without the slightest comment.

We expelled Brian Behan before the second congress of the SLL because he outrageously in public attacked the organization and its leadership. Behan is now one of the anarchist propagandists. He is a regular contributor to the extreme Tory magazine *The Spectator*. He writes in the house organ of the Astor family *20th Century* alongside such well-known fascists as Andrew Fountaine and such representatives of the 'democratic' press as Cecil King of the *Daily Mirror* empire.

We are proud to have expelled such a renegade from our movement. But even if we had made a mistake, what did you or Peng do at the time to correct us? You remained silent. Peng never raised this matter once at any meeting of the International Committee. You were hoping, in fact, to manoeuvre the 'British' as you describe them into a position of accepting your capitulation to Pablo and when this became impossible you have, of course, resorted to the old methods of slander.

Of course, comrade Peng will serve you loyally within the international Pabloite organization. We discovered in 1955 that he was serving the Pabloites loyally, when at one meeting of the committee we caught himself and his daughter L. taking documents from the committee to be handed over to the Pabloites. We reported this to comrade Dobbs when he visited us in 1958 but we, of course, have never taken any action against Peng. If the truth were known, despite his occasional contributions to your internal bulletins, Peng has been in close association with the Pabloites for a considerable period.

We are not worried either way because we know that Peng and his ilk will never build a movement anywhere, in any part of the world. They belong to the sectarian and opportunist past of our movement and all they do now is to provide lessons of mistakes which the Trotskyist movement must not repeat.

By parading this man as a leader of the Chinese section in your

internal bulletin, you are guilty of a fraud against the membership of the SWP.

Recently we have read in *The Militant* that 100,000 people attended a May Day rally in Colombo. 'The huge turnout', says *The Militant* 'was attributed to enthusiasm among the masses at the prospect of a united front between the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (Trotskyist), the Communist Party and the MEP (a smaller group led by Philip Gunawardene)'.

Here we go again. Just at the moment that you are splitting from the SLL and are reaffirming Peng as the leader of the Chinese section, you turn the attention of your membership towards 'the great LSSP in Ceylon'. Of course, you remain discreetly silent about the proceedings at that meeting. You did not tell your membership that when the three left parties, that is the LSSP, the CP and the MEP, were discussing the preparation of the meeting Philip Gunawardene insisted that only political parties should be represented on the platform. His motive was simple and quite reactionary. He wished to exclude the Indian working class from being represented through their trade unions.

The LSSP to its eternal shame agreed to this farce. It must be remembered that in the past the LSSP was the only party in Ceylon to stand unconditionally for the equality of the Indian Tamil working class. It always sharply opposed Philip Gunawardene of the MEP, whose role at this meeting was utterly reactionary.

You remain silent about what Philip Gunawardene said. With a slip of the tongue he used the word 'race' instead of 'nation' and then corrected himself. His supporters in the audience shouted 'No, not nation: race!' All this time the LSSP sat silent on the platform. Here is the price for such unity.

It is now freely admitted in the LSSP that the leaders are prepared to make real and large concessions on the question of parity of status for Tamil and Singhalese. This is the logic of the capitulation which has led them to support the capitalist government of Mrs. Bandaranaike. You should have told your membership that N.M. Perera, Anil Moonesinghe and other leaders of the LSSP are practising Buddhists who worship regularly at the temples. Here is fraud No. 2 which you perpetrate on the membership of the SWP.

Throughout the discussion on Cuba you have done your best to suggest that the SLL is opposed to defence of the Cuban revolution. In Britain and in Europe everyone knows, of course, that this is a lie.

It is also well known to you. Our criticisms of the Castro regime have in no way prevented us from defending the revolution and we shall continue to do so with everything in our power in the future.

But you are strangely silent about events in Cuba; events which you have other information on:

The Trotskyists are harassed. Leading people have been imprisoned sporadically for periods of time with no charges and no trial. An Argentinian comrade was deported. Their paper is semi-legal. They cannot get any publishing house to put it out. They claim a circulation of 1,000 in Havana, which is now their main centre, and say it is passed from hand to hand. They claim 100 members in Havana, of overwhelming proletarian composition, and rapid recruitment, especially since Castro's speech after Kennedy's Orange Bowl talk to Cuban counter-revolutionaries. This speech showed a clear departure from the usual militancy of Castro, and this was noticed by the Cuban people.

They cannot publish Trotsky's works. Open forums cannot be held under a revival of a Batista ordinance which requires permission from the police which they can never get .

May we suggest that your silence is needed in order to perpetrate fraud No. 3.

Now you are busy building up the legend of Ben Bella. But everyone knows that the state in Algeria is a capitalist state and that Pablo is an employee of that state. It is also well known that Pablo now supports Khrushchev's policy of peaceful co-existence. Perhaps he has learned from comrade Cannon's defence of Khrushchev over the missile bases in Cuba last October.

You do not really aid the Algerian revolution or revolutionaries. You simply build up a legend in order to give false comfort to the members of the SWP. Such is the method of pragmatism, openly extolled by Hansen.

Cannon's letter to your Political Committee in October 1962 hails Khrushchev's action over Cuba as one that 'will give the workers time enough to wake up'. But surely the role of the SWP as a revolutionary organization should be consciously to assist in warning the international working class of the pernicious and treacherous role of the Khrushchev Soviet bureaucracy in this present situation.

The real reason why you do not want a serious discussion over Cannon's letter is that it would reveal the terrible political crisis inside the SWP. In refusing this discussion you perpetrate fraud No. 4.

Of course you have no time for the 'sectarian SLL'. Our comrades

in the ranks and in the leadership fight day in and day out against reformism and Stalinism in the best traditions of the Trotskyist movement. But they do not yet speak to tens of thousands at public meetings like Ben Bella, Castro and the so-called Ceylon May Day meeting. In your eyes we are merely small, 'ultra-left fry'.

Our comrades took the leadership in the recent campaign against unemployment, organized and spoke to a mass meeting of 1,300, but this is small stuff. When our comrades deal powerful blows against the Social Democrats in the youth movement in the teeth of a violent witch-hunt, your correspondent T.J. Peters (a one-time leading SWP supporter who now writes like a retired liberal) speaks only of the great future before 'British Labour'.

We old-fashioned 'sectarians' believe that the Fourth International of which our organization has always been an integral part, offers the only alternative to the corrupt leadership of so-called 'British Labour'. But Peters has no time for us. He, like you, has really seen the light.

It took you some time. (As the saying goes "Those who come late to Christ come hardest"). It is approximately 12 years since George Clarke joined forces with Pablo and published the message of the infamous Third Congress in *The Militant* and what was at that time the magazine Fourth International. You failed to understand Pablo at that time, and then we had the split of 1953. Cannon hailed this split with the words that we were 'never going back to Pabloism'. Until recently he has been a really stubborn convert to Pabloism. But at last you have made it. You now have allies all over the place, from Fidel Castro, to Philip Gunawardene and Pablo.

We want to say only one thing and in this our congress was unanimous. We are proud of the stand which our organization has taken against such a disgraceful capitulation to the most reactionary forces as that to which the majority leadership of your party has fully succumbed.

We have, however, the utmost confidence in the rank and file of the SWP whom we are sure will re-convince many of your leaders to break from this fatal course before it is too late.

Yours fraternally,

G. Healy

National Secretary
Socialist Labour League

DOCUMENT 9b**Letter from Farrell Dobbs to G. Healy,
May 24, 1954**

Dear Burns,

We salute the British comrades for their smashing victory over the Stalinist-supported Pabloites in the battle for control of the paper.

Your fight has clearly been the bitterest and most complicated of any national struggle in the international campaign to defeat Pabloite revisionism and liquidationism. In that struggle, which you eloquently described as a 'political civil war', the British Trotskyists stood the test of fire and emerged as a finely-tempered combat force hardened and toughened for the great class battles yet to come.

Only a rank and file that is confident, alert, energetic, capable of sustained action and steadily growing in political stature could have provided the forces necessary for the victory. Only a leadership that is politically astute, skilled in strategic and tactical co-ordination, well grounded in the Trotskyist fundamentals and capable of confidently maintaining combat initiative could have guided the rank and file to such a decisive triumph.

Now that you have smashed the attempt to liquidate British Trotskyism, the momentum of your defensive struggle will carry over into a new dynamic drive to build up the Trotskyist cadre in the broader left wing of the mass movement. This seems already assured by the further crystallization and politicalization of direct periphery elements as reflected in the support you received in the showdown fight for control of the paper. Moreover, the paper will once again be on the beam politically, an effective instrument of which the comrades can be proud, instead of carrying the shameful pro-Stalinist line injected into it by Pabloite intrigue.

Your victory also definitively refutes the false Pabloite claim to a majority in Britain. Coming on the eve of the Pabloite rump congress, this exposure of a Pabloite lie and this profound demonstration of Trotskyist strength brings important new weight to bear against Pablo's whole international intrigue which he has sought to bring to a climax in his 'June Assembly'.

To all the British comrades we say: Well done!

Comradely yours,

Smith

DOCUMENT 9c**Letter from Farrell Dobbs to all SWP locals and branches, May 24, 1954**

Dear Comrades,

We are enclosing a report of the smashing victory won by the British Trotskyists in the fight for control of their paper.

Once again this paper will appear as a hard-hitting 100 per cent Trotskyist organ delivering political hammer blows in the contest for leadership of the British mass movement.

The bitter struggle for control of the paper dissipated all their funds and thus created a problem for them in getting out the immediate issues. Consequently they would appreciate payment in advance for the next bundle orders.

Because of the important political struggles now unfolding within the British Labour Party, we are sure the comrades will be more anxious than ever to follow events through the columns of the Trotskyist paper which the new editorial board pledges to keep a 'lively, fighting, principled organ worthy of the great tasks it must perform'.

We therefore suggest that comrades who are in a position to do so send us a five or ten dollar special contribution to help make sure we are able to get the paper quickly and regularly.

Comradely yours,

Farrell Dobbs

National Secretary

DOCUMENT 10a**Letter from G. Healy (for the IC) to the
International Secretariat, September 27, 1963**

Dear Comrades,

At the International Congress, September 9-13, 1963, convened by the International Committee, there was a discussion on the present relations between the International Committee of the Fourth International and the International Secretariat.

In spite of the deep-going differences, Congress was of the opinion that there were many within the ranks of both organizations who were still unfamiliar with the political nature of the split. Congress believed that everything must be done to encourage the closest working relations under conditions whereby a principled unification of the movement could be achieved. The following proposals were adopted:-

1. That a world congress of the forces of the IC and the IS should be convened during the autumn of 1964;
2. That a joint committee of representatives of the two organizations should regularly meet to prepare this conference and to work out practical ways and means for co-operation in the different countries;
3. This Committee should set out to prepare a joint resolution on world perspectives for the conference. This resolution would outline the points of agreement as well as disagreement. During the preparation of the resolution, all the sections would be constantly informed of the work of the committee. In this way a genuine and positive discussion involving the differences could be organized;

4. Congress insisted that this discussion must take place in all sections, not only in the leaderships, but in the ranks. Unless this decision was carried out it would be impossible for the international movement to develop new cadres which would be able to provide adequate political leadership in the next period. A proper circulation of all documents must take place;

5. Joint discussion between the members of the sections, particularly in Western Europe, should be organized. Whilst these discussions would deal with the differences, Congress believed that they should be extended to include a discussion on the practical work of the various sections in a way that would bring the members of these sections closer together. Such a discussion would also have an all-round effect on the education of the cadres.

We look forward to hearing from you as soon as possible.

Yours fraternally,

G. Preston

DOCUMENT 10b**Statement of the United Secretariat,
November 18, 1963**

In *The Newsletter* of September 28, in an article bearing the headlines, 'Marxists hold International Conference — Report of Congress of the International Committee of the Fourth International', the following paragraphs appear:

The final item on the agenda of Congress was a discussion of the present relations between the International Committee of the Fourth International and the International Secretariat. In spite of the deep-going differences, Congress was of the opinion that there were many within the ranks of both organizations who were still unfamiliar with the political nature of the split. Congress believed that everything must be done to encourage the closest working relations under conditions whereby a principled unification of the movement could be achieved. The following proposals were adopted:

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5. Joint discussion between the members of the sections, particularly in Western Europe, should be organized. Whilst these discussions would deal with the differences, Congress believed that they should be extended to include a discussion on the practical work of the various sections in a way that would bring the members of these sections closer together. Such a discussion would also have an all-round effect on the education of the cadres.

These proposals are to be immediately transmitted to the International Secretariat, with the hope that the joint work can begin immediately.

After due consideration of the article in *The Newsletter* in which these proposals appeared, we have reached the following conclusions:

(1) The article reports a purported congress of the 'International Committee of the Fourth International'. The gathering in question, however, consisted of only a small minority of the International Committee, the overwhelming majority of the International Committee having united with the forces headed by the International Secretariat at the Reunification Congress of the Fourth International last June. A joint leadership of the two forces was elected in proportion to membership and a new body, the United Secretariat, was elected to lead the Fourth International between sessions of the International Executive Committee. The minority which met in London consisted only of the British and French Sections of the International Committee, plus a few isolated individuals, some of whom have now been converted by this minority into 'sections'. This attempt to cover up the true situation makes a very unfavourable impression on us.

(2) The Reunification Congress of the Fourth International which brought together the big majority of the Trotskyist forces throughout the world, ending a split in the movement that had lasted almost ten years, is not recognized by the authors of the article in *The Newsletter*. Instead they picture it as a 'split which recently took place when certain sections left the IC and rejoined the Pabloite ranks'. This way

of presenting matters constitutes an attack on the reunited Fourth International — and not the only attack that has appeared in *The Newsletter* since the Reunification Congress was held. A new move of the same character is the announcement that the name of *Labour Review* is to be changed to *Fourth International*, the same name as the official organ of the Fourth International. This step will add to the confusion already created by the counterfeiting operations of the Posadas tendency. These aggressive moves do not speak well for the possibilities of an early fusion of forces.

(3) The five proposals advanced by *The Newsletter* boil down to three items: (a) the opening of a 'discussion'; (b) the organization of 'co-operation'; (c) the holding of a 'congress' or 'conference' in 1964. The eventual purpose or aim of these three proposals is nowhere clearly stated beyond a vague 'all-round effect on the education of the cadres'. Nowhere is any indication made that the authors of the five proposals have changed in the least from their position of a few months ago that a conference in 1964 could at best do no more than see whether 'reunification' had become feasible. Thus no other conclusion is possible except that the authors still reject an early fusion of forces.

(4) *The Newsletter* remains completely silent about the documents adopted by the Reunification Congress which the majority of the world Trotskyist movement accepted as the programmatic basis for a thoroughly principled reunification. In place of considering and discussing these documents, the authors of the article talk about doing 'everything . . . to encourage the closest working relations under conditions whereby a principled unification of the movement could be achieved'. The clear implication of such statements is that the Reunification Congress took place on an unprincipled basis. This interpretation is further borne out by Slaughter's reported attack on the Socialist Workers Party for supporting reunification of the world Trotskyist movement. According to *The Newsletter*, Slaughter gave a 'political report' in which he argued that the SWP 'have now, in theory and practice, repudiated everything they said at that time by accepting the revisionist programme in its entirety'. If the authors of the five proposals wish further 'discussion', they should begin by clarifying their position on the documents adopted by the Reunification Congress.

(5) The authors of the five proposals obviously seek to create the impression that they are now favourably disposed toward 'unity' — under certain conditions of course. They have yet to explain: (a) why they rejected the proposals of the overwhelming majority of the International Committee to participate in organizing the Reunification Congress in June; (b) why they rejected an invitation to participate in a conference of the majority of the International Committee with this subject on the agenda; (c) why they refused to send even observers to this conference; (d) why they were so hostile to the Reunification Congress that they categorically rejected an invitation to send even observers.

The basic reason for their hostility toward ending the split and participating in reunifying the world Trotskyist movement is of course quite clear. They developed political differences (Cuba, Algeria, etc.) of such profound character with the majority that they found membership incompatible in a common organization based on the programme adopted at the Reunification Congress. The reason for their silence about this is also clear. They do not wish to assume the onus of being against unity. The fact remains, however, that they have demonstratively refused to unite in a common organization in which they would be in a minority. They demonstratively refused to accept the majority decision of the International Committee forces on reunification. They demonstratively refused in advance to abide by majority decision of the world Trotskyist movement on reunification. Since the Reunification Congress they have given no evidence of having changed their attitude on this key question of democratic centralism. Their current five proposals envisaging some kind of vague 'unity' in '1964', or still more distant date, constitute further proof of their refusal to accept the principle of democratic centralism which was unanimously adopted at the Reunification Congress.

(6) In view of these considerations it is our opinion that the truth of the matter is as follows: The Healy-Lambert groups in England and France, the main holdouts among the members of the former International Committee, feel that their political differences are so profound that any serious move toward bringing their forces into the reunited Fourth International in the near future is excluded. So long as this remains their position, it would be unrealistic to hope for an early fusion of their forces with the main body of the world Trotskyist movement.

(7) As for our position, we stand as before for unification — on the basis of the principled programme adopted at the Reunification Congress — of all forces that consider themselves to be revolutionary socialists. In relation to the British and French sections of the International Committee, in particular, we call attention to the decision of the Reunification Congress requiring on the part of sections of the International Committee simple ratification of the documents of the Reunification Congress in order to qualify for membership in the reunified movement and representation in the leadership. Up to now both the Healy and Lambert groups have maintained silence on this as well as on the documents adopted by the Reunification Congress. We, of course, would welcome a change in this negative attitude although we state quite frankly that it would require serious evidence to convince us that a genuine change in policy has occurred. We shall watch their press with the closest attention for any signs of lessening hostility toward the reunified movement.

(8) As for 'co-operation' now with the Healy-Lambert forces, we are of course ready to meet with their representatives to discuss such matters of mutual interest as may arise from time to time. We suggest, however, that meetings be projected in relation to specific practical questions in which the well-known political differences now separating us publicly can be put to the side.

DOCUMENT 10c**Resolution of the SLL Conference
February 29 – March 2, 1964***From Revisionism to Opportunism*

The statement of the United Secretariat of the (Pabloite-revisionist) Fourth International which rejects the proposals of the International Committee (Fourth International) Conference for a principled unification of the world Trotskyist movement, has once again demonstrated the perfidious and fraudulent nature of Pabloite revisionism.

We must conclude that after a year of desultory talks, evasions and diplomatic manoeuvres the Pabloite IS had no interest in clarifying political principles and the contentious programmatic issues which split the Trotskyist movement for a whole decade.

Instead, it tried to paper over serious differences and consummate a marriage of convenience with the new revisionists inside the IC.

This brings to an end a long period of negotiation with the IS. The history of these negotiations can only be summarized at this stage. It must be stated that throughout this period the IC has never been distracted from its primary aim: the unification of the Fourth International *on the basis of principled programmatic agreement*.

In 1954, immediately after the split in which a majority of Pablo's supporters liquidated their sections in the Stalinist movement — the IC took the initiative in opening a discussion with the IS so that the confusion surrounding the split would be dispelled and also the possibilities of a principled unification could be explored. However, the SWP (which although not affiliated for legal reasons to the Fourth International has given political support to its decisions) obstructed this attempt.

Then, in 1957, James Cannon — leader of the SWP — without prior discussion with the IC, began discussions with the IS on the

grounds that political differences were fast disappearing and that there was little point in exhuming past differences. Every attempt by the IC to criticize the theoretical and political arguments of the IS was frowned upon by the SWP. In this situation it was impossible to achieve clarity on principles — and ‘unity’ became a series of organizational manoeuvres.

This action was consonant with the theoretical degeneration of the SWP leaders who had begun to abandon many, if not all, of the programmatic positions they held at the time of the split in 1953.

The ‘unity’ talks finally collapsed because the IS rejected even the watered-down proposals of Cannon. They wanted total and unconditional capitulation to their programme and organizational methods.

After this salutary experience, Cannon was forced to declare that the Pabloites ‘. . . conceive of the “International” as the literary and technical apparatus of the International Secretariat, which in practice operates outside all control. His whole conception and practice is incompatible with a *living world movement* made up of functioning, self-governing, working-class parties and, in reality, operates to prevent the development of such parties’.

In February 1962 once again as a result of tentative ‘unity’ moves by the SWP and the IS, the Socialist Labour League placed before the IC the motion:

The IC to approach the IS with a view to the setting up of a sub-committee consisting of three members from the International Committee and three from the International Secretariat. The purpose of this committee would be to arrange an exchange of internal material on international problems among all the sections affiliated to both the sections.

. . . Eventually, the sub-committee would prepare a summary report of the area of agreement and differences between the two bodies’.

This resolution was adopted unanimously.

The IS attitude to unity, however, was different from and opposed to that of the IC. In its statement of June 23 the IS states:

. . . The IVth International considered the split of 1953, and especially the Open Letter calling for disregard towards the normally elected leadership of the International, as a big mistake, which has done great harm to the world movement . . .

The political basis of the 1953-54 split, as we saw it, was a lack of full understanding of the correctness of the International’s turn in the estimate of the world situation, made in 1950-51.

The IC, since it has never retracted the 'Open Letter' issued by the SWP — and has never accepted the estimate of the international situation in 1950 by the IS which laid the basis for the split, could not but construe this declaration as an ultimatum for unconditional surrender of the political positions successfully defended by the IC and the SWP in 1953.

Any attempt to discuss on the basis of pre-determined agreement must seriously endanger international collaboration and the ultimate unification of the movement. That has been — and still is — the opinion of the IC.

Despite these obstacles, the IC tried in a principled way to conduct the discussion within the Parity Committee set up by the two bodies, the IC and the IS.

But even before the discussion could commence the IC was faced by a split in its ranks which was encouraged — if not inspired — by the IS and the SWP.

Rather than wait for the IC Conference in September 1963 which was to draw up a balance sheet of the discussion and the prospects for unification, the Chinese, New Zealand and Austrian sections conspired to split the IC, hold a hastily convened rump congress of their own in March 1963, and unite with the IS at the 7th World Congress of the Pabloites.

The IS rashly asserts that the splitters represented the majority of the IS. This lie typifies their method: it is calculated to disarm and confuse those who are not informed of the history and character of the dispute.

The details of this sordid manoeuvre are not as simple as that.

First, neither the New Zealand nor Chinese sections had debated or decided on any of the important documents submitted by both sides in the dispute.

The Austrians never made a *single* written contribution. As for the Chinese, it is seriously doubted whether this section existed — or functioned.

The New Zealand representative acted as a ventriloquist's dummy for the SWP and played no independent role whatsoever.

Secondly, the SWP leaders violated all the norms of democratic discussion when they approved the unification without submitting three out of the four major policy documents for discussion in the ranks.

Lastly, and this is the most reprehensible part of the intrigue — the splitters disregarded the opinions of *all* the Latin American sections of the IC. These sections — the Argentine, Peruvian and Chilean — had insisted that the IC Conference be held in September 1963 in order that they would be able to send a representative delegation and moreover would have time to study the relevant documents.

The statement of the Chilean POR in particular was clear and unequivocal. It rejected 'any separate attempt by any section of the IC to unify with the Pabloite IS. The Chilean POR will not allow itself to be dragged along by any particular section wishing to unite on its own account with the IS, understanding that it is an elementary duty in revolutionary discipline to first discuss as a body in the IC, which in its entirety and by majority must decide the basis for unity with the IS at its World Congress'. We do not conceal the fact that the Latin American sections were in favour of an early unification — but neither do we wish to conceal their principled attitude to unity.

Thus the splitters ignored the *majority* of the IC to secure 'unity'.

The IS now accuses us of being against an 'early fusion of forces'. As we have made plain in the preceding lines, we are opposed — resolutely opposed — to unity which is not preceded by a thorough and ample discussion.

This was also Lenin's attitude when he prepared the 2nd Congress of the RSDLP.

The *Iskra* at the very outset, in its advance announcement in 1900, declared that before we could unite, lines of demarcation must be drawn . . . We were, in fact, guided by the maxim: 'Measure your cloth seven times before you cut it'. (*One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*, pp. 15/16, Lawrence & Wishart edition, 1941).

The IS challenges us to define our attitude to the documents of their 7th Congress. Very well.

It is not possible in the space of this statement to comment adequately on the documents of the 7th Congress, but the Revisionists can rest assured that the IC has never remained — and will never remain — silent on the question of revisionism.

Here we shall touch only briefly on some of the major issues raised at the Congress. [See Document 11 for a full analysis of the main resolution at this Congress].

On the main resolution 'The Dynamics (?) of World Revolution today', under Section IV (The Proletarian Revolution in the Imperialist Countries) we read:

The most probable variant in the next few years is . . . the following: the colonial revolution will continue involving new countries and deepening its social character as more workers states appear. It will not lead directly to the overthrow of capitalism in the imperialist centres but it will play a powerful role in building a new world revolutionary leadership as is already clear from the emergence of Castroist currents. . . .

If this quotation means anything at all, it means that the construction of a Marxist leadership in the metropolitan countries is predicated on the emergence of non-Marxist petty-bourgeois leaderships à la Castro in the colonial and semi-colonial world. These leaderships not only abhor Trotskyism, but repress it at every opportunity! The IC explicitly rejects such revisionist fantasies whose acceptance would condemn the FI to decades of stagnation — and perdition.

This quixotic thesis of the IS finds its corollary further on when the authors, referring to Cuba and the prospects for Trotskyism, hopefully suggest:

As I.F. Stone the acute American radical (sic) journalist observed after a trip to Cuba, the revolutionists there are 'unconscious' Trotskyists. *With the coming of full consciousness among these and related currents Trotskyism will become a powerful current.*

Without labouring the point, we should like to know the precise meaning of the phrase, 'With the coming of full consciousness'. Are we to assume that 'full consciousness', like Castro's beard, is a natural endowment of every petty-bourgeois radical and peasant revolutionist?

Here we see how a scientific theory of revolution is thrown down and trampled underfoot while coarse elemental 'spontaneity' and bourgeois radicalism is exalted to the point of virtue.

To talk of 'unconscious Marxists' is patent nonsense and a contradiction in terms. Like the cold-blooded mammal it belies reality — and defies all systems of classification.

Marxism, i.e., scientific socialism, is a method of social analysis, a world outlook and the only scientific and valid theory of knowledge. It is human *consciousness* at a very advanced level of development. It represents the conscious expression of an unconscious historical process. It can never be unconscious.

The 'unconscious Marxist' is not a Marxist at all, but an empirical simpleton who identifies social being and social consciousness in a mechanical and absurd way.

Let us not forget Lenin's advice: 'The highest task of humanity is to comprehend the objective logic of the economic evolution (the evolution of social existence), to comprehend the most general and fundamental features with the purpose of adapting its social consciousness and the consciousness of the advanced classes of all capitalist countries to it in clear exact and critical fashion'. (*Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, p. 280, Lawrence & Wishart edition).

On this point the IS quarrels not with us — but with Lenin and Trotsky:

One of the most outstanding features of Bolshevism has been its severe, exacting, even quarrelsome attitude towards the question of doctrine. The twenty-seven volumes of Lenin's works will remain forever an example of the highest theoretical conscientiousness; without this fundamental quality Bolshevism would never have fulfilled its historic role. (*Stalinism and Bolshevism*).

Lenin has remarked elsewhere that socialist consciousness cannot develop without the party and that the party represents the highest form of human consciousness. This has been considered an axiomatic truth for the revolutionary movement.

The revisionist wisecracks in the Unified Secretariat, however, have replaced dialectical materialism and the party with the inane nostrums of Ben Bella and the rhetoric of Castro — who, incidentally, has not read a single work of Trotsky and has never written a single theoretical work in his life.

And what are the prospects, if any, for the FI? Let us listen to the revisionists:

In the advanced countries, the International *can perform crucial services* on behalf of revolutions in colonial countries . . . true internationalists . . . Among the advanced workers, intellectuals and youth of the workers states the International *can play a special role in helping them to dig through the debris of forty years of falsification* . . . (Our emphasis).

Here in a nutshell is presented the perspective for the International. Nowhere in this exposition do the tasks of the movement rise above the level of routine and mundane propaganda. Nowhere is there any

mention of the party leading struggles against unemployment and the integration of the unions in the state apparatus — or of winning working class youth to the party and the construction of a mass youth movement around the party. For example, the question of publishing a regular weekly paper is nowhere dealt with — apart from a cursory reference to maintaining ‘a Trotskyist publication’. Instead we have such phrases as ‘can perform’, ‘can help’ and ‘can play’. What *has* the IS *done* to build powerful parties in Europe? Precisely nothing!

The IS conception is the direct antithesis of Lenin’s conception of the party as a highly centralized and disciplined combat organization of dedicated revolutionists armed with a scientific theory of revolution. Such a party seeks to win the vanguard of the working class — and through it the majority of the working class — for the socialist revolution. This can be done only through propaganda, agitation and *organization*. Only the collective, organized *action* of the party can bring about the leadership of the class.

Marxism is the philosophy of action, the science of revolutionizing practice — not the contemplation of texts or the ‘digging of debris’ as the IS believes.

The IS rejects in practice and in theory the fundamental idea of the Transitional Programme when it states:

An acute problem in relation to the construction of revolutionary-socialist parties in many countries is lack of time to organize and to gain adequate experience before the revolution breaks out. In previous decades this would signify certain defeat for the revolution. *Because of a series of new factors, however, this is no longer necessarily the case.* The example of the Soviet Union . . . and the relative weakening of world capitalism, have made it possible for revolutions in some instances to achieve partial successes . . . and even go as far as the establishment of a workers state. Revolutionary Marxists in such countries face extremely difficult questions (!) . . . *No choice is open to them in such situations but to participate completely and whole-heartedly in the revolution and to build the party in the very process of the revolution itself.*

Two conclusions emerge from this:

- (a) There is no crisis of proletarian leadership today;
 - (b) Revolutions are not organized and prepared for: they only occur.
- Therefore, the task of party building is a platonic one — necessary but not indispensable.

If it is possible to have revolutions and even workers’ states without the leadership of the party, why should anyone want to build a party in

the 'process of the revolution'? Why indeed? Unlike the IS we do not build parties for the sake of glory and prestige, but for the carrying through of the socialist revolution.

If what the IS says is true, then it is time to review the entire theoretical, programmatic and historical basis of the FI. Was Trotsky right to set up the Fourth International, was his struggle really necessary and was his historical prognosis correct?

Does the IS agree with the observation of Trotsky that 'No one has either shown in practice or tried to explain articulately on paper how the proletariat can seize power without the political leadership of a party that knows what it wants'? (*Stalinism and Bolshevism*).

No equivocation, please, Messrs. Liquidators and Revisionists! We demand a straight answer. This does not exhaust by any means our criticism of the IS documents, but it must suffice for the present. We shall comment fully and exhaustively — elsewhere, in our own time.

The *pièce de resistance* of the IS statement is the grandiloquent boast about unifying all forces that 'consider themselves to be revolutionary socialists'.

We strongly contest the truth of this assertion for the following reasons.

The reaction of the Unified Secretariat and its transatlantic allies to the Kennedy assassination has proved beyond any doubt the reformist and philistine-liberal nature of this sect.

Just as Stalin's death revealed the degeneration within the IS in 1953, so, too, today the death of Kennedy has crystallized all the rottenness within the IC and IS.

While Farrell Dobbs was sending his condolences to the widow of the leader of world reaction and *The Militant* was approvingly quoting the words of a capitalist judge imploring the 'nation' to 'abjure hatred' (!!), the English organ of the IS (*World Outlook*) was reproducing eulogies to the dead president from renegades such as Earl Browder, who had the indecency to compare Kennedy to Lincoln!

The Newsletter correctly and severely criticized this nauseating statement of Dobbs and the undignified behaviour of the SWP. This attack has provoked Joseph Hansen, a leader of the SWP, to justify it on the grounds of expediency:

Farrell Dobbs joined with other leaders of the American radical movement to explain why the Marxist movement is completely opposed to assassination. His declarations were published in the *New York Times*. The attitude of

this powerful newspaper is often of great weight in setting the tone for other newspapers in the United States.

Dobbs also issued a short statement to the press expressing personal sympathy for Mrs. Kennedy . . . his statement helped counter the poisonous witch-hunting effort to picture Marxists as unbalanced individuals. (World Outlook, Vol 1, No. 18) (Our emphasis).

Hansen's 'defence' is as rotten as the statement of Dobbs. If it is as Hansen states, then Dobbs has committed a double crime in the eyes of revolutionary socialists: he has not only disgraced the SWP in front of the Federal state — but he has also prostrated himself in front of the most 'powerful' — and *reactionary* — organ of bourgeois public opinion in America. The leaders of the SWP have sold their revolutionary birthright for the sake of a little bit of respectability.

To call these people 'revolutionary socialists' as the IS statement does, is to insult the honourable name of 'revolutionary socialism'.

We think we have made it palpably clear why the IC did not, and would not participate in the charade of a 'Reunification Congress' and why we condemned the rump conference of an unrepresentative IC minority.

Recent events — such as the Kennedy assassination — have revealed the decisive and irrevocable nature of the split between Pabloite revisionism and revolutionary Leninism.

From now on the struggle must and will be waged *on all fronts and in public* so that the vanguard of the international working class will distinguish authentic Marxism from the counterfeit variety.

Down with Revisionism and Opportunism!

Chapter Five

Balance sheet and perspectives after the 'Reunification'

This chapter consists of the major report made to the International Conference of September 1963, attended by the national sections affiliated to the International Committee of the Fourth International. Its characterization of the 'reunification' as an amalgam of different centrist tendencies, and its prediction that no real unification and growth of these forces could proceed on this basis, are fully confirmed a decade later by the crisis of Pabloism. The International Committee now proceeded resolutely with the arming of the Trotskyist cadres, in the fight against revisionism, for the building of revolutionary parties.

DOCUMENT 11**Report on the International Situation made to
the International Conference of Trotskyists
by C. Slaughter, September 1963***The Future of the Fourth International*

The task of this Conference is to mobilize the forces of the International Committee of the Fourth International for the great class struggles which lie immediately before us. Our unity is based on the fight for the Transitional Programme of the Fourth International, founded by Trotsky 25 years ago. This fight has drawn us together to struggle against those revisionists who take the name 'Trotskyism' but have abandoned its programme. We must analyse the way in which this revisionism, expressed particularly by the Socialist Workers' Party of the United States of America and the 'Pablo' group, has developed, how it reflects the pressure upon the revolutionary vanguard of the forces of imperialism. Such an analysis is part of our struggle against the bourgeoisie, a necessary step in understanding the development of imperialism itself. The revisionists have retained the phrases and formulae of 'Trotskyism', duly to adapt them to the service of non-working class forces: in particular, to the national bourgeoisie in the colonial and semi-colonial countries, and to the Stalinist and Social-Democratic bureaucracies in the workers' states and the advanced capitalist countries.

The aim of Marxist theory is to reflect accurately the reality of the class struggle as a guide to leading the working class. This can only be done through participation in the class struggle itself, armed with Marxist theory. In the modern epoch of wars and revolutions, there is no road to this scientific understanding except in the revolutionary struggle to build Leninist parties. Struggling to find a road to the working class, the party has to fight its way through the resistance of agents of the class enemy, leaderships which dominate the working

class and its organizations. These leaders, Social-Democrats and Stalinists alike, have betrayed the working class into the hands of monopoly capitalism. The development and the problems of these leaderships reflect the crisis of their social basis: the military, political and economic crisis of monopoly capitalism and the parallel crisis of the Stalinist bureaucracy. A revolutionary party based on the objective class struggles produced by these contradictions can be constructed to defeat the bureaucracy. This was the meaning of the Transitional Programme and of the First Four Congresses of the Communist International: the crisis of humanity was concentrated above all in the crisis of leadership of the working class. Many say they agree with that formulation, but in the real struggle they capitulate to the bureaucracy, so that their repetition of the Transitional Programme as a slogan loses any content, and becomes a deception. The struggle against this deception, against the revisionists, is a vitally necessary part of the rebuilding of the Fourth International. In the course of such a struggle we begin to probe the full extent of their departure from Marxism. This reflects and demonstrates to us the magnitude of the crisis confronting the working class, and it is only in such a struggle that we rediscover and begin to enrich the Marxist method. That method is not something that can be learned by heart by any intelligent Communist, then 'applied' to each and every situation. It is something which has to be fought for in the real struggle to build Marxist parties.

Revolutionary Leadership and Marxist Method

The fight against revisionism in the Trotskyist movement, particularly in the Socialist Workers' Party, has revealed a basic difference in *method*. The Socialist Workers' Party leaders have abandoned Marxism for empiricism, they have abandoned that method which starts *from the point of view of changing the world*, as against interpreting or contemplating it. The far greater part of the work in the struggle against this revisionism remains still to be done on our part. It is not enough to be able to demonstrate the descent into empiricism by the revisionists — our problem is to build around this fight against revisionism, sections of the Fourth International able to lead the advance guard of the working class. Looking at the world from the point of view of changing it, means, today, starting from the point of view of the construction of disciplined revolutionary parties able to

intervene in the struggles of the working class, able to build the Fourth International out of their interventions. These parties are proletarian parties, whose work and methods correspond to the general interests of the working class. In the advanced countries, such parties are only built in implacable opposition to the petty-bourgeois circles who have dominated 'official' left politics during the comparative prosperity since 1945. Inside our movement this means a constant fight to build a cadre consciously opposed to the way of life of the centrist propaganda circles who provide a left cover for the bureaucracy. This is the direct *opposite* of the Pabloite theory and practice of support for the bureaucracy, which takes the form of supporting supposedly 'left' trends inside the Stalinist bureaucracy, believing even that they will be forced to take the power in the capitalist countries or to carry out the political revolution in the workers' states. Alternatively it leads to 'deep entry' in the Social-Democracy, justified by the hoped-for emergence of mass 'left centrist' parties.

In the backward countries, fighting to resolve the crisis of leadership means fighting for the construction of *proletarian* parties, with the aim of proletarian dictatorship. It is especially necessary to stress the proletarian character of the leadership in countries with a large petty-bourgeoisie or peasantry. On this question, the revisionists take the opposite road to Lenin and Trotsky, justifying their capitulation to petty-bourgeois, nationalist leaderships by speculation about a new type of peasantry. In recent years, the Pabloites have declared that the character of the new states in Africa will be determined by the social character and decisions of the *élite* which occupies state power, rather than by the class struggle as we have understood it. More recently, Pablo and others have discovered 'the revolutionary role of the peasantry'. These are only thin disguises for capitulation to the petty-bourgeois leadership of the FLN in Algeria and of Castro in Cuba. Above all, the 'theory' that the 'epicentre of the world revolution' has shifted to the colonial and semi-colonial countries, for all its revolutionary appearance, is used to justify this capitulation.

In relation to the Stalinist bureaucracy and the political revolution, the case is even clearer. The pronounced right turn of Khrushchev comes only a few years after Pablo's insistence that his section of the bureaucracy would lead the destruction of Stalinism. At the recent 'reunification' congress of the Pabloites, supported by the Socialist Workers' Party, Pablo's minority insisted that Khrushchev's was the 'left' tendency in Stalinism. Even though this was rejected, we must

remember that as recently as April 1962, Germain, in the majority at this same Congress, spoke of the Khrushchev faction as 'the most flexible and the most intelligent wing of the bureaucracy'. What are the prospects of a revisionist tendency which thought the 'objective forces' for Socialism so strong that 'Stalinism could no longer betray', in face of the recent understandings of Khrushchev with Kennedy and the Roman Catholic Church? Any strategy which proceeds from assumptions that sections of the Stalinist *counter-revolutionary* bureaucracy can 'move left' is a negation of Trotskyism. The construction of independent Marxist parties, the paramount need of the working class, will be absolutely opposed by the bureaucracy in the workers' states, just as it is in the capitalist countries. Not to struggle against this bureaucracy is to abandon the construction of Marxist parties. The whole theory of 'mass pressure' forcing the bureaucracy to the left is nothing more than apologetics for this abandonment of the Fourth International and its programme. Marxist parties are the conscious expression of the decisive historical role of the working class. For the revisionists, the role of the working class is reduced to that of unconscious, spontaneous 'pressure', to which the existing leaderships respond. Thus Pablo maintains that, 'although in a distorted way', Khrushchev's group in the bureaucracy represents the revolutionary strivings of the masses.

Our fight against revisionism is thus identical with the fight to build parties of the Fourth International. Without this fight the working class cannot defeat the bureaucracy. Pabloite revisionism arose specifically as an adaptation to the dominant bureaucracies in the labour movement. The failure to develop Marxist theory after Trotsky's death exposed the cadres of the Fourth International to this bourgeois pressure through the bureaucracy. We can only overcome the split which this brought about by understanding this process in all its aspects. Such an understanding can only come from the actual struggle against revisionism in all its manifestations, theoretical, political and organizational. We shall see that the revisions are so deep that they affect the whole theory and method of Marxism.

Why an International Discussion?

The International Committee has insisted, in its relations with the Socialist Workers' Party and other forces calling themselves Trotskyists, on an all-embracing discussion. Such a discussion must

include all the tendencies and must deal with all disputed questions. Only in this way can we grasp consciously the present stage of development of the class struggle and of our own movement in relation to it. Our determination to get to grips in discussion with the revisionists is not at all the result of any principle of super-democracy or of a desire for 'unity' for its own sake. On the contrary, we see revisionism as the highest reflection of all the tendencies which we have to combat in the construction of parties, in the fight for the political independence of the working class. Only the sharpest fight against revisionism, therefore, can equip us politically for the class struggle. We know that inside our own movement such a fight must be carried on internally for correct methods of work against revisionist conceptions. Pabloite revisionism was a response in the Trotskyist movement to a definite stage of development of imperialism and its relation to the world revolution, reflected through the Stalinist bureaucracy. It was not just the aberration of a few individuals, but has found a response in many countries. Consequently its influence necessarily pervades the methods of our own sections until we have fought through to the end all the problems of the split with Pablo. The Socialist Workers' Party leadership, for example, reacting empirically to the actions of Pablo in 1953, actually initiated the formal split in the International, yet within a few years find themselves 're-united' with the Pabloites. The formal rejection of some of the *consequences* of Pablo's revision of Marxist theory was not enough. Because Cannon and his group did not explore the roots of this revisionism (and this would have pinpointed the theoretical responsibility of the Socialist Workers' Party) the same forces which produced Pablo eventually overtook the Socialist Workers' Party.

Pablo's response to the turn of world events after 1945 was to build a theory of 'centuries of deformed workers' states'. The Fourth International's perspective of a revolutionary outcome of the world war, with the Trotskyist parties leading those revolutions, had been proven wrong, it was argued. Instead, the Stalinist parties, backed by the material strength of the Soviet state, had proven capable of overthrowing capitalist power and establishing deformed workers' states. The strategy and tactics of the Marxists must be subordinated to this new reality.

In the first months of its reaction against Pablo in 1953, the SWP leadership rejected this perspective, condemning it as only the theoretical mask for capitulation to the Stalinist bureaucracy. Now

the SWP leadership supports 'reunification' without a discussion of the political causes of the original split. In any case, it is said, the differences have narrowed to almost nothing. In a way, this is true. In the last few years, both the Pabloite and the SWP leaders have found other 'new realities' which point the way to a type of socialism replacing capitalism *without the crisis of working-class leadership having been solved*. This was the essence of the theory of 'centuries of deformed workers' states'.

Our impressionists have now imposed the same historical perspective upon the national liberation struggle in colonial and semi-colonial countries. Here, petty-bourgeois, nationalist leaderships will carry through the overthrow of capitalism; the leading rôle will not be played by the working class; there is no need for the construction of a Trotskyist party for workers' states to be established; Trotskyists work with a perspective of 'influenceing' the leadership of these revolutions, helping them along the road to training the masses in socialist construction, etc., etc.

This, then, is the meaning of the SWP leaders' claims that the struggle in Cuba and Algeria has revealed the essential 'unity' between those who split in 1953. In essence, through the mechanism of the colonial struggle, the SWP has accepted the historical perspective of Pabloism: capitulation to petty-bourgeois leaderships in the struggle against imperialism.

Internationalism and Empiricism

The Socialist Workers' Party leaders and the Pabloites have attacked the sections of the International Committee as sectarians who substitute their own limited experience, particularly in Britain and France, for the general picture of international objective forces working for Socialism. It is then argued that these 'favourable objective circumstances on a world scale' demand formal reunification of all tendencies, putting aside the discussion of differences. But the line of the International Committee does not at all flow from narrow or national considerations. Our type of activity, our method of party building, flows from a thoroughly internationalist view of the class struggle. We have in the past three years begun an analysis of the present stage of development of world capitalism, of the class forces which defend it, and of the bureaucratic agents of these class forces in the mass movement.

The events of the last two years, since we tried to initiate political discussion with the Socialist Workers' Party, have decisively confirmed our insistence on the basic Trotskyist position that the Stalinist bureaucracy is *counter-revolutionary*. In the Cuban missiles crisis and Sino-Indian border dispute of October-November 1962, the political consequences of our line and the line of revisionism in the Trotskyist movement were sharply and decisively contrasted. Cannon, in the Socialist Workers Party, hailed Khrushchev's withdrawal of missiles as a contribution to peace, and in the course of it betrayed his whole descent into empiricism with the phrase: 'What else could he (Khrushchev) have done in the given circumstances?' In France, the Pablo group distributed a leaflet in the Renault factory calling on the workers to render assistance to Cuba 'equally with the aid from the workers' states'. The fact that Cannon found his way to Khrushchev via the uncritical support of the petty-bourgeois, nationalist leadership of Castro, whereas Pablo reflected the Stalinist pressure earlier and more directly, is only a matter of the particular historical situations of the two. Pablo reacted to the apparently overwhelming strength of the Stalinists in the 'two camps' period in post-war Europe, where there were mass Communist Parties. Cannon's evolution in the United States, where Stalinism was feeble, took longer, and expressed itself through the relations of the Socialist Workers' Party leaders, along with the whole 'radical milieu' in the United States of America, to the Cuban Revolution. The face of the Socialist Workers' Party had become turned to this petty-bourgeois milieu and away from the working class. Here we see clearly that Pablo's original capitulation to Stalinism was only one variety of capitulation to the petty-bourgeois bureaucracies upon which modern imperialism depends.

In India the representatives of Pablo's 'International' supported the bourgeois government of Nehru against the deformed workers' state in China. This party issued a statement condemning the Chinese method of solving the border dispute. While the delegate of the Indian section voted with Hansen and Germain for 'reunification of the Fourth International', hundreds of Indian Communist Party members were in Nehru's prisons for opposing the Indian Communist Party leadership's capitulation to Nehru. The latter was part of the Khrushchev bureaucracy's deal with imperialism. Khrushchev supplied aircraft to Nehru, the United States supplied other weapons. Nehru's troops are with the United Nations forces policing the

Congo on behalf of United States imperialism. These decisive class questions have exposed the end-result of Pabloism: it is not a temporary weakening before a wing of the Stalinists, but a full-blown revision corresponding to the latest needs of imperialism, i.e., the development of powerful bureaucracies and state personnel able to control the masses of all countries. It is the presence of such basic class questions at the root of the division which explains the magnitude of the departure from even the most basic Marxist ideas among the revisionists.

What Cannon betrayed in a phrase about 'the given circumstances', Hansen has developed into a whole case, arguing that dialectical materialism is the same thing as 'consistent empiricism'. What a contrast with Trotsky's warning to the Socialist Workers' Party! The ideas of pragmatism and empiricism have their direct and concrete expression in the domination of opportunism in the labour movement. The revisionists' attempt to assimilate empiricism to Marxism is the natural accompaniment of their capitulation to the opportunist bureaucracies. In this way is justified the characterization of the July 26th movement leaders in Cuba as 'natural Marxists', the Pabloite faith in the Soviet bureaucracy's capacity for transforming itself, etc. In all this it is indicated that without conscious theory men will respond to 'objective forces' and arrive at the path of Marxism. This is a clear abandonment of the Transitional Programme, with its stress on the decisive question of resolving the *subjective* problems of the world revolution.

It is in this sense that the fight for dialectics is the fight to build the world party in every country. Neither can succeed without the other. Dialectical materialism will only be understood and developed in the struggle to build the party against all enemies. The party can be built only if there is a *conscious* fight for dialectical materialism against the ideas of other classes. It is on revolutionary theory that the ability of the party to win the political independence of the working class is based. Marxism is a developing theory; it develops in the practice of revolutionary parties who 'discover' reality by acting to change it. Trotsky's warning about the fight against pragmatism was seen by the Socialist Workers' Party leadership only as a suggestion that one or two comrades should interest themselves in questions of philosophy — the consequence is before us now. An explanation of the degeneration of Pablo, Cannon and the others will be incomplete if it ignores this side of the question: the neglect of theory since Trotsky's death. It

was this which halted Cannon's rejection of Pablo in 1953 at the level of a few programmatic points, preventing the necessary deeper analysis.

We have a parallel for this development in the historical relationship between Marx and Lenin. Lenin made gigantic developments of Marxist theory after a historical gap during which expositions of Marxist ideas on various subjects went alongside the deepening degeneration of the Socialist movement in the Second International. The development of Marxism is not a purely theoretical development. It was the rise of imperialism, and the urgent tasks placed before the Russian working class, which laid the basis for Lenin's contribution. But these new objective conditions did not automatically produce Leninism and the Third International, much less 'transform' the Second International into a revolutionary organization! On the contrary, the epoch of wars and revolutions brought about by imperialism had to be analysed and grasped consciously by the Marxist method. *Without* a theoretical struggle to rework the dialectic in the context of the new situation, in conflict with all other trends, the concrete meaning of the new historical stage and of the tasks flowing from it could not have been burned into the consciousness of the Bolsheviks. When we say that Marxism is 'the conscious reflection of an unconscious process' this is what we mean. Reflection is an active, struggling, contradictory process, not a passive adaptation. Marxism is the organized, practical consciousness of the revolutionary working class, not a bible used to place blessings on the accomplished fact. Today, the Socialist Workers' Party's descent into empiricism is the result of this loss of the historical thread in the development of Marxism. Once this happens, the way is open for capitulation to other tendencies.

Crisis of the Revisionists

The 'unification' with the Pablo group, supported by the SWP, is founded not upon Marxist theory and the actual development of the movement, the conscious resolution of the contradictions in that development. Instead, it is a combination of centrist trends each of whose development is determined by empirical adaptation to circumstances. For such a 'unified' organization there can be no unified development and no growth. Within it, some groups, such as Pablo and his immediate supporters, go to the Right in complete capitulation to the national bourgeoisie in Algeria; others, held back by

tradition and the force of inertia, resist this turn and look for face-saving formulae. Within the Socialist Workers' Party itself a large minority adopts a position to the right of the leadership in relation to China.

It is not a historical accident that the revisionists are driven together at this moment, nor is it simply a consequence of their subjective consideration of problems of their own internal development. The driving force here is the radicalization of the working class and the open manifestation of capitalist contradictions in the advanced countries in the last few years — in the US, Britain, Belgium, France, Germany, Spain — together with the accentuation of the crisis of Stalinism as the political revolution matures for the next blow after the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. Close to sections of the bureaucracy and the petty-bourgeoisie instead of to the working class, in the years since the war, the revisionists proceeded from their impressions of the comparative social peace in the advanced countries, as contrasted with the might of Stalinism on the one hand, and the upsurge of the national-liberation struggle in the colonies on the other. Thus they looked away from the decisive sector, the proletariat of the advanced countries, and conceived theories of left tendencies in the Stalinist bureaucracy, and of the epicentre of world revolution shifting to the colonial countries. In the advanced countries, they said, the class struggle took on a muted character, expressing itself only through the existing 'mass organizations', i.e., through the labour bureaucracy.

The revisionist forces based on this perspective are driven together now in order to resolve their own crisis, because the forces upon which they immediately depend, the bureaucratic and petty-bourgeois servants of imperialism, are in crisis, a crisis caused above all by the class struggle in Europe and the US. The mechanism of adaptation, for the revisionists, was through adaptation to bureaucracy. Since the death of Stalin the development of the political revolution in Eastern Europe and the radicalization in the advanced countries have brought crisis to the bureaucracies. Pablo's organization first based itself on the perspective that the French Stalinists would even take state power. East Germany and Hungary in 1953 and 1956 exposed this perspective even more than the treacherous domestic policy of the French Stalinists. Pablo then turned certain of his sections into little more than errand-boys for the national-bourgeois leadership of the Algerian FLN, turning away from the industrial working class itself in Western Europe. Now the crisis of the FLN deals a final blow and causes

new crises and divisions within the Pablo camp. In the Socialist Workers' Party, we have seen a similar turn to the radical, petty-bourgeois intelligentsia and away from the working class. While Hansen and Cannon concentrated on finding 'radical' allies for the 'Fair Play for Cuba' committees and made a great noise about recognizing Cuba as 'the first workers' state in the Western Hemisphere', the struggle of the working class in the US itself, particularly of the Negroes, came along and took them unawares. The same Kennedy against whom they defended Castro is called upon by the Socialist Workers' Party organ *The Militant* to arm the Negroes of the South.

Crisis and Militancy

The resolution which formed the agreed basis of 'reunification' with the Pabloites, endorsed by the SWP, must be criticized in detail, in order to understand the full extent of the revisionists' departure from Marxism, even though the document is intrinsically worthless from the point of view of a scientific view of the world revolution, its strategy and tactics, and the construction of the Fourth International.*

In the introductory section, the main thesis is stated:

As a result of the successive failure of the two major revolutionary waves of 1919-23 and 1943-48 — and of the minor one of 1934-37 — the main centre of world revolution shifted for a time to the colonial world. The victory of the Chinese Revolution in 1949, following the post-war revolutionary wave in Europe, opened an uninterrupted series of colonial revolutions.

In the following paragraph the Resolution formally accepts that the lag in the advanced countries is to be placed at the door of 'the treacherous role of the official leadership', in place of which the working class must have 'a genuine Marxist revolutionary leadership'. The essence of the question is, of course, to build such a leadership to defeat the official bureaucracy. However, the Resolution concentrates upon another aspect entirely, with the 'subjective factor' entirely ignored. Thus 'the fact that the revolution won first in backward countries and not in the advanced is not proof that the workers in the advanced countries have shown insufficient revolutionary combativity. It is evidence of *the fact that the opposition which they have to*

* 'The Dynamics of World Revolution', Adopted by the Reunification Congress of the Fourth International June 1963, in *Fourth International*, 17, Oct.-Dec. 1963.

overcome in these countries is immeasurably stronger than in the colonial world'. (Our emphasis – Editors).

In a single phrase, then, the Resolution indicates the responsibility of the traitorous leaderships for defeats in the advanced countries. Similarly it contains a pious reference to the same problem in the backward countries: 'The crisis of revolutionary leadership exists, of course, in the colonial and semi-colonial countries as well as in the advanced countries'. In both cases, however, this is only a question of repeating traditional formulae while rejecting their political meaning. For the advanced countries, the 'unifiers' have in fact gone over to the most reactionary revisionist viewpoint: it is the strength of the enemy, of the ruling class, which really appears to them the stumbling-block. For example, the Resolution refers to 'a very astute and supple capitalist-class leadership which has learned to transform reforms into a powerful brake upon revolution'. Here Marxism is abandoned for impressions of the will and ability of the ruling class. The basis for reformism in these countries is a historical-economic one; the actual force which puts a 'brake' on revolution is the counter-revolutionary, bureaucratic leadership of the labour movement. What the resolution refers to as external, objective 'facts' are in fact the living force with which our movement is locked in struggle. We are based on the struggle of the working class as the contradictions of capitalism intensify; the bureaucrats rest on imperialism itself.

The Resolution continues:

The failure of a revolutionary wave in an imperialist country gives way eventually to some form of temporary relative economic stabilization and even to fresh expansion. This inevitably postpones new revolutionary uprisings for a time, *the combination of political setback (or even demoralization) of the working class and a rising standard of living being unfavourable for any immediate revolutionary undertaking.* (Our emphasis — Editors).

In these sentences is expressed the essence of the revision of Marxist politics by the Pabloites. Their description of an 'unfavourable combination of circumstances' leaves entirely out of account the main question, i.e., the relation between the working class and its leadership, the role of consciousness in the revolutionary struggle. Because they do not start from this decisive consideration, the 'unifiers' inevitably dissolve the concrete into the abstract. In the sentences quoted, the words 'working class' are an abstraction. For political purposes we have to see the working class with its internal divisions and contradic-

tions, the developing relation between vanguard and mass, the changing relation to its traditional leaderships, etc. Contrast the glib 'combination' of the Resolution, for example, with Trotsky's analysis of the European working class during the ebb of the revolutionary wave in the early 1920s (*The First Five Years of the Comintern*, Vol. II, pp. 74ff). Trotsky shows that after 1914 there was a strong working-class upsurge, but that it was unorganized and poorly-led. Out of these struggles, the most dynamic sections were drawn into the new Communist Parties. Many more temporarily withdrew from the political struggle. This division in the class, resulting from a differentiation of consciousness in response to the first wave of struggle, was the basis upon which the labour bureaucracy restored its dominant position. When the crisis of 1920 broke over Europe, its effect was a series of bitter outbursts, but this was not sufficient to provoke the unity of the class necessary for revolutionary victory. For that to happen an economic revival was necessary. Here Trotsky concludes that an economic upswing is necessary for a new step forward in the class struggle. But it is not at all a question of formally opposite conclusions; under other circumstances an economic revival could, of course, have the opposite effect. But these 'circumstances' are the strategy and tactics of the leadership in relation to the economic and political struggle of the class. Because Trotsky examines the relation between leadership and class, examines the contradictions in the revolutionary camp, he is more concrete than our 'unifiers'. At the centre of his 'combination' of factors is the strategy and tactics of the class and the leadership; the 'combination' is not a collection of impressions from which contemplatively to draw conclusions. The latter approach is well suited to the 'deep entrism' of the Pabloites in the official reformist parties in Western Europe, where everything is staked on the hope of mass centrist developments, and the construction of the revolutionary party in struggle against the bureaucracy abandoned.

Leadership in the Colonial Liberation Movement

On the other hand, the expression, 'The crisis of revolutionary leadership exists, of course, in the colonial and semi-colonial countries as well as in the advanced countries', is intended to put at their ease those who see that Pablo's open capitulation to Ben Bella has gone too far. But a phrase is not enough! Those who have drafted the

Resolution *in fact* conduct their 'defence of the Algerian Revolution' by subordinating themselves to Ben Bella, by saying and doing *nothing* about the construction of independent revolutionary parties in Algeria and the colonial countries. Indeed, the Resolution itself provides adequate 'theoretical' justification for this capitulation. This is summed up in the conclusion: 'The weakness of the enemy in the backward countries has opened the possibility of coming to power even with a blunted instrument'. In other words, workers' power can now be achieved in these countries *without* Marxist parties. The double-edged formula is masterly — and meaningless. There is a crisis of leadership, 'of course', in the backward countries, but there is no need for it to be resolved!

If we take the argument leading to this conclusion, we find exactly the same method, the same impressionism, the same dissolving of the concrete into the abstract, the same neglect of the conscious role of the class and the leadership, as in the Resolution's analysis of the advanced countries. For example:

In the colonial and semi-colonial countries, on the other hand, the very weakness of capitalism, the whole peculiar socio-economic structure produced by imperialism, the permanent misery of the great majority of the population in the absence of a radical agrarian revolution, the stagnation and even reduction of living standards while industrialization nevertheless proceeds relatively rapidly [?], create situations in which the failure of one revolutionary wave does not lead automatically to relative or even temporary social or economic stabilization. A seemingly inexhaustible succession of mass struggles continues, such as Bolivia has experienced for ten years. The weakness of the enemy offers the revolution fuller means of recovery from temporary defeats than is the case in imperialist countries'.

Now, of course, it is true that the 'specific weight' of the *national* bourgeoisie in the economic and political life of a colonial country is small, since it is international finance-capital which dominates the social structure. But when Trotsky wrote of this phenomenon in Tzarist Russia, developing the theory of permanent revolution, he was especially concerned to bring out, on the other hand, the increased significance of the role of the industrial proletariat, despite its small numbers. The greater concentration and militancy of this class, its birth at an already highly developed stage of the international movement, qualitatively decided its leading role in the struggle against Tzarism, and determined the necessity of the transition from

bourgeois to proletarian revolution. Trotsky eventually realized that only the type of party constructed by Lenin could carry out the strategy and tactics flowing from this perspective. Such a party was founded upon Marxist theory and was quite specifically *proletarian* in character. This proletarian character of the leadership does not stand in contradiction to the overwhelming preponderance of the peasantry in the population. In point of fact, where the working class is so outnumbered and even has close ties on many sides with the peasantry, there is need for special vigilance to assure that the Party is based on proletarian methods and Marxist theory.

The revisionists draw the opposite conclusion. A 'blunted instrument' will be sufficient, because of the weakness of the enemy. Defeats and lost opportunities are not so serious, because in any case the number of mass struggles is 'seemingly inexhaustible'. This abstracted impression is substituted for any analysis of the experience of the proletariat, and of the revolutionary vanguard, in Bolivia, Algeria, Ceylon, South Africa. Of course, it appears as a 'hard fact' that 'mass struggles' continuously recur, but the actual course of these struggles and the experience of the classes in struggle is completely neglected. This is parallel to the actual politics of the revisionists, with their uncritical praise of Castro-ism, peasant guerrilla uprisings, and so on. Similarly with the phrase, 'the weakness of the enemy offers *the revolution* fuller means of recovery from temporary defeats than is the case in imperialist countries'. (our emphasis — Editors). Here the words 'the revolution' are an abstraction with no meaning, an abstraction at far too general a level for any political, *class* orientation. Like the phrase 'colonial revolution', it is however at a level of abstraction which is perfectly adapted to acceptance of the existing leadership of the national liberation struggles. Any more exact abstraction, based on the class content of the struggle and the contradictions within the fight for political independence, would be precisely against the interests of the petty-bourgeois leadership, who also prefer non-class formulations — the Algerian revolution, the Arab revolution, Arab Socialism, etc., etc.

The Resolution proceeds to discuss the various 'sectors' — colonial revolution, political revolution in the workers' states, revolution in the advanced countries — considering each one with the same method we have outlined. As 'Marxists', of course, our 'unifiers' must insist that the struggles in these three spheres form a 'dialectical unity' — 'each force influences the other'. By this is meant something quite

different from the actual struggle of the class forces on a world scale. The Resolution refers, for example, to the interrelation of the USSR and the absence of successful revolutions in advanced countries in this way: 'This same delay [in the advanced countries] also retards the maturing of the political revolution in the USSR, especially inasmuch as it does not place before the Soviet workers a *convincing example* of an alternative way to build Socialism' (our emphasis — Editors).

Now, of course, the propaganda effect in the USSR of such a revolution would be enormous. But to lay the major emphasis upon this 'example', or lack of it, in one's analysis of the interrelations of the struggles of the international proletariat, is to assume that in the class struggle the mechanism is identical with that of the Pabloites' own method — the response of individuals to impressions. What is above all important here is the single task of constructing fighting links between revolutionaries in all countries through the development of the Fourth International. Only a detailed historical treatment of the history of the sections of our own Marxist movement in relation to the experience of the working class in each country can give us the basis for such an analysis. Where events occur which pose *real* problems of the inter-related, international character of all revolutionary struggles, the Resolution is silent. In the Cuban crisis of October-November 1962 the fate of the present government and of the working class in Cuba was clearly posed as an *international* problem. Only a correct orientation towards Stalinism as a counter-revolutionary force, and towards the organization of revolutionary struggles led by Marxist parties against the rulers of the imperialist countries, could guide those who wished to defend Cuba against US imperialism. It was not just a question of the weakness of the national bourgeoisie, undoubtedly true for Cuba, but of the *impossibility* of fighting for the socialist revolution in Cuba outside of a struggle against the counter-revolutionary Stalinist bureaucracy, the specific stage of whose relations to imperialism must be grasped. What is more, Khrushchev's latest approaches to the US ruling class and to the Roman Catholic Church are a defensive reaction of the Soviet bureaucracy to the mounting struggle of the working class in both Western and Eastern Europe and the USSR. Instead of this kind of *class* analysis of the 'interrelation' of the struggles in different parts of the world we actually found the revisionists welcoming Khrushchev's 'actions for peace'. Once again the connection between revisionist theory and opportunist practice is crystal-clear.

What is the Colonial Revolution?

In its consideration of 'the Colonial Revolution' the Resolution expresses most clearly the politics of revisionism. This 'colonial revolution' is described in the terms used by petty-bourgeois and centrists everywhere:

As a development in world history, the colonial revolution signifies above all that two billion human beings — men, women and children in areas where the tradition for centuries has been to live as passive subjects, condemned to super-oppression and super-exploitation, utter humiliation and destruction of their national traditions, even their national identity when they have not been made the target of mass slaughter and extermination — suddenly acquire a voice, a language and a personality of their own. Basically, the colonial revolution is the irrepressible tendency of these two billion human beings to become at last the masters and builders of their own destiny. The fact that this is socially possible only through a workers' state provides the objective basis for the tendency of the colonial revolution to move into the tracks of the permanent revolution.

There follows a feeble attempt to answer the criticisms which have been made in recent years of the exclusive Pabloite stress on 'objective forces' making for this 'permanent revolution'. But we are left with an absolutely worthless conclusion:

. . . any ideas that this process will recur automatically or inevitably within a certain time limit [?] necessarily leads to a distorted estimate of the actual relationship of forces and replaces scientific analysis by illusions and wishful thinking. It pre-supposes that the objective process will solve by itself a task which can only be solved in struggle through the subjective effort of the vanguard; i.e., revolutionary socialist conquest of the leadership of the mass movement. That this is possible in the very process of the revolution and in a relatively short time, has been adequately demonstrated in the case of Cuba. That it is not inevitable, and that without it the revolution is certain to suffer serious defeats or be limited at best to inconclusive victories is demonstrated by much in the recent history of other Latin-American countries; for instance, Bolivia, Argentina and Guatemala.

It is difficult to see how this face-saving formula can be made consistent with the earlier conclusion that 'a blunted instrument' will suffice

for victory of the socialist revolution in these countries. It might be argued that it is only a question of emphasis. But this is just the point: *unless* the whole concentration of Marxists is upon the construction of independent proletarian parties, then the masses will be betrayed. For the revisionists, it is quite a different matter; the existence or non-existence of such parties before a revolutionary situation *may or may not* be decisive! It is not possible to develop revolutionary strategy and tactics from such a perspective. All that follows is a passive acceptance of the existing leadership, covered up by a semblance of 'left' activity supposedly designed to encourage the likes of Ben Bella along 'the tracks of the permanent revolution'.

Wisely, the Resolution neglects a detailed analysis of the experience of the class struggle in particular countries: 'A more precise perspective for each of the great ethno-geographic zones of the colonial revolution (Latin-America, The Arab World, Black Africa, the Indian subcontinent and South-east Asia) can only be worked out on the basis of a concrete analysis of the specific social and political forces at work and of their more exact economic conditions'. The colonial revolution, already an ideological abstraction, is now subdivided into 'ethno-geographic zones'. The significance of this division is not indicated, but its relation to historical materialism is obscure, to say the least. It conforms much more readily to the ideologies of the bourgeois-nationalist leaders.

In place of analysing the experience of the class struggle and of the revolutionary vanguard in particular countries, the Resolution enumerates 'certain general social trends which apply to all or most of the colonial or semi-colonial countries'. It is almost sufficient to quote at length from this section of the Resolution to confirm the correctness of the criticisms which the sections of the International Committee have made of the Socialist Workers' Party and the Pabloites in the last two years in relation to the struggle in the backward countries.

First, then:

- (a) *The numerical and economic weakness of the national bourgeoisie.* Despite the priority granted them by history, the national bourgeoisie has proved incapable of handling the capital made available under the rubric of 'aid to the undeveloped countries' in such a way as to achieve optimum results in industrialization. This is perhaps the biggest obstacle in the way of a 'bourgeois solution' of the problem of economic underdevelopment. Everywhere we find the same phenomena: Of available surplus capital, a major part is diverted from industrial uses to investment in land or usury,

hoarding, import of luxury consumers goods, even outright flight abroad. This incapacity of the national bourgeoisie is not the result or mere reflection of its moral corruption but a normal operation of the capitalist drive for profits under the given economic and social conditions. Fear of permanent revolution is not the least of the motives involved.

We are dealing here with a tendency which capitulates to the petty-bourgeois nationalist leadership. Particularly in Algeria, this leadership has maintained relationships with French imperialism. Pablo has in the past 'explained' the necessity of such agreements, leaving intact as they do large French investments in Algeria. It is a matter, in fact, of managing *better* the resources made available by the imperialists; this will achieve 'optimum results in industrialization'. This paragraph from the Resolution abandons the Marxist analysis of objective relations between world finance-capital and the exploited masses of the colonial countries, with the petty-bourgeois, nationalist leaderships playing a Bonapartist role in the 'independent' states. Such a clear political characterization of the role of the petty-bourgeois nationalists is avoided by the device of having separated off 'the colonial revolution' in each country for separate consideration, ignoring the international economic and class content of the actual social relations within the country.

The second 'general social trend' indicated is 'the creation of the infrastructure of heavy industry through the state, taking the form of nationalized property'. Referring in particular to Egypt and India, the Resolution points out that these nationalizations do not in themselves alter the *capitalist* character of the state; they are carried out under the leadership of the 'urban petty bourgeoisie, especially the intellectuals, the military and state functionaries', and are indispensable for the foundation of a *bourgeois* state. What is *not* discussed in the Resolution is the actual relation of the practical politics of the revisionists to these petty-bourgeois governments. In Algeria, the revisionists, as we have seen, in fact give support to the petty-bourgeois, nationalist government. They express similar uncritical approval of Castro in Cuba. There was even published an article by one Sadi both in the Socialist Workers' Party *International Socialist Review* and the Pabloite *Fourth International* advocating 'entry' into Nasser's national movement, and specifically disavowing any organized independent political opposition. A class characterization of nationization is incomplete, and *turns into its opposite*, if it does not sharply define the role of the proletariat in opposing the petty-bourgeois nationalists.

The Myth of the Revolutionary Peasantry

The remaining two 'general social trends' in the colonial revolution are of special interest, insofar as they represent crude attempts, once again, to accommodate Pablo's extreme revisionist formulations while at the same time reassuring those who are not prepared to go so far as Pablo in drawing the logical conclusions from their revisionist method. It is a question here of 'the strategic role of the colonial proletariat' and 'the radical role of peasantry'. The Resolution emphasizes that factory workers are an insignificant minority in colonial countries; most important are 'the miners, plantation hands, agricultural workers and largely unemployed — typical for the colonial economy'. We have here a formula to satisfy Pablo, who recently wrote approvingly of Fanon's thesis that the colonial proletariat is, in fact, a privileged stratum. From this flowed the conclusion that the rural masses, 'the revolutionary peasantry', would form the base of the socialist revolution. Many of Pablo's followers naturally could not accept this clear contradiction of Marxist writings on the peasantry as a class with no independent political role: the peasantry rebels against oppression, but the political content of this rebellion depends on the leadership coming from the bourgeoisie *or* from the proletariat. The Resolution we are considering somehow finds a halfway formulation: 'In the form of expanding guerrilla forces, the peasantry has undoubtedly played a much more radical and decisive role in the colonial revolution than was foreseen in Marxist theory. It has revealed a social nature somewhat different from that of the traditional peasantry of the advanced capitalist countries'.

But what is this 'somewhat different social nature'? The Resolution itself finds it necessary to point out that 'the existence of a large majority of small land-owning peasants has undoubtedly served as a momentary brake on the revolutionary process in several South-East Asian countries (Malaya, Thailand, even [?] Ceylon)'. For the rest, it is no revelation that the peasantry is not a homogeneous class specific to capitalism. In every country its composition is determined by a complex history of past economic systems and their degree of dissolution. In no case is the peasantry a homogeneous class in the same sense as the proletariat tends towards homogeneity through the laws of capitalism and the necessities of the class struggle. Like other petty-bourgeois strata, the peasantry under capitalism is constantly being

differentiated by the penetration of big capital into the countryside. There is no doubt of the economic breakdown and utter impoverishment of the peasantry in colonial countries in the epoch of imperialist decay, and of the consequent mass forces of revolt who become potential allies of the proletariat against imperialism. But none of this alters the central importance of proletarian leadership. Here it is necessary constantly to re-emphasise the elementary lessons of the experience of Lenin, Trotsky and the Bolsheviks, who had to fight against ideas of just this kind from Russian petty-bourgeois, radical intellectuals. This is particularly true in relation to the Resolution's final point on the peasantry: as against 'the *ingrained individualism* of the classical peasantry', the Resolution contrasts 'the *predisposition towards collectivism* among rural populations still living under conditions of total or partial tribal (communal) property. This class, in contrast to the traditional peasantry, is not *per se* opposed to the introduction of socialist property relations in the countryside. It therefore remains an ally of the proletariat throughout the whole process of permanent revolution'.

It is difficult to know where to begin in criticizing such patent nonsense. Where are the rural populations still living under partial or total tribal communism? Without a doubt, all known existing societies are class societies. The subsistence cultivators of Africa, Asia and South America have long ago seen their societies fragmented by the penetration first of commercial and then of industrial and finance capital. Whether the greater part of them were still tribal-communal is very doubtful in any case. But worse follows. If such societies *did* exist, how could we explain the term used in the second sentence of our quotation: 'This class . . .'?! If the people concerned are in a 'totally tribal' society, they are clearly not a class; if it is only a 'partially tribal' society, then its people are by definition differentiated, and share membership of the classes of that society into which they have been incorporated. It is thus impossible to attach any meaning whatever to this essay in a 'peasantry of a new type'. It is about as new as the Russian village community so beloved of the Narodniks. It is not, of course, necessary to comment on the Resolution's injunctions on future workers' states to imbue these primitive communists with 'the essential components of discipline, self-management and modern industrial rationality'!

Pablo's crowning formula, in his previous writings on the 'revolutionary peasantry', was the so-called 'Jacobin leadership *sui*

generis', a conglomeration of petty-bourgeois intellectuals and other politically active people forced by repression to leave the urban centres and put themselves at the head of peasant uprisings. This is not even a sophisticated formula; it is only a very transparent justification of the existing domination of petty-bourgeois leaders over the mass movement in the backward countries. Those who have 'unified' on the basis of this Resolution cannot denounce and expose Pablo's role, much less make a principled break from his course, which will inevitably compromise them all. Instead, they adopt once again a formula designed to obscure the differences: 'It is an absolute necessity to educate revolutionary Marxist cadres and to build tendencies and independent parties wherever possible [?] in all colonial countries'. And finally, although it bears no relation and is emptied of all meaning by the earlier equivocations, double-edged formulae, and outright revisions, we have the pious repetition of correct phrases: 'The building of sections of the Fourth International capable of working out concrete analyses of their specific national situations and finding concrete solutions to the problems remains a central strategic task in all countries'. What will these 'sections of the Fourth International' do, since 'blunted instruments' are sufficient? What will be their role in relation to the existing parties and leaders? What will be their class basis? An answer to these questions is the absolute prerequisite of 'finding concrete solutions' to the problems of the class struggle in the colonial countries.

Effects of the Colonial Revolution

We saw earlier how the 'unifiers' conceived of the interrelations of the revolution in the advanced countries and the struggle of the workers in the USSR and Eastern Europe. The 'effects' of the colonial revolution are considered in similar mechanical fashion, instead of through the struggle and consciousness of the vanguard and the working class. We are told that the French working class received a 'breathing space' after de Gaulle's accession to power because of the struggle of the Algerian people. This is breathtaking! It was the failure of working-class leadership during the French political crisis provoked by the Algerian struggle in 1958 which brought the Bonaparte de Gaulle to power. Instead of proceeding from this *real* 'relationship of power', the Resolution proceeds from 'de Gaulle's power', 'the

Algerian Revolution', and so on, as settled 'facts' to be balanced one against another. We are treated to a similar piece of mechanistic speculation with regard to Angola: 'In Portugal, the outbreak of revolution in Angola and other colonies proved decisive in undermining the stability of the Salazar dictatorship, creating the pre-revolutionary climate which has placed the overthrow of Portuguese fascism on the order of the day. The fall of Salazar would help accelerate the Spanish revolution, weaken the Bonapartist regime in France and intensify the new wave of militancy in the West European labour movement'. Here is illustrated the extent to which the politics of the revisionists have become only the verdict of outside commentators on some process in which they have no part. They make some perfunctory remarks about the effect of the colonial revolution in radicalizing certain elements in the labour movement but without any indication of the real content or class significance of this 'influence'. For example:

. . . it has affected vanguard elements in an immediate way, crystallizing new revolts against the waiting, passive or treacherous attitude of the old leaderships towards the colonial revolution or fresh reactions against the generally low level of politics [?] in some imperialist countries. This has occurred not only in France where these new layers have been most vocal [?] but also in several other European countries, especially Spain, and in the US where the opportunity to solidarize with the Cuban Revolution has opened the door to radical politics [?] for a new generation of vanguard elements [?]. In the same way the influence of the colonial revolution, especially the African revolution, upon vanguard elements in the Negro movement has helped prepare the emergence of a new radical left wing. In all these cases, it is the task of revolutionary Marxists to seek to win the best elements of this newly emerging vanguard to Trotskyism and to fuse them into the left wing of the mass movement.

In point of fact, the SWP's method of 'solidarizing with the Cuban Revolution' only served to take the Party closer to 'radical' petty-bourgeois circles. Similarly, the 'effects' of the mass struggles in Africa on the Negro movement in the US are not at all straightforward and homogeneous. Insofar as they are seen simply as political struggles for 'independence' within the framework of imperialism, adequately represented by the likes of Nkrumah, then they can strengthen middle-class leadership of the Negro struggle. Only if they are understood and explained in a Marxist way can they be fused with

the real class needs of the Negro workers. But the Pabloites prefer to speculate, once more, on 'general' influences rather than subjecting these to class analysis: 'In general the colonial revolution has helped to overcome lethargy and the feeling of political impotence'.

A final 'influence' of the colonial revolution considered by the Resolution is its effect on world Stalinism. Apart from the usual glorification of the existing character of the national liberation movement,* the most emphatic point made by the Resolution is that 'The victory in Cuba marked the beginning of a new epoch in the history of the world revolution; for, aside from the Soviet Union, this is the first workers' state established outside the bounds of the Stalinist apparatus'. The essential consequence of this has been that, 'In fact an international Castro-ist current has appeared inside the world Communist and revolutionary-socialist movement'. If the influence of this current is still largely confined to the backward countries, 'One of the reasons for this is that the Cuban leadership has not yet reached an understanding of how it can best facilitate revolutionary rebirth in these areas'.

Here we have reached a crucial point in the role of revisionism today. Everything is staked on the initiative and consciousness of 'the Cuban leadership'. It is true that 'Castro-ism' has found much support among peasant leaders and radical intellectuals in backward countries, but this is precisely because of the failure of the working class to resolve its crisis of leadership. In such a situation, petty-bourgeois tendencies basing themselves on superficial theories about peasant risings and guerrilla warfare easily find a following. Indeed, the bitterness of exploitation and the apparent ease of early success against rotten ruling cliques encourages many revolutionaries to go through an experience with this kind of ideology, particularly when the Stalinists offer them only class-collaboration policies. To accept as a 'fact' or 'new reality' the rise of petty-bourgeois-dominated, national revolutionary movements, instead of seeing as an essential part of their origin the opportunist betrayals of working-class leadership, is another example of the method empiricism, of what Trotsky called 'worship of the accomplished fact'.

* 'The emergence of mass revolutionary forces led by parties or tendencies which have developed outside the realm of Stalinist control (Cuba, Algeria, Angola) has introduced the most powerful disintegrating element into international Stalinism, favouring the development of a revolutionary left wing.'

In case anyone should think that the revisionists have thereby abandoned the role of the Fourth International, we have what is really a very clear depiction of the perspectives of the Pabloites and the SWP:

The appearance of more workers' states through further development of the colonial revolution, particularly in countries like Algeria, could help strengthen and enrich the international current of Castro-ism, give it longer-range perspectives and help bring it closer to understanding the necessity for a new revolutionary Marxist international of mass parties. Fulfilment of this historic possibility depends *in part* on the role which the FI plays in the colonial solution and the capacity of the FI to *help* win fresh victories.

This paragraph does not need lengthy analysis. The role of the Fourth International, in fact absolutely necessary to *lead* the proletariat in every country, is here reduced to 'helping' in the winning of fresh victories. This 'help' will have a 'part' in determining whether or not the 'Castro-ist currents' come closer to understanding the need for a Fourth International. By this subtle influence our 'Trotskyists' will also influence the revolution in Eastern Europe and Russia. Thus: 'The infusion of Trotskyist concepts in this new Castro-ist current will also influence the development of a conscious revolutionary leadership, particularly in the workers' states, will help prevent "Titoist" deviations and better assure the evolution of mass pressure and direct action into the cleansing force of the political revolution. The development of the Portuguese and Spanish revolutions, historically possible in a short period [?], can also give rise to new tendencies of the Castro-ist type which could help the Cubans and related currents to achieve a fuller understanding of world revolution in its entirety'. So much for the *phrase*, 'The crisis of revolutionary leadership exists, of course, in the colonial and semi-colonial countries as well as in the advanced countries'. For Trotsky and the founders of the Fourth International the *content* of the insistence on resolving the crisis of working-class leadership was the urgent task of constructing parties of the Fourth International. The 'Reunification' of the Pabloites, with SWP support, is based on the exact opposite, reducing the 'International' to the role of ideological apologists for the existing leaderships of the mass movement, with appropriate formulae to suit the particular conditions of each country.

Russia, Eastern Europe and China

In considering the workers' states, the Resolution offers only a collection of impressions and speculations. There is no analysis of the contradictions within these countries and consequently no basis for any consideration of the tasks of building sections of the Fourth International against the counter-revolutionary bureaucracy. Phrases can be found which 'accept' the necessity of political revolution to overthrow the bureaucracy, but exactly opposite formulations represent accurately the actual method and theory of the Resolution. Pabloism's first direct political expression was the theory that the Soviet bureaucracy, in the conditions following the establishment of workers' states in Eastern Europe and China, would be forced to itself express the revolutionary pressure of the masses. Within the SWP leadership, which at first opposed this orientation, there soon appeared formulations which equated reforms and revolution in the USSR. The 'reunification' document preserves a solid base for this type of policy and leaves the way open for the most right-wing elements in their support of Khrushchev, e.g., 'The evolution of the workers' states as a whole since the victory of the Chinese Revolution in 1949 and especially after Stalin's death in 1953 has therefore steadily removed the causes that fostered political passivity among the masses and their vanguard', and 'Certain sectors of the bureaucracy have indicated awareness of the objective need to loosen the Stalinist stranglehold on the productive forces the better to meet the threatening military and technological advances of US imperialism'. Once again we have a picture of 'the evolution of the workers' states as a whole' objectively removing the basis of the bureaucracy's role, together with the supposition that these objective trends will be expressed through the bureaucracy itself. The essence here is the same as it was in considering the backward countries: the working class must have a conscious *leadership*, forged in struggle against the class forces who cling to their power and domination in face of the changing objective situation. Starting from this point of view, the reactions of the bureaucracy or of factions within will be seen as tactical defences of the reactionary forces, not as relatively progressive or 'left' tendencies.

For all the talk about political revolution, the consequence of the Pabloites' method is to accept the perspective of Soviet technical

progress and 'peaceful coexistence' upon which Khrushchev and the Soviet bureaucracy themselves insist. Thus:

However entrancing the picture of the worldwide consequences of an *early* victory of the political revolution in the Soviet Union may be, the process may prove to be longer drawn out than we desire. It would therefore be disastrous for Marxist revolutionary forces to stake everything on this one card, meantime overlooking the very real opportunities for breakthrough in the colonial and imperialist countries before the political revolution in the USSR succeeds. Consequently it is advisable to take into account the effect which continuous technological and economic progress of the USSR and the other workers' states can have on the world revolutionary process in the absence of an early revolutionary victory.

True, the Resolution rejects 'the view that the economic and technological advances of the workers' states can in themselves decisively modify the relationship of forces between the classes in the imperialist countries, or contribute decisively to the overthrow of capitalism', but its conclusion is finally: 'The main contribution to the development of the proletarian revolution in the imperialist countries remains therefore the effect in the labour movement of the crisis of Stalinism and the technological and economic gains of the USSR'.

The Advanced Capitalist Countries – The Key

We have already indicated the basically false method and revisionist conclusion of the Pabloites and the SWP leaders on the class struggle in the advanced capitalist countries. In its final section the 'reunification' Resolution returns to the theme of the relation between militancy and changes in living standards.

In an attempt to justify their own concentration on work within the bureaucracy and inability to turn to the struggles of the most oppressed sections of the working class, the Pabloites have discovered that in fact the highly-paid workers, once their standards are disturbed, are most likely to set going the 'revolutionary process', e.g.:

What both theory and experience do prove is that the most revolutionary consequences follow not so much from the *absolute level* of real wages and living standards as from their *relative short-term fluctuations*. Attempts to lower even slightly a hard-won high level, or the widespread fear that such an attempt is in preparation, can under certain conditions touch off great class actions that tend to pass rapidly from the defensive to the offensive

stage and put on the agenda struggles of an objectively pre-revolutionary significance around transitional slogans. Such struggles may even lead to revolutionary situations.

Recent strike waves in Belgium, Spain and Italy — spearheaded by the *best-paid workers* — again prove that it is quite false to hold that the highest-paid workers are automatically 'corrupted' by 'capitalist prosperity'.

It is necessary to be very clear about the role of this abstract speculating. The sharp swing to the right by Khrushchev is definitely a response to the revival of the class struggle in the advanced countries and in Eastern Europe. In the US and Europe the most oppressed sections of the working class, particularly the youth, are being drawn into the struggle. This is especially true in Britain and in the Negro struggle in America. Trotskyists will win the leadership of the working class only if they can build the revolutionary party out of these sections. At this point the struggle against the conservative organs of the labour bureaucracy becomes extremely sharp. In this sharp battle older workers and trade unionists who have gone through the prolonged 'boom' can be won from industrial 'militancy' to revolutionary politics. Because the Pabloite analysis, as we saw earlier, is an analysis by commentators and not participants, it neglects entirely the factor of consciousness and leadership. This is why it ends with grandiose and abstract conclusions with no import for the strategy and tactics of the revolutionary party. Thus:

If some of the obviously fine qualities of the undernourished proletariat of yesterday seem to have disappeared among Western workers, other good new qualities have appeared, precisely as a result of the higher standing of living and culture gained by the proletariat in the West. The gap between the knowledge of the skilled worker and the bourgeois technician has virtually disappeared or been greatly reduced. Technologically the Western worker is much more capable of socialist self-management today than was his father or grandfather; and he feels more strongly the need to play a conscious, leading role in the process of production.

It is also easier for today's worker to grasp the overall economic interaction among all the factors, the intertwining of all economic problems and the needs and practical purposes of socialist planning. Increased leisure also means the increased possibility to participate on a mass scale in political administration [?], something that never existed in the past. It is not for Marxists to deny the basic Marxist truth that capitalism is the great educator of the workers for socialism, at least on the economic field.

All this 'objective' consideration of the working class as a collection of individuals sensitive to the economic climate, rather than as a fighting force, is a prelude to the Resolution's justification of 'deep entry'. After explaining the pressure of the falling rate of profit on the employers, which will lead to big wages struggles, the Resolution predicts even revolutionary situations:

. . . provided that the working class, or at least its broad vanguard [?], has sufficient self-confidence to advance the socialist alternative to the capitalist way of running the economy and the country. This in turn hinges essentially on the activity and influence of a broad left wing in the labour movement that educates the vanguard in the necessity of struggling for this socialist alternative and that builds up self-confidence and an apparatus capable of revolutionary struggles through a series of partial struggles.

and further:

The objective is to stimulate and broaden mass struggles to the utmost and to move as much as possible towards playing a leading role in such struggles, beginning with the most elementary demands and seeking to develop them in the direction of transitional slogans on the level of governmental power and the creation of bodies of dual power.

The advanced countries are the fundamental key to the world revolution. It is here above all that the resolution of the crisis of leadership of the working class, the construction of Leninist parties, will strike at the heart of imperialism. But here, too, the revisionists have found a formula for trailing behind the official leadership.

At the centre of the actual reconstruction of the Fourth International will be the building of Trotskyist parties who make a relationship with the strength of the working class in the advanced countries, a struggle which requires a bitter fight against the opportunists and centrists of all kinds. Those who excuse the betrayals of the bureaucracies, even dressing them up as reflections of mass pressure, stand in the way of this vital task.

The Fourth International

The revisionist ideas we have analysed here are the basis for the 'reunified Fourth International' of the Pabloites, supported by the Socialist Workers' Party (USA). Denouncing the Trotskyists of the

International Committee as 'sectarians' and 'ultra-lefts', deliberately confusing our position with that of an adventurist group (the 'Posadas' group) which split from their own ranks only two years ago, they unite on the basis of liquidating the independent Marxist party, which necessitates the abandonment of Marxism. Instead, all manner of demagogy and spurious nonsense talked by petty-bourgeois bureaucratic and nationalist leaders is welcomed by them as approaching Marxism.

For example, in its section, 'The Fourth International', the Resolution says:

The validity of the Trotskyist explanation of the character of the bureaucracy as a *social force* has become accepted by all serious students of the Soviet Union. It is even reflected in the theoretical basis and justification offered by the Yugoslav government in its experimentation with workers' councils and self-management.

Not only Tito, but also Castro is welcomed as a convert to Trotsky's views on bureaucracy and the role of the working class, even to the extent of extravagant claims such as this: 'The attack Fidel Castro launched against the Anibal Escalantes of Cuba sounded like a repetition of Leninist and Trotskyist speeches heard in the Soviet Union almost forty years ago'.

In point of fact, Castro's speech* was a defence of the independence of the State officialdom, not only against one wing inside Cuban Stalinism, but also against *any* political control from outside the State apparatus itself. We thus have the spectacle of 'Trotskyists' not only justifying the manoeuvres of petty-bourgeois state bureaucracies, but even welcoming them as expressions of the creeping victory of Trotskyism.

Theory is no longer seen by these 'Trotskyists' as a guide to action, but as a series of formal, abstract writings to be checked and 'confirmed' in the heads of their possessors. Our 'theoreticians' have the function only of casting around for 'examples' in the course of events or in the speeches and writings of politicians, examples which they then abstract from the context and list as 'confirmations'. By contrast, Marxist theory is *in fact* confirmed and developed only by the active penetration of reality by the Marxists and the working class. The very expressions used in the document illustrate the difference: 'In the

* For a more detailed analysis of this speech, see 'Revisionism and the Fourth International' in *Labour Review*, Vol. VII, No. 5, pp. 179-180.

same way the theory of permanent revolution, kept alive by the Fourth International as a precious heritage received from Trotsky . . . ' With this approach theory becomes an ikon with the possibility of perhaps a few quantitative additions, rather than a qualitative development through revolutionary practice. The Resolution indeed describes this explicitly: 'The cadres of the Fourth International carried out their revolutionary duty in keeping alive the programme of Trotskyism and adding to it as world events dictated'.

This part of the Resolution concerned with 'The Fourth International', which should be concerned with the struggle to establish and develop the theory and practice of independent revolutionary parties on the programme of the Fourth International, is in fact something quite different. After pointing out that small organizations are in greater danger from sectarianism than from opportunism, which is 'generally easier to recognize' (this passes for serious argument!), this section is devoted to a collection of formulae to excuse the virtual liquidation of independent revolutionary parties. 'Entrism' is necessary, says the Resolution, because the masses are still dominated by opportunist leaders: under these conditions, 'the masses, when they display readiness to take the road of revolutionary action, do not begin with a fully developed Marxist consciousness but with an outlook which is closer to left centrism.

In addition to this, the bureaucratic leaderships do not facilitate bringing Marxist educational material to the ranks. They operate as ruthless permanent factions, completely hostile to the ideas of Trotskyism and prepared to engage in witch-hunting and the use of most undemocratic measures against those who advance fresh or challenging views

We have seen how, both in the advanced and the backward countries, the revisionists in fact capitulate to leaders of a petty-bourgeois type. The theoretical justification for this is that, through a tactic of 'entrism', the Fourth International encourages the rapid evolution of 'left centrist' mass movements: 'The revolutionary nuclei actively participate in building left-wing tendencies *capable of leading broader sections of the masses into action*. Through the experiences built up in these actions, they assist in transforming the best forces of these centrist or left-centrist tendencies into genuine revolutionary Marxists'. For all the disclaimers that entrism does not mean forming only 'pressure groups', this formulation makes it very clear that the leader-

ship of the decisive mass struggles will be centrist in character, and that the 'Fourth International' will not organize for the political defeat of these leaders, preferring instead to 'transform' them into Trotskyists. All the talk about transitional demands resolves itself into the assumption of a purely educational role within the centrist apparatus rather than revolutionary leadership of the masses. The history of the Belgian General Strike and the Pabloite capitulation to the FLN are the most striking examples.

Two Types of Leadership

The decisive test of a Marxist party's orientation towards the mass movement is the degree of success in building a revolutionary cadre, whose links with the working class are forged in struggle against the opportunists and bureaucrats. In their concern over the past ten or fifteen years to 'get closer to the new reality', the revisionists have produced a circle of 'leaders' and a method of work diametrically opposed to this revolutionary preparation. For the colonial and semi-colonial countries, it is clear that the so-called 'sections' of the Fourth International which follow Pablo have become mere apologists for the nationalist leaderships. Their abandonment of an independent orientation to the working class is explicit. Such a method produces only a soft group of professional advisers who are not averse to becoming petty functionaries, as we see in Algeria. From these positions of 'influence' they help along the 'objective' process whereby the petty-bourgeois leaders are pushed towards Marxism.

In the advanced countries, these errors take similar form. The grandiose 'World Congresses' of Pablo's International, with their claims of innumerable represented sections, discuss everything under the sun except the actual construction of the revolutionary leadership. What is the balance-sheet of 'entrism *sui generis*'? The tactic of entry into the mass labour organisations must build up a body of experience about trade union work and the methods of politically preparing an alternative leadership in battle against the opportunists and centrists; that is the purpose of entry. But at no Pabloite Congresses is there any discussion of this experience. Marxism develops as a science, by consciously working over the experience of the movement in struggle. But for the Pabloites such questions do not arise: 'entry' work consists of steadily entrenching themselves in positions within the apparatus, from which they will 'help' or 'encourage' the 'left centrist' tendencies

who are in any case historically next in line for the mantle of leadership.

Such orientation produces a particular type of national section and a particular type of leadership within the Pabloite International. Around the publications of this group there gather numbers of petty-bourgeois intellectuals who very easily accept a standpoint of 'principled' but quite abstract avowals of Marxism, divorced from any struggle to construct a leadership against the enemies of Marxism and of the working class. Such groups seek constantly for 'alliances' with all kinds of centrist trends, cultivating the most naive illusions about the 'leftward' tendencies of these 'allies' in Parliamentary and Trade Union circles, as in Britain and Belgium. The real task of Marxists, to 'go deeper and deeper into the working class' to build a power which will smash the bureaucracy, is anathema to these circles. To such a political way of life, the message that it is most important to encourage the 'left centrists' is a gift from heaven. The leaders of this International are, more and more, men of 'influence', men with 'reputations' in petty-bourgeois circles, and not working-class leaders, not leaders familiar with the intimate and detailed problems of the working class and the revolutionary party.

The sections of the 'International' led by this type of 'leader' are surrounded not by the most militant section of the working class (in particular, today, the youth), but by their flimsy and deliberately unclarified relationship with the centrist and bureaucratic tendencies. In this environment, all the tendencies towards extreme revisionism which we have indicated are assured of a rapid growth; and are now strangling to death whatever remains of the cadres of the Pabloite International. In the United States, as we have pointed out in an earlier section of this report, the same result has been achieved by the SWP without benefit of the 'entrism' tactic. The well-known theories of 'regroupment' of the Left after the Stalinist crisis of 1956 and of joint electoral activity independent of the Democrats and Republicans, both of which are part of a general orientation of the Party's work towards the 'radical' milieu in the United States, were the substitute for 'entrism', which was not a possibility. There is consequently a situation in the SWP where Trade Union work is at its lowest ebb and has produced no new cadres. The old leadership survives at the core of the Party, more and more concerned with creating a good impression in petty-bourgeois circles, from Castro to the *National Guardian*. While this orientation has matured over the

period since the war, a profound process of radicalisation has surged through the most oppressed sections of the working class. In the struggles now taking place in the USA, part of the overall radicalization in the advanced capitalist countries, the SWP is utterly incapable of leadership. It tails along behind the petty-bourgeois leaders of the Negro struggle, rejecting them only when their sway over the masses is coming to an end. The type of party into which the SWP has been turning is like the Pabloite sections, adapted to radical circles of petty-bourgeois, powerless to intervene in the real struggle of the class.

Leaders of this type are, not unnaturally, hostile to the International Committee, and particularly to the Socialist Labour League. Hansen advises the SLL to stop criticizing the centrists and instead, 'advance to meet the leftward-moving stream' in Britain. He is really advising an abandonment of the SLL's orientation towards the working class in struggle against the bureaucracy. But it is the work of the SLL and the other sections of the IC which is the real guarantee of the defeat of the revisionists in the international movement. In contrast to the Pabloites and the SWP, it has been possible to develop the basis of a new working-class leadership, to train in struggle a force which knows how to lead workers and to fight the opportunists. On this fundamental, principled basis, the SLL in fact has a tactical relationship on limited issues with centrist tendencies in the trade unions which is far more stable and successful than that of any of the revisionists, who merely submit themselves as errand-boys to the centrists.

The Resolution eventually tries to justify liquidationism by accepting a formulation which the SWP leadership has been toying with for the last two and a half years:

'An acute problem in relation to the construction of revolutionary-socialist parties in many countries is lack of time to organize and to gain adequate experience before the revolution breaks out. In previous decades this would signify certain defeat for the revolution. Because of a series of new factors, however, this is no longer *necessarily* the case. The example of the Soviet Union, the existence of workers' states from whom material aid can be obtained, and the relative weakening of world capitalism, have made it possible for revolutions in some instances to achieve partial successes, to reach certain plateaux (where they may rest in unstable equilibrium as in the case of Bolivia) and even to go as far as the establishment of a workers' state. Revolutionary Marxists in such countries face

extremely difficult questions, from an inadequate level of socialist consciousness among the masses to a dearth of seasoned or experienced cadres to carry out a myriad pressing tasks. No choice is open to them in such situations but to participate completely and wholeheartedly in the revolution and to build the party in the very process of the revolution itself.'

This passage is a fitting end to our long series of quotations. It contains the conclusion which excuses everything: *because of 'new factors' working-class power can be obtained without there necessarily having been constructed Marxist parties.* In practice, this means that the primary emphasis in the work of the Pabloite national sections will be to encourage the 'left centrist' leaderships, for this will be seen as the quickest way of making sure the working class is not 'overtaken' by revolution. In reality *the crisis of leadership has passed*; new factors mean that humanity can emerge from capitalism *without* the formation of conscious leaderships based on Marxism.

When these revolutions occur, Marxists have no alternative but to participate in them 'whole-heartedly', i.e., they must not appear as opponents of the petty-bourgeois leaderships. In Cuba, for example, they must enter Castro's party and work loyally within it. In Algeria, they must work for Ben Bella, and join with him in denouncing and imprisoning any opposition movements, Right or Left. The 'dearth of seasoned or experienced cadres to carry out a myriad pressing tasks' is a direct reference to the Pabloites' role with regard to Algeria, where they have made themselves recruiting sergeants for technicians to strengthen the Ben Bella government. As for 'building revolutionary parties in the process of the revolution itself', this is only the most extreme of the hypocritical formulae in which the Resolution abounds. It is precisely in the revolutionary situations of Algeria and Cuba that the building of the independent party had been most blatantly abandoned, on the assumption that the petty-bourgeois leaders themselves will become revolutionary Marxists. Even if the formulation were taken seriously as a contribution to theory, it would have to be immediately rejected as false. The task of revolutionaries is never to speculate about whether there is 'time' for the party to be constructed, but work in all the stages of development of the class struggle, guided by the long-term, revolutionary interests of the working class, to steel the revolutionary party in struggle against every arm of the capitalist class and its state, to develop a Bolshevik cadre with bonds of steel uniting it with every section of the pro-

letariat. This constant struggle, through periods of black reaction as well as in times of revolutionary upsurge, is the only guarantee of preparedness in the struggle for power. Even such a party, when the revolution occurs, will find it necessary to overcome internal conflict, hesitations, even desertions, as Lenin found in 1917. Such a perspective is absolutely alien to the facile notion of 'building parties in the process of revolution itself.'

Such are the political bases of the 'reunification' of revisionists which took place in Rome in 1963. The sections of our International Committee in Europe, in Latin America, in Africa, in Japan, and in the deformed workers' states of Eastern Europe, are united in their complete opposition to the revisionists. We are confident that in the course of action and of discussion, many of the followers of Pablo and Cannon will be compelled to change their views, and to recognise the need to return to the founding Programme of the Fourth International. Above all, the resurgence of the working class of the USA and of Western and Eastern Europe is the foundation for the great leap forward which is now possible in the Fourth International. This rising militancy of the revolutionary class is the ground of all our activity, and it is also the ground upon which the opportunists and centrists of all kinds will be defeated, because their room for manoeuvre with the imperialists grows smaller and smaller. The great international crisis of Stalinism is the most important proof of this process. Our fight against revisionism in the Fourth International is a vitally necessary part of our revolutionary political work in the working class. It is the revolutionary practice which will surely enable the Fourth International to provide the leadership of all those communists who come to take their place in the coming final battles of the working class to overthrow the power of world capital.

Chapter Six

Ceylon and the fruits of 'Reunification'

The International Committee's stand against the 'reunification' was rapidly vindicated by the bitter experience of the Pabloite betrayal in Ceylon in 1964. What emerges from the documentation is the unquestionable responsibility of the Pabloite leadership for the treacherous coalition politics of the LSSP, and the determination with which they impeded all discussion of the experience in the Pabloite ranks. The SWP covered up the betrayal as they had covered up the issues of the split. The International Committee, fighting to expose the coalitionists, was able to deepen the struggle against the revisionist basis of the 'reunification'.

DOCUMENT 12

Ceylon: The great betrayal

by G. Healy, July 4 and 11, 1964

Behind the Ceylon Coalition

WHAT is the truth about the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP) coalition in Ceylon? This is now the number one question for every Trotskyist throughout the world.

On June 7 at an aggregate conference of the membership, 507 voted for a coalition with the capitalist government of Mrs. Bandaranaike. 75 voted for the policy of the 'Unified Secretariat of the Fourth International' in Paris to support a United Left Front government of the Communist Party, the LSSP and the party of Philip Goonewardene, known as the Mahajana Eksath Peramuna (MEP)

This group, led by Colvin R. de Silva and Leslie Goonewardene, decided to remain in the Party even though it has entered the Coalition government. 159 members who opposed the policy of class collaboration walked out of the conference and formed the LSSP (Revolutionary Section).

Meeting in Paris on June 22, the 'United Secretariat' of the Fourth International unanimously expelled Dr. N.M.Perera, presently Finance Minister in Mrs. Bandaranaike's government, Anil Moonesinghe, Minister for Communications and Cholmondely Goonewardene MP, who accepted another ministerial post.

The same United Secretariat, without batting an eyelid, then decided to suspend 504 members of the LSSP from membership for having supported the coalition. It took no action against the Centre group of de Silva and Goonewardene even though they remain members of the coalition party. Nothing like this has happened in the international Trotskyist movement since its foundation.

The capitulation of the overwhelming majority of the LSSP to capitalist policies is the direct outcome of the split in 1953. This involved the forces of the International Committee, of which the Socialist Labour League is a member, and those who supported Pablo's revisionism, who are now grouped around the 'United Secretariat'.

The degeneration is inextricably bound up with the struggle inside the international Trotskyist movement. It constitutes the most complete example of betrayal by Pablo and his European allies, Germain and Pierre Frank.

These people must take the responsibility, since they have been in constant communication with the LSSP in Ceylon, for the past 18 years.

The answer lies not in Ceylon, but in an international study of the struggle against Pabloite revisionism. The real architects of the coalition reside in Paris.

The Lanka Sama Samaja Party was founded in 1935, mainly by students returning from London universities who supported the propaganda of the international Trotskyist movement against Stalinist betrayal.

The Party entered politics by critically supporting the national movement for independence of Ceylon from the yoke of British imperialism. In the early war years its leaders were imprisoned and escaped, some to India, where they founded Trotskyist groups, whilst others continued the illegal struggle on the island.

These student leaders came in the main from bourgeois families. Their parents in some cases were related to the leading aristocratic families on the island. Because of their native capitalist interests, these families tended to be hostile to imperialist overlordship, a factor which assisted the young leaders of the early LSSP.

In 1947 Ceylon was granted formal independence, which allowed, amongst other things, the granting of franchise through the setting up of an island Parliament.

In the elections of 1947 the Party won a number of seats. The opportunist ideas behind the present coalition began to form inside the ranks of the top leaders of the LSSP almost from this date.

It was one thing for these men to wage a national liberation struggle for independence from imperialism under conditions which allowed the native capitalists of Ceylon to continue to hold power as its agency.

It was another thing to build the LSSP as a revolutionary party whose aim was the destruction of bourgeois parliamentary democracy, the expropriation of the native capitalists and the setting up of the proletarian dictatorship in Ceylon. So far as this was concerned participation in Parliament was of secondary importance.

The main task before the LSSP was to lead the struggles, particularly of the working class and rural poor, against the national bourgeois imperialist agents, at the same time as they exposed Parliament from within.

It was precisely this struggle which the LSSP leadership evaded. They continuously avoided the training of a Marxist leadership with deep roots amongst the working class and rural poor which could carry out this task.

This would have meant a day-by-day, violent clash with their aristocratic friends and they were not prepared for such unpleasantness. It was so much easier to engage in a game of verbal shadow-boxing in Parliament.

So they turned more and more towards these parliamentary methods of struggle in a retreat from the historic responsibility of the building of the revolutionary party.

From 1947 to 1956 the Ceylon Parliament was dominated by the extreme right wing United National Party who included amongst its top leaders some of the most corrupt politicians it was possible to meet anywhere in the world.

In the late 40s and early 50s, the economic position of the island deteriorated and the United National Party began to lose support. The position became so serious that in 1952 a split was organized from that party by Mr. Bandaranaike, the late husband of the present Prime Minister, who then founded the Sri Lanka Freedom Party.

The economic situation went from bad to worse and the UNP launched attack after attack against the living standards of the workers and peasants.

On August 12, 1953, the LSSP led the great Hartal action against the increase in the price of rice. That action was in the nature of a direct and violent clash both with the capitalist UNP government and with the capitalist class of Ceylon as a whole. As the LSSP annual Party conference of 1954 said: 'The clash further reached in whole regions the level of actual rebellion . . . the masses were able to come out of this unprecedented direct action struggle with a sense of victory won and of a government rendered temporarily impotent'.

Clearly the situation was becoming desperate for the ruling class and British imperialism.

The formation of Mr. Bandaranaike's party was, therefore, of enormous importance to these reactionary forces. The UNP could no longer rule, so the demagogue Bandaranaike was ushered on to the scene.

To save the rule of native capitalism and imperialist interests, however, he had to pay lip-service in the founding programme of his party to vague socialist demands whilst at the same time he was firmly committed to the preservation of capitalism and imperialist interests on the island.

His party was a petty-bourgeois, capitalist party whose main objective was to head off the growing discontent of the masses with the UNP which, following the Hartal action, was resulting in a growth of support throughout the island for the LSSP.

The 1953 split in the Fourth International and events in Ceylon

Towards the end of 1953, the split took place in the Fourth International and it is now clear that this had a direct bearing on subsequent events in Ceylon.

The split arose over the Pablo theory that under the pressure of international events, an irreversible leftward process had begun inside the Soviet bureaucracy. This, it was implied, could lead to a section of the bureaucracy breaking away, assuming the role of a revolutionary leadership and re-introducing democracy inside the Soviet Union.

As Pablo, in Europe, was drafting his resolution 'Rise and Fall of Stalinism' in which he expounded his revisionist theory, Leslie Goonewardene, secretary of the LSSP, began speculating about the character of the SLFP.

In an early 1953 issue of the LSSP English weekly *Sama Samajist*, he designated the SLFP as 'a centrist party', which, although it upheld capitalism, could, he claimed, be supported in a number of its demands by the LSSP.

The illusion was therefore created that under certain conditions the SLFP would be forced to act in the interests of the working class of Ceylon.

Thus, he confused a process which is familiar in reformist parties based on the working class with the demagogic left cover of a petty-bourgeois party based on capitalism.

The SLFP was not a centrist party, but a capitalist party. It had come to the rescue of a discredited UNP with a left cover that was in practice meaningless. Its emergence was part of a deliberate calculation by the ruling class to isolate the LSSP.

Leslie Goonewardene placed a question mark over the whole future of the LSSP as a revolutionary party, at the same time as Pablo placed a question mark over the role and future of the Fourth International. From such a theoretical revision of Marxism, it was impossible for the revisionists Leslie Goonewardene and Colvin R. de Silva to build a revolutionary party in Ceylon.

Whilst under certain conditions the SLFP talked big against the imperialists and even nationalized insurance and petroleum installations, these actions bring little or no improvement to the conditions of the working class and should not be confused with the importance of nationalizing the major industries in Britain. The limited nationalization policies carried out by the SLFP, especially recently, are designed chiefly to strengthen the economic positions of native capitalist interests.

At a meeting early in 1954 in Colombo, the LSSP leadership unanimously rejected Pablo's proposals. In June of the same year an international conference took place in Europe to discuss Pablo's resolution 'Rise and Decline of Stalinism'. The delegation of the LSSP to that conference was led to Colvin R. de Silva and Leslie Goonewardene.

Instead of voting against Pablo's resolution as was already decided by their national committee in Ceylon, they agreed to accept that resolution provided Pablo, in turn, accepted a number of their amendments. They agreed, in fact, to turn a blind eye to what was going on in Europe provided he remained equally blind to their opportunist course in Ceylon.

This was the basis of the unprincipled agreement which has persisted in the international movement between Pablo and the LSSP leaders since that time.

They gave him support against those Trotskyists organized around the International Committee who wanted a political clarification of international events, whilst he, in turn, praised them to the skies as 'the largest Trotskyist organization' in the world thus deliberately covering up for their opportunism. Anyone who attempted to discuss the grave problems facing the movement was denounced as a disrupter and a factionalist by both sides.

In the general election of 1956, the SLFP took the government from the UNP for the first time. Now the theoretical designation of the SLFP as a centrist party took on a new form for the LSSP leaders. Shortly after this election they announced that the policy of the LSSP towards the SLFP should be one of 'responsive co-operation'.

The SLFP, like the UNP, did not and could not solve a single basic problem facing the Ceylonese working class and peasantry.

After Mr. Bandaranaike's government was formed in 1956, he came to a coalition agreement with the MEP, which is a petty-bourgeois party with some roots in the trade unions. It was founded and led by Philip Goonewardene, a man who had previously been expelled by the LSSP.

Although he was taken into Bandaranaike's Cabinet and the name of this coalition government changed to the MEP, it failed, as it was bound to, right from the beginning.

Strikes and other mass struggles were breaking out all over the island during the late 1950s. Even the political resolutions of the annual conference of the LSSP which took place on July 18/19, 1959, had this to say:

There are two principal features of the current political situation which requires to be carefully assessed for the purpose of determining the tactics of the struggle to overthrow the M.E.P. Government. On the one hand there has been during the last year and a half a tendency amongst sections of the masses and especially of the working class to resort to direct or extra-parliamentary action.

Since November, 1957, we have witnessed a series of working class strikes, all economic struggles save the One Day Token General Strike on March 3rd last, which however is a special case. The communal upsurge in May, 1958, and the rigours of the first months of the consequent emergency served only to interrupt these strike struggles but did not prevent their resumption in recent months. There is certainly a readiness among workers to strike on felt economic issues.

Apart from strike action by the workers we have also witnessed in recent months such political phenomena as mass resistance to destruction of shanties, mass occupation of crown land and mass satyagraha on railway lines. No doubt these manifestations of discontent did not spread in the manner that strike struggles spread among the working class. Nevertheless they are noteworthy phenomena in that they bore the character of mass and direct actions and were engaged in by other sections of toilers than the workers. It is also to be noted that these sections too were directly rooted in day-to-day needs.

In short the masses still rely primarily on constitutional methods and processes, but they are ready in the case of felt issues to resort to direct action even outside the constitutional process to bring pressure to bear on the Government.

The LSSP was looking both ways. It was paying lip-service to the resistance of the working class and the growth of strike action whilst at the same time turning more and more in the direction of parliamentary politics.

The debates inside the Party centred around these issues. A minority, led by Edmund Samarakkody wanted to direct the Party towards extra-parliamentary action, whilst the leadership of N.M. Perera, Leslie Goonewardene and de Silva was turning more and more in the direction of a parliamentary alliance with the SLFP in preparation for the 1960 general election.

The party ranks were thoroughly confused, especially when top leaders announced a slate of close on 80 candidates for parliament, whilst at the same time they signed a 'no-clash' agreement with the SLFP and the Communist Party in a number of important constituencies.

Such an alliance, they said was necessary because of the danger of the extreme right coming back to power and establishing a dictatorship. They justified support for the capitalist party (SLFP) on the same lines as the Stalinists had previously in Spain and France justified support for the class collaboration betrayal of the Popular Front governments.

In a communication to the LSSP early in 1960 the Pablo Secretariat in Paris agreed that it was possible to 'permit practical no-clash agreements with the SLFP', although their letters stressed that it would not be permissible to vote in the elections in those constituencies where such an agreement was operating for the candidates of the SLFP.

The Pabloite International Secretariat endorsed, with reservations, the main line of the LSSP in the 1960 elections. The same letter went on to say: 'What is on the other hand permissible, is a critical support for an eventual Government of the SLFP, a support that is temporary each time that this party engages in an action that is effectively anti-imperialist'.

Thus Pablo and Co. supplied them with further cover for their capitulation to the SLFP.

After the 1960 election

Between them, the Communist Party and the LSSP helped the SLFP to power in 1960. The way in which the LSSP prepared for the election revealed the enormous political degeneration which had now set in within the party.

Candidates were not selected democratically by the Party but in agreement with its top leaders. In the main only those who could pay their election expenses were selected. As a result a horde of undesirable elements were placed on the LSSP slate.

There was no difference between this procedure and many of the practices of a corrupt social-democratic party. The LSSP leaders had turned their backs on mass struggle and were now operating as parliamentarians of the most opportunist character. Yet in spite of all their efforts they only gained 14 seats in Parliament.

Since they had collaborated with the SLFP during the election, the masses were confused as to the party's intentions and therefore voted for the SLFP. From this date active steps were taken to prepare for the coalition.

The most significant of these was a retreat on the citizenship question in relation to the Tamil estate workers. This took the form of a slight amendment to the Party's programme stating that this issue was a matter for negotiation between the Indian government, representing the Tamil plantation labourers who have emigrated to Ceylon from India, and the Ceylon government.

The conflict over the citizenship issue is necessary for the rule of the imperialists. It cannot be resolved until they are successfully overthrown. By making this a constitutional issue between the capitalist governments of India and Ceylon, the LSSP had turned away completely from the revolutionary requirements of the Tamil poor.

This reflected itself most sharply in the field of trade union relations in the countryside.

Most of the plantation workers are organized between two trade unions of over 300,000 workers, one led by S. Thondaman, right-wing supporter of the SLFP and the other by Aziz, a fellow traveller of the Moscow dominated Communist Party.

During the late 1950s, there was an enormous growth of the Youth Leagues influenced by the LSSP throughout the island and in particular in rural areas never before penetrated by the Trotskyist movement.

This movement amongst the youth was a further indication of the development of a pre-revolutionary situation. Its most positive effect in the countryside was reflected in the growth of the LSSP's Lanka Estate Workers Union, which had in early 1960 reached a membership of 80,000 among the Tamil workers.

Because of its youthful organizers, it was gaining ground steadily from the reformist trade union leaders, Thondaman and Aziz. Then, when the LSSP retreated on the citizenship question, this union was thrown into a crisis and virtually collapsed.

Large numbers of Tamil workers ceased to be members and the union became torn between the struggle of various gangster factions. This was perhaps one of the cruellest blows which the leaders of the LSSP dealt against their party. It effectively barred the way for the Party's growth in the countryside, something which was absolutely decisive for the taking of power.

Any illusions which the masses had about the SLFP electoral victory in 1960 were almost immediately dispelled. During 1961, strike struggles became a regular feature of the important industries.

The LSSP leadership noted this in their report of their Politbureau to the Central Committee, on March 31, 1962. They described the 1961 strike wave as follows:

Broadly speaking, the principal gains of the strikes can be said to be following:—

1. They have increased the consciousness of the working class in the strength that is created by its unity.
2. They have destroyed many of the illusions the working class had in the SLFP government.
3. They have demonstrated to a wide layer of conscious workers that struggles on a trade union level cannot take them much further, and that the political struggles which involve the question of the political regime itself, have become necessary.

Quite so.

Throughout 1962 support for the SLFP government continued to crumble.

Ceylon had entered a state of extreme class tension which was in itself reflected in the assassination of Mr. Bandaranaike by a Buddhist monk.

The dockers in Colombo harbour, who are amongst the lowest paid workers on the island, engaged in a stubborn strike for more wages,

which was a continuation of a previous strike they had waged in 1959. That strike arose as the result of an enquiry into their conditions, the findings of which still remain unpublished. It was called off during a state of emergency.

The dock strike was followed by a strike of bank clerks which lasted 90 days. Mrs. Bandaranaike who had now assumed premiership soon showed her class teeth in an outburst of hostility towards the striking workers. *The Bank Clerk* the journal of the Ceylon Bank Employees Union for June and July 1962, reports her attitude as follows:

On the morning of the 26th April the Honourable Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, Prime Minister of Ceylon, made a political onslaught on the Union in her famous 'message to the Nation'. Among other things she said that 'I have no doubt whatsoever now that the movement started by the F.P.* was inspired by various organizations in different parts of the island who have been planning secretly to overthrow the lawfully established government of this country. For instance, I would like to refer to the strike organized by the Bank Clerks' Union. There is reason to believe that there are certain elements who are using the Bank Employees to cause grave harm to the economic life of this country'.

The significance of the strikes of the dockers and bank clerks is that they were in all essentials political strikes against the government.

In January 1963 the Ceylon Transport Board was affected by a strike which paralysed the main transport services. Mrs. Bandaranaike promptly called in the army to drive the buses and scab on the strikers.

On July 10, 1963, 3,000 Wellawatte (suburb of Colombo) textile workers struck work. The stage for a decisive showdown between the working class and the capitalist government of Mrs. Bandaranaike was being reached.

Between June and September 1963 two major events took place which have an immediate bearing on the background to the coalition.

In June the Socialist Workers Party of the United States supported reunification with Pablo's Fourth International, although because of legal reasons it could not itself be a member. The unification conference in turn gave full support to the LSSP leadership, Colvin de Silva, N.M. Perera and Leslie Goonewardene, who it said had: 'Correctly

* Federal Party.

raised the question of a United Left Front, both to arrest the movement to the right and to help these masses to move towards an alternative left'.

This United Left Front was based on an agreement between the Communist Party, the MEP party of Philip Goonewardene and the LSSP. The purpose of the agreement was in the words of the Pabloites, to form an 'anti-capitalist' United Left Front on an agreed programme.

Why did the LSSP leaders put forward the United Left Front at this stage? In 1960 the right wing pushed through a coalition resolution at a special conference immediately after the debacle suffered by the LSSP in the general election.

But the same conference elected a central committee in which the right wing was in a minority. The right-wing of N. M. Perera was in a quandary. The leaders then obligingly helped them out with the tactic of the ULF — the sugar-coating for the bitter pill of coalition.

Prior to this, the Communist Party provided wholehearted support for the SLFP whilst the MEP of Philip Goonewardene had in fact participated in a coalition with the 1956 SLFP government.

A resolution of the LSSP submitted to their Central Committee on October 14/15, 1961, characterized the role of the Communist Party as follows:

The Communist Party remains very much where it was before the July 1960 elections. Politically its line remains substantially unchanged and it continues to support the SLFP Government unconditionally. Its policy of unconditional support is likely to continue as long as this policy subserves the foreign policy needs of the Soviet Government.

Now this was all conveniently forgotten, by the LSSP leaders as well as the so-called 'Unified Secretariat'. The plain truth was that both the CP and the MEP were already in Mrs. Bandaranaike's coalition pocket and through its electoral collaboration with the SLFP, the LSSP was over halfway there.

It continuously campaigned for support for Mrs. Bandaranaike's government on issues 'which it agreed', thus following carefully in the footsteps of the Pabloite directive of 1960.

On points 14 (a) and (b) on the citizenship issue, in the programme of the United Left Front, the Unified Secretariat haggled about for a few weeks over a formula. On July 1, they wrote to Leslie Goonewardene agreeing that the final draft 'is certainly an improvement' and

that 'we recognize that there is nothing wrong in the principle of negotiations between India and Ceylon on the subject'.

Thus the Secretariat took full responsibility for the LSSP's retreat on the citizenship issue.

The theory of the Pabloite Unified Secretariat on the United Left Front followed from the theory that you do not need a revolutionary party to take power but that this could be arranged through the medium of a 'Front'. Today the Communist Party and the MEP fully support the coalition government. The United Left Front simply paved the way for the LSSP to join the coalition.

In April 1964, just two months before the coalition, the Unified Secretariat in Paris sent a letter of encouragement to the LSSP leadership which said:

The United Front of the left, strengthened by mass struggle and directed to the establishment of its own political power on a genuinely socialist programme, provides a means for stemming the tide of reaction and uniting the masses and ranks of our own party for the ultimate realization of our perspectives. Ceylon can provide another Cuba or Algeria and prove to be of even greater inspiration to revolutionary minded workers throughout the world.

The idea that the Stalinist party of Ceylon could participate through the Front in taking power flowed originally from the 1953 conception of Pablo that sections of the bureaucracy could, under 'certain circumstances' fulfil the task of the revolutionary party.

They were obsessed with the Cuban and Algerian no-revolutionary-party-road and they also wanted to avoid at all costs publicly breaking from N.M. Perera and the LSSP leaders. They wanted to preserve the facade of international unity, especially in the face of the criticisms of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

Trade Union unity around the 21 points

The second important event during the Summer of 1963 was the enormous growth of unity amongst the trade unions all over the island. While the LSSP and its opportunist allies were seeking to concentrate the attention of the masses on the parliamentary road via the United Left Front, the trade unions were coming together to do battle with Mrs. Bandaranaike's government.

On Sunday, September 29, 800 delegates from all the major trade unions representing one and a half million workers from the plantations and industrial enterprises, met in the Ceylinko Hotel, Colombo, and ratified the following 21 points as an agreed programme for action against the government:

1. Pay increase Rs. 1/- per day or Rs. 30/- per month for all employees.
2. (a) Monthly pay for all employees; (b) Annual increments for all employees.
3. Exclude all cost of living allowances, provident fund payments and commuted pensions from income tax.
4. A maximum 45 hour working week for all employees. Overtime payments for all work in excess of 45 hours for all employees.
5. Adequate provision of housing or house rent allowance for all workers.
6. Full tenancy rights for all workers, including estate workers, who occupy dwellings supplied by the employer.
7. (a) Seven days casual leave and thirty days medical leave for all workers in the private sector and local bodies; (b) Maternity leave to be extended to six weeks before and six weeks after confinement; reduced hours of work during the latter stages of pregnancy and immediately after confinement; (c) Saturday to be considered as half day for purposes of leave and public holidays in Government establishments and local bodies; (d) When holidays fall on Sundays the following day to be declared a holiday; (e) All statutory holidays under the Shop and Office Employees' Act to be granted to all workers in the private sector; (f) Sunday to be a paid holiday for all workers.
8. All casual employees in the public sector including local Government should be made temporary after 6 months of service and all temporary employees should be made permanent and pensionable after three years of service. All service, including interrupted and broken periods of service prior to permanency to be counted for incremental and pension purposes.
9. (a) No retrenchment without the provision of suitable alternate employment and adequate compensation for full past service; (b) Work for unemployed or relief under a scheme of unemployment insurance.

10. (a) Increase employers' contribution to Employees' Provident Fund to 10 per cent of gross pay; (b) Provision for the withdrawal of money lying to the credit of the employee in EPF without restrictions on cessation of employment after not less than 10 years' membership of the fund including funds transferred to the EPF; (c) Double the Widows' and Orphans' Pension Benefits.
11. Gratuity of one month's gross pay for each year of past service prior to the inauguration of the Employees' Provident Fund.
12. Appointment of elected representatives of workers to Boards of State Corporations.
13. Creation of transfer and promotion boards with Trade Union representatives.
14. Full Trade Union political and civic rights to all public servants including teachers and employees in State Corporations and Local Government Service; and full access to all estates [plantations] for trade union Officials.
15. Re-instatement of all employees dismissed or compulsorily retired for participation in strikes or trade union activity and the removal of all penalties imposed for such participation or activity.
16. The implementation of the assurance given by the late Prime Minister Mr. S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike that in implementing the Official Language Act and the Tamil Language Special Provisions Bill no penalties will be imposed on old entrant public servants and the employees in Local Government bodies.
17. Public servants whose duties do not require proficiency in the Official Language be exempted from the proficiency test.
18. (a) A unified administrative service with prospects and promotions from the lowest to the highest and suitable provision for 50 per cent of posts in the higher grades to be filled from the lower grades in the public service; (b) Provision of proper avenues of promotion from lowest grade to highest grade for technical and industrial categories of workers.
19. Reconstitute the Public Service Commission and the Local Government Service Commission to win the confidence of the Public and Local Government Service and to appoint an appellate body answerable to Parliament to revise all previous decisions of the PSC and LGSC.

20. Treble the rate of Workmen's Compensation under the Workmen's Compensation Ordinance and grant full pay from date of accident.
21. Equal pay for equal work: (a) No wage discrimination against women; (b) No wage discrimination on basis of language as in the case of teachers.

Six weeks later the Ceylon Mercantile Union, the best organized Union on the island called a 69-day strike on behalf of its clerical membership employed on the docks and the main industrial enterprises in Colombo.

Its general secretary, Bala Tampoe, who is also a leader of the minority, who walked out of the LSSP conference, led his union from the start into battle against Mrs. Bandaranaike's government.

The strike was a display of enthusiasm the like of which the island had not seen for many a long day. On January 9, 1964, the government intervened and told the CMU that it would make no more concessions.

The next day Mrs. Bandaranaike presented them with an ultimatum 'to return to work or else', but the CMU leadership correctly held on and decided to defy the ultimatum with the result that by Sunday, January 12 it had won a decisive economic and political victory.

This was too much for Mrs. Bandaranaike and her government and she decided to close down Parliament in February 1964. The CMU strike had clearly thrown herself and her government into a most serious crisis.

Such was the temper of the trade union movement fortified by the agreement on the 21 points, the victory of the CMU and the government crisis. They then decided to move into action behind the 21 points with a massive demonstration in Colombo on the evening of March 21.

The remarkable thing about these 21 points was that they united for the first time in history, the plantation workers with the proletariat of the towns.

Truly, had the LSSP been a revolutionary party, the time had come for the seizure of power.

The rally assembled at 4 p.m. with leaders, including Thondaman and Aziz pledging an all-out struggle for the 21 demands. This received the unanimous support from the largest audience of workers ever seen on the island.

Colvin de Silva for the LSSP trade unions called for a fight to the finish for the 21 demands. Yet at the same time as he was speaking on the Galle Face, his colleague, N.M. Perera was already engaged in secret negotiations for a coalition with Mrs. Bandaranaike.

A journalist who was interviewing her whilst the workers were assembling on the Galle Face reported that she was physically shaking with fear of the demonstration. She feared above all that the demonstrators might take the revolutionary road and begin to establish workers and peasants power in the island.

So it was perfectly understandable that at this time, Dr. N.M. Perera should have come along on behalf of the LSSP majority to help her out of trouble.

After all, was not the island led by a few great aristocratic families such as those of Mrs. Bandaranaike?

Did not the sons and daughters of these families go to London, some to learn to speak on the left and some to learn to speak on the right?

Whilst Colvin de Silva was making left noises on the Galle Face, his colleague, N.M. Perera, was creeping through the servants' entrance of 'Temple Trees' the Prime Minister's residence.

On the evening of March 21, as the capitalist house presided over by Mrs. Bandaranaike began to burn down, it was only natural that those aristocratic children, the Goonewardenes, the de Silvas and the Pereras should in their own way come to the aid of Mrs. Bandaranaike and her class.

N.M. Perera knew he was on solid ground for his secret coalition talks. He enjoyed the wholehearted support of the Communist Party, always a supporter of coalition, and a major prop in the so-called United Left Front. He had also enjoyed the tacit collaboration of the Paris 'Unified Secretariat'!

From early 1964 onwards the Secretariat refused to allow any discussion about what was happening in Ceylon. They said it would upset unification by leading them into conflict with the LSSP leadership which they wanted to avoid at all costs.

In reply to a critic who wanted such a discussion they wrote the following:

The Reunification Congress (June 1963) placed with the united new leadership the responsibility of doing everything in its power to cement the ties re-established after a long split and to work for fresh cohesion and

stability in the world Trotskyist movement. This required a certain organizational relaxation for a period and a serious effort to ameliorate internal disputes in the various sections and in the components of the united movement — especially disputes inherited from the past — in order to help every area in the common problem of making a fresh start. All this was explained and agreed upon unanimously by the delegates who participated in the Reunification Congress.

The attitude of the United Secretariat towards the situation in Ceylon as elsewhere in the movement has been governed by these broad considerations laid down by the Re-unification Congress.

The United Secretariat 'in essence' as Comrade Anderson puts it, has not modified in the least the criticisms of the LSSP made by the Seventh World Congress. What it has done is to place confidence in the capacity of the leadership of the LSSP to prove responsive to these criticisms. The letter addressed to the LSSP was not intended as some kind of public pillorying or as a challenge to pitch into a factional brawl, as Comrade Anderson appears to believe. The criticisms which it contained were made with complete goodwill by the assembled representatives of the world Trotskyist movement and in full confidence that they would be given thoughtful consideration by the LSSP. The United Secretariat has sought to maintain this loyal and comradely attitude towards the Ceylonese section, while frankly acknowledging that its members tend to sympathize politically with the left wing of the LSSP . . .

However, the United Secretariat feels that it would be wrong for it as a body representing the movement as a whole to brush aside the declarations of the majority of the LSSP leadership and refuse to grant them the time needed to prove in action the sincerity of their stand in relation to the United Left Front and the good faith of their assurances. (Our emphasis).

It would mean first of all to deliberately heat up the atmosphere in the LSSP by injecting the sharpest kind of factionalism; secondly, to exacerbate matters still further by transferring the dispute to the public arena. A divisive policy of this kind would put in jeopardy if not destroy, fraternal relations between the United Secretariat and the leadership of the LSSP. The end result could be highly injurious to the Fourth International and to the LSSP, including its left wing which has absolutely no interest to put in question the unity of the party through the creation of undue internal friction and tension from any source.

All the chickens were coming home to the Bandaranaike roost. The revisionists from Paris to Colombo were now eager to demonstrate that faced with the need to give a decisive lead to the working class to take power, they were on the side of the class enemy.

We have entered the last lap of the great betrayal. On Sunday, May 10, the prime minister, Mrs. Bandaranaike, finally made known to the public at large her plans for the coalition government.

The following extract from her speech will surely rank as one of the most thoughtful class statements in history.

After July, 1960, after I was made President of the party on the invitation of Mr. C.P. de Silva and other well-wishers, the SLFP was able to form a Government winning 75 seats in alliance with the Left parties, except the MEP. What is the real significance of this? — We who got 46 in March got 75 in July because we got the support of the Left. This must be admitted honestly. If by any chance we got less than 75 seats those parties who supported us in the election would have had a place in forming the Government.

However, after forming the Government we had to face certain questions. The leftists who worked with us began a series of strikes because they did not get a place in the Government. In the North, while there were communal issues flaring up, there were various other issues cropping up on the language question, too.

Though it is true that we faced this bravely, in the light of my experience, I must remind you of something. However much progressive work we do, we cannot expect any results unless we get the co-operation of the working class. This could be understood if the working of the Port and of other nationalized undertakings are considered. We cannot go backwards. We must go forward, Disruptions, especially strikes and go-slows must be eliminated and the development of the country must proceed.

Some people have various ideas on these subjects. Some feel that these troubles can be eliminated by the establishment of a dictatorship. Others say that workers should be made to work at the point of gun and bayonet. Still others maintain that a national Government should be formed to solve this problem. I have considered these ideas separately and in the context of world events.

My conclusion is that none of these solutions will help to get us where we want to go. Therefore, what we should do is to travel on the path defined by our leader in accordance with our conscience. It is only by travelling on this path whilst considering the changes that have taken place in our country that we can achieve our purpose.

Therefore, gentlemen, I decided to initiate talks with the leaders of the working class, particularly *Mr. Philip Gunawardene* and *Dr. N.M. Perera*. Though both of them expressed their opinion, I must say that I did not agree with all they said. I then had further discussions on outstanding issues.

Can we form a coalition Government? If so, how could this be done? These are the questions we considered. Afterwards they informed me that they could form a Government on the basis of a common programme like the 1956 agreement binding on the constituent parties of the MEP. They were of opinion that it was a Government like this which could work for the common weal.

A few hours before the vote was taken at the LSSP Conference on Sunday, June 7, Pierre Frank for the Unified Secretariat in Paris was still advocating his policy of the ULF. The 'centre' group of Leslie Goonewardene and Colvin de Silva supported him.

Fortunately, the revolutionary left wing took no notice and walked out of the conference.

However, Dr. N.M. Perera now on the way to becoming Finance Minister had no difficulty in leading a party which by now had been so thoroughly confused, corrupted and betrayed by the United Secretariat in Paris as well as its rotten leadership such as Goonewardene and de Silva that it went the whole hog and gave him a massive majority.

Some Problems of the Ceylon Revolutionary Left

The relationship between the leaders of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (Ceylon) and the Pabloite international centre in Europe was a marriage of political convenience.

The former capitulated to the pressure of the capitalist politicians in Ceylon and eventually found their way into the coalition government, whilst the latter concentrated on the liquidation of the sections of the Fourth International founded by Trotsky in 1938.

In Britain it was Pablo who prepared the ground for John Lawrence and his group in 1954 to split away from our organization and join the Communist Party. Right at the moment when Lawrence proposed to enter, Pablo drew back and criticized him.

From time to time we also read of criticisms which the centre in Paris made of the LSSP. All the while they boosted this party as the largest Trotskyist organization in the world. They maintained the friendliest relations with its leaders.

Pablo, Frank and Germain were fully aware of the revisionist policy being pursued by N.M. Perera. After the 1960 election he wrote a

lengthy resolution outlining his preparation for the coalition, which was forwarded to the centre in Paris. In this, he justified his policy along the lines of the 'entrism' policies pursued by the Pablo leadership.

The following sections reveal his ideas which were essentially in line with Pablo's policy of all-out support for 'entrism' and for national capitalist parties and movements such as the FLN in Algeria.

Concretely, [he said,] the LSSP party will have to take the following steps. First of all enter into a no-contest pact to fight the forthcoming elections. In the campaign itself declare our readiness to support the formation of an SLFP [Sri Lanka Freedom Party] government. This must not be hedged about with conditions otherwise we will weaken the forces ready to rally round an alternative government.

Secondly, steps must be taken to bring about a programmatic agreement with the SLFP with a view to forming a joint government. The pre-election resistance through fear of the disadvantages of a Marxist-SLFP alliance will no longer obtain after the election. We will not get most of what we stand for, but a broad progressive programme should be possible, e.g. (a) nationalization of life insurance, but not all; (b) control of banks but not nationalization; (c) government import of all essential commodities, but not all imports and exports; (d) a ceiling on incomes, etc.

It is possible to denigrate such a line of action as class-collaboration and condemn it out of hand. This charge of class collaboration is only tenable if the class character of the SLFP as a petty-bourgeois party is not accepted. In any case, such entrism tactics in respect of reformist social-democratic parties are nothing new. Admittedly we are taking entrism a stage further by accepting office. But is this not the best way of taking the masses through the experience necessary to dispel their illusions, and creating confidence in our genuineness. A few bold progressive measures sponsored by us will enable them to learn more than years of propaganda by us. These measures should be such as to be in line with our socialist programme and such as would carry our socialist policies forward.

It is also possible to condemn this as parliamentarism. As I have already pointed out historical factors have pushed the party into the parliamentary struggle in a big way. And parliamentary struggle is also a struggle for power. Universal franchise does boost the parliamentary struggle. It is no accident of history that in no country where universal franchise obtains has there been a revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist class. Though mass struggles leading to the overthrow of capitalism are conceivable, in point of fact such situations have never yet arisen, because the franchise has placed in the hands of the workers a vehicle for achieving power. Universal

franchise one must admit has tended to blunt the edge of mass struggle. Militant working class actions will continue to occur, but they do not reach the heights necessary for wresting power. . . .

It would be equally wrong to deny the dangers and pitfalls of such a policy of entrisism, as I have advocated earlier. It may, specially at the outset, create more illusions in the progressive character of the SLFP. There are also the dangers inherent in taking office. LSSP ministers may have to take unpleasant decisions with regard to strikes, and the demands of the workers. We may not be able to eliminate these dangers, but we can minimize them (a) by activizing our party organization and by systematic propaganda through it of the true meaning and purpose of these entrist tactics. We should, if this work is properly carried out, succeed in infiltrating the SLFP branches and capturing the more progressive minded youth of the rural areas; (b) by pushing through a comprehensive labour code obtain some very needed reforms which will help root out some of the worst evils of the existing system. By a more sympathetic attitude to labour as against the employers win the confidence of the workers and be able to harness them for the next stage in our attainment of power.

Significantly enough the recent timing of Pablo and his followers for their public pro-Khrushchev activities coincides with the formation of the coalition government in Ceylon. Yet there is no basic difference in method between Frank and Germain, who are expelling Pablo, and N.M. Perera and his followers.

Indeed, over the past year Pablo has had no direct control or influence over what has gone on in Ceylon. All the decisions have been made by Germain, and Frank, supported by the Socialist Workers Party in the United States.

It is well known that Germain is at this moment engaged in building up a faction in Western Europe against the SWP. His immediate collaborators are those who are turning towards liquidation into the parties of social-democracy.

Recently, Germain described Mr. Joseph Hansen, who likes to be known as the secretary of the late Leon Trotsky, as 'an hysterical old woman', and the SWP as 'an opportunist party'.

One cannot separate the problems of the LSSP revolutionary wing from this degeneration. These comrades are aware that a lot of discussion has to take place about what happened in the international movement since 1953.

Apart from a few brief written words and odd notes about international work there has been absolutely no serious discussion in the

LSSP on such problems for almost ten years. Many comrades who support the minority are only now beginning to realize the relations between the international and national degeneration of the Fourth International founded by Trotsky in 1938.

The future of the revolutionary wing depends mainly now upon a serious study of this relationship.

The Unified Secretariat under the direction of Germain and Frank, supported by the SWP, advocated support for the centrist wing of Leslie Goonewardene and Colvin de Silva and the United Left Front policy right up until the vote was taken at the LSSP Conference on June 7. Pierre Frank very reluctantly supported the revolutionary wing after they walked out.

They did not, in any way, support the revolutionary minority before the conference. Indeed, they endeavoured at all times to dampen down the internal struggle by pleas about unity and internal party peace.

The Unified Secretariat issued a bulletin in January 1964 which contained letters to the LSSP leadership about the United Left Front and the basis for the eventual agreement between them.

In the same bulletin they published a resolution from the minority. This resolution was submitted for discussion on July 7, 1963, but the Unified Secretariat did not make it known to their sections until early in 1964. This resolution warned the whole movement about the dangers of the United Left Front when it said:

The working class and the broader revolutionary masses of tomorrow must not be led to believe that their salvation lies in putting a so-called 'Left Front' in office, but in organizing and uniting for direct mass action against the SLFP government and the other forces of capitalism in Ceylon, on the road to a Workers' and Peasants' Government.

This was reproduced without a single word of comment, either for or against by the Unified Secretariat. Such silence undoubtedly disorientated many comrades who could have been won to the minority.

Whilst behind the scenes some leaders of the Paris centre vaguely supported the leaders of the minority; in the public activity of the LSSP they came down heavily on the side of the centrists. This two-facedness is typical of the methods of Pabloism.

Even now when Leslie Goonewardene and Colvin de Silva with their supporters are actively behind N.M. Perera and the coalition government, the Unified Secretariat does not expel them. It is still

hoping that it will be possible to bring them together with the revolutionary left, in an organization where they will be able to manoeuvre between the left and right wings.

In effect, the Unified Secretariat is extremely hostile to many of the leaders of the minority because they know that there is going to be a serious examination of the policies of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

After the coalition government was formed, a ferocious struggle between the two rival factions for power took place inside a number of unions. The tendency which gained most from this was undoubtedly the Chinese wing of the Communist Party led by Shanmugathan, whom Pierre Frank had special discussions with whilst he was on the island.

Having staggered through the United Left Front, Frank is now looking for another alliance with a pro-Chinese tendency which is extremely hostile to Trotskyism. At the same time as Frank was speaking to Shanmugathan, the latter was taking full advantage of the formation of the coalition by insisting in the press that this was the direct outcome of Trotskyist policies.

The LSSP revolutionary wing has now the historic task of reconstructing the revolutionary party in Ceylon. They will do this all the better when they understand its relationship to the past and break completely from the Unified Secretariat in Paris. Their place is in the ranks of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

DOCUMENT 13**Statement of the Political Committee of the SLL
in reply to an attack by Pierre Frank
July 20, 1964**

THE NEWSLETTER'S reporter, G. Healy, secretary of the Socialist Labour League, wrote on his return from Ceylon that the betrayal of the 'Trotskyist' party (Lanka Sama Samaja Party) in that country was now the world number one question for all Trotskyists.

When Trotsky and his comrades founded the Fourth International in 1938, they called the workers to a 'spotless banner', as yet unsullied by class betrayals. Yet now, 26 years later in Ceylon, where Trotskyism was the avowed programme of a party with mass following, such a betrayal has taken place.

Leaders of the LSSP have power in a capitalist coalition government and it has been left to a minority of the party, the LSSP (Revolutionary Section), to continue the fight for the working class.

Previous Newsletter articles have outlined the history of this sell-out and its meaning for the workers of Ceylon and of the world.

Of greatest importance is that the lessons are assimilated into the theory and policies of the Trotskyist movement, the Fourth International.

In this connection it is instructive to consider the recent article by Pierre Frank in the journal *World Outlook* for July 17, 1964. *World Outlook* is an organ of the self-styled Unified Secretariat of the Fourth International (Paris), on whose behalf Frank attended the recent congress of the LSSP, where the coalition decision was made.

This 'United Secretariat' was set up in 1963 as the result of a 'reunification' between the International Secretariat (IS) and certain individuals of the International Committee, with the support of the leadership of the Socialist Workers Party (USA).

The International Committee of the Fourth International, supported by the SWP and the IS, led by Michael Pablo, had split in December 1953.

It is important to understand the reason for the split and the unprincipled 'reunification' of 1963 if we are to grasp the implications of Ceylon.

Pablo developed a theory that a third world war between imperialism and the workers' states was inevitable. This clash between the two systems and the 'mass pressure' resulting from it, he thought, would force the Stalinist leaders to fight capitalism everywhere.

These 'irreversible' objective trends were so powerful that time would not permit the construction of independent revolutionary Trotskyist parties before capitalist power was broken. Thus, there would be 'centuries' of degenerated workers' states.

Without a long analysis here, we will simply point out that this was rejected by the SWP and the International Committee as a capitulation to bureaucracy.

The Fourth International was founded precisely in opposition to all bureaucracies: only by defeating the bureaucratic leaders could the working class fight to take power and save humanity.

For that, revolutionary parties and the Fourth International were necessary.

Pabloism departed from this fundamental programme and from the basic Marxist theory behind it: that the emancipation of the working class is the task of the working class itself. Pablo saw the working class as a force only to be emancipated by bureaucracies, who became the real instruments of 'irreversible' objective forces.

In the years that followed, the theory of inevitable war was dropped, but the essence remained; Pablo and his whole organization became for years nothing more than an errand boy agency for the nationalist movement in Algeria. Pablo is now an official in Ben Bella's government.

He says in his latest bulletins that: "De-Stalinization" in its overall causes and effects is thus synonymous in this sense with the process of the Political Revolution in the USSR and in the other workers' states'. These ideas and actions are only the logical consequence of Pabloite revisionism.

Ceylon is the most important and instructive of all. More, it marks the end of a whole stage of development of the Fourth International. Fittingly, it came about only one short year after the SWP leaders decided it was time to re-enter the Pablo ranks!

Pierre Frank presents a theory of the reasons for the LSSP's degen-

eration which is rooted in the same method as Pablo. He entitles his article 'The Wearing Out [!] of a Revolutionary Leadership'. Like Pablo, he abandons the viewpoint of Marxism.

Revolutionary leaderships are not just the victims of objective processes, but a conscious force struggling to lead the working class to change the world.

The 'wear and tear' on a revolutionary party is the wear and tear of class struggle; it is the responsibility of Marxists to consciously grasp and fight the class struggle. Marxists discuss such questions from the point of view of their responsibilities in leading the working class.

But Pierre Frank is absolutely unprincipled in his avoidance of this responsibility.

The weakness of political education in the LSSP (which adhered formally to the International Secretariat and the 'Reunification') was 'well known among the leaders of the Trotskyist movement on an international scale . . . there was common concern about this problem . . . the split in 1953 did not help, as was recognized by the IS and the IC; and the reunification undertaken last year was not granted sufficient time to bring new united efforts to bear in a strong healthy way [?] in this situation'. (Our emphasis).

Quite apart from the pathetic evasions of this method, the statement amounts to a pack of lies.

It was not the split of 1953 which perpetuated the political weakness of the LSSP leaders, but the fact that the Party did not break from the revision of the Pabloites!

What disgraceful hypocrisy not to mention the fact that the LSSP's weaknesses persisted and developed *within the IS*, and not simply alongside 'the split', which 'did not help'!

We shall see that it was the revisionism of the IS itself which hastened and encouraged the betrayal.

It is not a question of the reunification 'not being granted sufficient time', to bring to bear 'united' and 'healthy' efforts. Everything about the unification was politically unhealthy and the participants in it, Frank included, are directly responsible for Perera and the other Ceylon renegades.

This can be proved in chapter and verse.

In his article, Frank says that the United Secretariat 'supported the left-wing tendency' and further than ' . . . the left wing has been conducting its struggle for the past year in consultation with the United Secretariat . . . '

This lie is exposed by internal material published for the United Secretariat as recently as *May 1964*. Their internal bulletin of that date contains a motion on Ceylon submitted by a minority (led by Pablo) in their own ranks and a reply by the United Secretariat. We quote at length.

1. Motion on Ceylon submitted by Anderson (for Pablo's minority):

'... We . . . (a) censure the non-publication internally or externally, of the letter to the LSSP of the 7th World Congress, and demand its immediate publication, internally and in the next publication of *Quatrième Internationale*.

(b) Protest at the alterations made by the Bureau of the United Secretariat in the letter approved by the 7th World Congress, which softens its criticisms of the LSSP Minority, etc., etc.

2. The Reply of the United Secretariat, which is very revealing, contains the following:

The United Secretariat . . . has not modified in the least the criticisms of the LSSP made by the Seventh World Congress. What it has done is to place confidence in the capacity of the leadership of the LSSP to prove responsive to these criticisms . . . The United Secretariat has sought to maintain this loyal and comradely attitude towards the Ceylonese section, while frankly acknowledging that its members tend to sympathize politically with the left wing of the LSSP.

Did the LSSP leadership 'wear out' — or was it helped to betray by 'loyal and comradely' attitudes from the United Secretariat?

However, the United Secretariat feels that it would be wrong for it as a body representing the movement as a whole (sic) to brush aside the declarations of the majority of the LSSP leadership and refuse to grant them the time needed to prove in action the sincerity of their stand in relation to the United Left Front and the good faith of their assurances.

So! Frank says the United Secretariat was not granted sufficient *time* to intervene efficiently in Ceylon. But here we see, from their own mouths, that they *chose* to 'give the time needed' . . . to Perera!

Let us come to the crux of the argument.

The reply of the United Secretariat continues to say that if it had come out in criticism of the LSSP '*the consequence would be the creation*

of conditions the precise opposite of those required to consolidate and stabilize the reunification'.

Yes! The SWP and the Pabloites insisted on no discussion of differences in order to patch up the unification. Instead of clarification — a fight against revisionism — there was a tacit agreement that everyone would be left alone.

While Perera made his firm course to Mrs. Bandaranaike, the Pabloites continued to bask in the reflected glory of a 'real mass party' in Ceylon.

Says the statement of the United Secretariat, only weeks before the betrayal: 'A decisive policy of this kind would put in jeopardy, if not destroy, fraternal relations between the United Secretariat and the leadership of the LSSP'. (!)

The same United Secretariat, only a few weeks later, was compelled to suspend all 504 members of the LSSP who voted with Perera — a figure many times the entire strength of any section of the United Secretariat!

The end result could be highly injurious to the Fourth International and to the LSSP, *including its left-wing which has absolutely no interest to put in question the unity of the party through the creation of undue internal friction and tension from any source.* (Our emphasis).

Here then is the last word!

So much for the 'support' given to the left wing by Pierre Frank and the United Secretariat. What they actually did was to provide the best possible left cover for Perera's capitulation and thus to incapacitate the left.

Their method covering up differences in order to prevent a false picture of unity prepared the betrayal. They are very explicit and unashamed about this method.

The latest issue of their magazine *Fourth International* rejoices in the reunification as ending 'a troublesome division'; it completely conceals the features of this division and says unity has now been reached through 'negotiation'!

It does not say that the SWP and its friends deliberately carried through the unification in order to *avoid* a discussion of differences.

The SWP resorted to native American pragmatism to excuse this abandonment of the Marxist method of analysis, preferring the familiar 'concrete issues'.

Thus, the statement of the Political Bureau of the SWP, 'For Early

Reunification of the World Trotskyist Movement', includes the following:

We can attract the best layers of this new generation of rebels by our bold programme, our fighting spirit and militant activity, we can only repel them by refusing to close ranks because of differences over the past disputes of little interest to young revolutionists of action, who are primarily concerned about the great political issues and burning problems of the day.

Early reunification, in short, has become a necessity for the world Trotskyist movement . . . the outstanding leaders of both sides (must) begin the jobs of establishing a new comradely atmosphere and of removing fears which have no real basis in the situation in the world Trotskyist movement today.

After this came the Ceylon betrayal! In the same year came the suspension of Pablo himself and his closest followers for 'factionalism'! Just before unification, the Pabloites themselves lost almost their entire Latin American section in a split! New splits are on the way in all the European sections!

The Marxists in the Revolutionary Section of the LSSP are finding a road to the masses and we are confident that along this road they will reject the United Secretariat with its replacement of Marxist principle by policies of adaptation to bureaucracy, the consequence of which has been class treason in Ceylon.

The United Secretariat has written to the LSSP (Revolutionary Section) and called upon all the renegades who supported Perera to reconsider the action and return to the Fourth International.

Pierre Frank's attacks on Gerry Healy and *The Newsletter* are a shabby attempt to cover up this record of betrayal and deception.

We did not 'demand' that the LSSP left wing abandon the Fourth International. Comrade Healy suggested to the LSSP (Revolutionary wing) that they should break from the Paris Pabloite centre which misuses the name of the Fourth International and open up discussions with the International Committee of the Fourth International.

The purpose of these discussions would be to organize an international conference where the forces of the International Committee and the Pabloites would be able to present their various opinions in a way that would help to clarify the international movement.

The revolutionaries of the LSSP, we are confident, will find their place in a short time with the Marxists of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

DOCUMENT 14a**Statement by the International Committee of the Fourth International, July 5, 1964**

IMPERIALISM can only retain its hold in Ceylon as in other colonial and semi-colonial countries through the medium of native 'national' leaders. In Ceylon the native capitalist parties are no longer able to govern alone; the economic and political crisis has raised the question of workers power, in alliance with the peasantry. Capitalist rule is being maintained only because the Lanka Sama Samaja Party, a workers' party, which has until now claimed membership of the Fourth International, has entered into a coalition with the capitalist Bandaranaike government, with the purpose of disciplining the working class.

The programme of the Fourth International and of Trotskyism has been completely abandoned by the majority of the LSSP. Its leaders have deserted to the side of imperialism. The International Committee condemns them as traitors and enemies of the working class. It welcomes the decision of a minority to form the new LSSP Revolutionary Section.

Since the split in the Fourth International, after which the International Committee was formed, the LSSP has adhered to the International Secretariat until recently led by M. Pablo. While the International Secretariat has acclaimed the LSSP as 'the only really mass Trotskyist party in the world, etc.' the opportunist and parliamentary degeneration of the LSSP went on behind its public adherence to the Fourth International.

Pabloism consists essentially of an abandonment of the perspective of constructing independent Marxist parties, relying instead on the inevitable 'left' development of the petty-bourgeois revisionists and of the Labour bureaucracies. This formed the 'theoretical' and political cover for the capitulation of N.M. Perera and the LSSP leaders.

After the LSSP entered the coalition, the Unified Secretariat of the Pabloite revisionists expelled the three ministers, Perera, Anil

Moonesinghe and Cholmondely Goonewardene, and suspended the 504 delegates who voted for the coalition. These were the fruits in Ceylon of the 're-unification' of the Pabloites and others exactly one year ago. Pablo himself had been suspended from the Unified Secretariat along with his supporters on the Executive Committee only a few weeks earlier. In the European sections of the Pabloite Fourth International new splits are on the way; Frank and Germain who led the suspension of Pablo are openly going over to a programme of structural reforms which has developed in the 'left' social-democracy and the reformist Italian Communist Party.

Pablo and his immediate clique are openly capitulating to Khrushchev, whilst Frank and Germain tag along with centrist currents in Western European social democracy and the Stalinist Parties. There is no basic difference in revisionist method between the two groups. They both serve different wings of the corrupt bureaucracies of Stalinism and Social-Democracy.

When the Unified Secretariat, consisting of the Pabloite International Secretariat and some former members of the International Committee was formed in June 1963 with the support of the Socialist Workers Party of the United States, the International Committee opposed this unification. We insisted that unification without political discussion and agreement was unprincipled and would, in fact, only prepare future splits weakening and not strengthening the Trotskyist movement.

The procedure of unification without discussion flowed naturally from the Pabloite revisionism of Marxism and the abandonment of the building of revolutionary parties. The betrayal in Ceylon only one year after the unification together with the suspension of Pablo has overwhelmingly confirmed our position. Discussion of difference was not permitted. Criticism of the LSSP or any other section was forbidden on the grounds that it would impede the unity of the Trotskyist movement. Pabloism thus consciously and directly prepared the betrayals of Perera and the LSSP majority. In the name of Trotskyism a defeat for the working class was organized.

In proposing a 'centre' resolution at the LSSP Conference based on the class collaborationist role of the CP and the MEP in the United Left Front the Unified Secretariat continued, in fact, to prepare for the defeat. Even now they do not expel the centre group of de Silva and Leslie Goonewardene, even though they remain in the same party as the traitor Perera.

The LSSP Revolutionary Section has taken the first necessary step — a complete break from the opportunists. It must find a road to constructing the revolutionary party with roots in the struggles of the urban workers and the plantation workers, preparing not for parliamentary honours but for the revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist government.

The entry of the LSSP members into the Bandaranaike coalition marks the end of a whole epoch of the evolution of the Fourth International. It is in direct service to imperialism, in the preparation of a defeat for the working class that revisionism in the world Trotskyist movement has found its expression. The task of reconstructing the Fourth International must be undertaken from the firm basis of constructing revolutionary proletarian parties in every country in struggle against the bureaucratic and opportunist servants of imperialism and against their defenders the revisionists who usurp the name of Trotskyism and the Fourth International.

DOCUMENT 14b

Resolution of the Revolutionary Minority to the LSSP Congress, June 6-7, 1964

The LSSP and Crisis of the SLFP Government

The Sirimavo Bandaranaike government is in a desperate state. It is approaching the final year of its constitutional term of office without any real prospect of retaining its position without the political collaboration of the Left and collaboration of the working class, in particular, with its regime. Hence the prorogation of Parliament and the efforts of the Prime Minister and some of her ministers to secure the participation of the LSSP in the government.

To agree to accept office in Mrs. Bandaranaike's government, either separately or in association with the other parties in the United Left Front would be to agree to join hands with the SLFP government in staving off the rising tide of working class and mass discontent against it, and to seek to provide working class collaboration with its policy of maintaining capitalism in Ceylon within the capitalist constitutional framework.

The entry of the LSSP leaders into the SLFP government will result in open class collaboration, disorientation of the masses, the division of the working class and the abandonment of the struggle-perspective, which will lead to the disruption of the working class movement and the elimination of the independent revolutionary axis of the Left. In the result, the forces of capitalist reaction, far from being weakened or thwarted, will be ultimately strengthened.

Collaboration with the bourgeois SLFP government on the basis of coalition on a 'minimum programme' is thus a gross contravention of the Party's Revolutionary Programme and the acceptance of Portfolios by the LSSP would be treachery to the proletarian revolution.

This Special Conference, therefore, categorically rejects all proposals for coalition with the SLFP government, on any basis whatsoever, and calls upon the Party to rally to the defence of its Revolutionary Programme. The task of the Party today is to defeat the attempt to divide and subdue the working class and to seek to unify all sections of the working class and the toiling masses for the carrying forward of the class struggle against the capitalist class and the SLFP government.

R. S. Baghavan
Champa
W. D. Dharmasena
Meryl Fernando
V. Karalasingham
D. S. Mallawarachi
S. A. Martinus

Reginald Mendis
T. E. Pushparajan
Prins Rajasooriya
Edmund Samarakkody
Pelis Serasinghe
Bala Tampoe
Sydney Wanasinghe

DOCUMENT 14c**Resolution of the 'Centre' group to the LSSP Congress, June 6-7, 1964**

The present political, economic and financial crisis cannot be solved along progressive lines within the framework of capitalism. The processes necessary for a progressive solution of the crisis can be inaugurated by a coalition government between the ULF and the SLFP on the following conditions:

1. There should be agreement on a series of measures to be implemented within one year. These must include measures which are capable of enthusing the masses and of securing their active participation.
2. In the present political situation, to ensure the effective carrying through of these measures, the following are required.
 - (a) the coalition agreement should be between the SLFP and the ULF and
 - (b) there should be an arrangement with regard to Ministries ensuring the following Ministries for the LSSP, viz. Ministry of Finance and Planning; Ministry of Nationalized Services; Ministry of Internal and External Trade.

This conference empowers the Central Committee to make arrangements for a coalition government with the SLFP on the lines indicated above.

Colvin R. de Silva
Leslie Goonawardene
Doric de Souza
A. Siridasa

Bernard Soysa
N.S.E. Perera
Kamini
R.R. Dharmaratnam

DOCUMENT 14d**Resolution of the Renegade Majority to the
LSSP Congress, June 6-7, 1964***Political Resolution*

The outstanding political event in 1963 was the formation of the ULF. Two factors helped to bring this about. On the one hand the steadily growing strength of the UNP became manifest by the victories of that party in very many local government elections throughout the country. There was also a noticeable tendency of the teenagers and others who had formally supported the SLFP to move towards the right. On the other hand, faced with the growing strength of the UNP, there was a manifest desire on the part of the progressives to get together to struggle against the growing menace of the consolidating reactionary right. This desire of the progressives was clearly brought out, when the three left parties began a campaign over the petrol issue.

The swing to the right in the country was a result of the failure of the government to solve the pressing problems that beset all sections of the people of the country. The deterioration of the general economic situation which led to the shortage of goods, and the extraordinary rise in prices were cleverly utilized by the UNP to its advantage. The attack on the SLFP government was linked with an attack on the left in general and the LSSP in particular which was held responsible for bringing the present government into being. In a way that most left parties did not anticipate all manner of small capitalists and traders became the most conscious propagandists for the UNP as the only way out of the growing economic instability and mounting inflation.

The ULF was formed after prolonged negotiations and in the midst of misgivings and opposition from sections of the party. The tremendous enthusiasm with which the ULF was received, helped to dissipate doubts about the value and the usefulness of the ULF as an organization to fight the menace of reaction. The ULF began to be projected as the only alternative force capable of forming a govern-

ment opposed to the UNP. Members of the SLFP both inside and outside parliament began to consider the ULF as the coming force to stem the tide of reaction.

Unfortunately the ULF could not realize to the full the benefits of this mobilization of all the progressives in the country. Within our own ranks, attacks on the ULF in public had a retarding effect. The MEP and Mr. Philip Gunawardene, did not lend their full support to push the ULF forward organizationally. Although it is true the ULF continued to make a general impression in the country and also succeeded in enthusing the SLFP rank and filers, it was not so effective as it might have been. It did succeed in arresting the flow to the right that was visible prior to the formation of the ULF.

The major political crisis came to the surface on the 8th of March with the prorogation of parliament. The SLFP government was numerically too weak to face parliament. The economic and financial crisis had reached a stage where the ministers had not the capacity to tackle them. Their inefficiency and incompetence stood exposed. Manifestly the problems facing the country were beyond their capacity to solve. The end of the middle path had been reached. In this situation both to the SLFP rank and file and the SLFP government, the ULF and its clear-cut programme stood out as a powerful factor which could not be ignored.

The Prime Minister who obtained a breathing space at this juncture had three alternative courses of action available to her (a) a coalition with the right; (b) the dissolution of parliament, leading to possible dictatorial intentions; (c) a coalition with the left. After much consideration she rejected the coalition with the right as well as the dissolution of parliament. She decided unmistakably to move leftwards with the progressive forces and find a solution to the problems besetting the country, along left policies. This was made abundantly clear in the speech she made at N'Eliya towards the end of March 1964.

In keeping with this decision of hers, she commenced negotiations with ULF, which authorized Comrade N.M. Perera to negotiate with her on an informal basis. The discussions showed that there is a reasonable measure of agreement on a short-term programme of implementation for the remaining period of this parliament. In accordance with the mandate given to her by her own executive committee, she has indicated that she is prepared to form a coalition government with ULF. Ministerial portfolios would be granted only to the LSSP in the first instance.

Does coalition with the SLFP in this setting mean class collaboration? Nobody would dispute that the UNP is a party of the capitalist class in Ceylon. The SLFP is a party based on the radical petty-bourgeoisie and the lower middle class. Admittedly the leadership has feudal connections, but from the policy that was followed since July 1960 it is clear that the main pressure on the government has been from the lower middle class and to some extent even from the working class. In fact the SLFP has shed some of the more reactionary elements that existed from 1956 to 1960, and being a centre party, it has vacillated, sometimes moving to the right, and sometimes moving to the left. But the overall drive has been a steady movement leftwards. If this characterization is not correct, it will be difficult to explain the various measures for nationalization, the party has embarked upon since 1956. It has taken over the bus transport, the port, private schools, insurance. It has taken steps to abolish private practice in medical service. It has established the People's Bank and has taken over the Ceylon Bank. All these and above all petrol, which is a direct blow at both imperialist power and capitalist power it has undertaken. The cumulative effect of these measures must result in a serious inroad into the capitalist structure of the economy. The SLFP government and the MEP government before it, has carried forward a national struggle in this country, by removing the imperialist bases in this country. Voting rights have been conceded to those above 18 years. The reorganization of the headman system has taken place. A substantial fillip has been given to national cultural activities. The power of the entrenched Catholic Church has been weakened and Buddhist tradition and culture have been given their due place. The ordinary man has been given a place in the political and social life of the country, which centuries of imperialist domination had deprived them. Workers have felt the benefits of a number of ameliorative measures including May Day as a paid public holiday.

When the cumulative effect of these changes are considered it will be quite apparent that the SLFP is not a capitalist party. The fact that it is functioning within the capitalist framework, does not necessarily make it a party of the capitalist class. Its fundamental character as a centrist party, drawing its main support from the peasantry and the lower middle class elements of the country, remains unchanged. A coalition government between the working class party like the LSSP and the SLFP can still further change its class character. Such an association will increase the progressive content of the SLFP and

make it more definitely a leftward moving government. This would become more emphasized in the programmatic association that is envisaged and give a further bias along socialist lines.

The progressive character of the internal policy of the government had been reflected in the external policy which it has followed. Beginning from 1956 the establishment of diplomatic connections with socialist countries notwithstanding the opposition of the imperialist bloc have been carried forward. In defiance of the threat of no assistance from Western Germany, it has given consulate status to Eastern Germany. A number of economic and cultural agreements have been signed with countries of the socialist bloc. Following a strictly non-aligned policy like Yugoslavia it has not hesitated to reject assistance from the USA on conditions which are humiliating and derogatory to the independence of this country.

Immediate Perspectives

Such a coalition government with the SLFP as envisaged above would make it possible to activize both the working class and the masses generally. Within the 12 months available to us it would be possible only to concentrate on certain lines of action. The party should concentrate on making an appreciable impression on the rising cost of living. An effective drive should be made to smash blackmarketeering and hoarding of essential goods and thereby reduce the prices of essential commodities. It is essential that all our youth leagues and trade union organizations should be in the forefront in helping to build up peoples' committees in various parts of the island. These committees will be given legal status and have the assistance of the police in carrying out these tasks.

The party should equally concentrate on minimizing corruption and sabotage activities in the various departments in the public sector. Herein our trade union organizations will have an important role to play. They should take the leadership in the workers and vigilance committees that is to be set up in all workplaces and government departments.

A serious effort will have to be made in building up peasants organizations for the effective implementation of the Paddy Lands Act. In this respect also our youth leagues will have an important role to play.

By concentrating on these three lines of action we would be able to bring into active participation in the process of government both the working class as well as the general masses. In a real sense these two mass forces, the workers and the peasants, will have positive and creative functions to perform. They will be in an organized manner ranged against their class enemy with the necessary authority and power of the state machinery to back them in their struggle. A new purpose and a new enthusiasm would be generated that would carry the whole movement forward. Sterile criticism will give place to positive action, and the whole left movement will find a new purpose. The end of this period of 12 months would see the firm foundation laid for moving forward along socialist lines to a new society.

Accordingly this party conference request the new Central Committee of the party to negotiate with the SLFP government with a view to the formation of a coalition government between the ULF and the SLFP. If such negotiations fail the Central Committee is authorized to enter into an agreement for the formation of a coalition government between the LSSP and the SLFP.

Such a coalition government should contain the following in respect of the LSSP.

1. A minimum programme which will at least contain the 10 items in the attached list.
2. Three ministers for the LSSP.
3. These three ministers should be:
 - (a) Minister of Finance and Planning
 - (b) Minister of Internal and External Trade
 - (c) Minister of Nationalized Services

Measures for Implementation

1. All companies registered in Ceylon and all resident individuals should be required by law to maintain their accounts in the Bank of Ceylon and/or the People's Bank only. (N.B. the transfer of various categories of Accounts could be staggered).
2. Legislation should be introduced to control the activities of Agency houses.

3. The export of capital, dividends and profits from Ceylon should be restricted still further.

4. New administrative regulations should be introduced to make it possible to retire compulsorily government officers who hamper work or are inefficient or are deliberately unco-operative in pushing forward government work.

5. (a) Workers' committees, elected by secret ballot, should be set up in every public corporation of utility. Such committees should be associated with the management at all levels. They should have legal powers to check waste, inefficiency and corruption and the right to make proposals to improve the work of these institutions.

(b) Vigilance committees should be set up by administrative regulations in all government departments and in the departments of semi-government institutions such as the local government service. Such committees should have powers to check inefficiency and sabotage and to make proposals to improve the work of the department concerned vis-a-vis the public.

(c) In every vigilance committee or local body Peoples' Committees should be established with legal powers to inspect the distributive trade, thereby helping to fight hoarding, the black market, and corruption.

6. (a) The state Trading Corporation should take over all essential imports and gradually extend its activities to exports as well.

(b) The Co-operative Wholesale Establishment should have the monopoly of wholesale distribution. It should have a centre in every district through which textiles, building materials, motor spares and accessories, medicines and foodstuffs specifically will be distributed.

(c) Retail distribution should be through the co-operatives and private retailers. Where necessary, special state retail shops should be opened.

(d) The maximum wholesale and retail price should be fixed by law for every essential item.

7. The machinery for economic planning should be made more effective and proper ways and means devised to associate the trade unions and the people in general with the preparation and carrying out of economic plans.

8. Special courts should be established to deal expeditiously with cases of bribery, corruption, black marketeering, hoarding and other such anti-social offences. Imprisonment should be made obligatory for all found guilty of bribery or corruption and the legal punishment of profiteering and hoarding should be enhanced.

9. The monopoly of the daily press by the private capitalist concerns should be ended.

10. (a) The GPS should be cleaned up to ensure that the cultivator gets full value for his product.

(b) The services of the People's Bank should be extended to the rural areas either directly or by making certain co-operative societies their sub-agents. A scheme to relieve rural indebtedness should be prepared.

(c) The Paddy Lands Act should apply to all paddy lands including those in the colonization scheme.

(d) Landlords should be removed from the cultivation committees. These committees should be given enhanced powers, including the power to put *ande goviya* back in possession of lands while litigation regarding tenancy rights is pending.

N.M. Perera, D.G. William, H. Siddhartha Thero (Rev.), D.W. Wijesooriya, J. Wanigatunga, Cyril Perera, Gilbert Pieris, Hector Fernando, B.A.U. Lewis, Alwis, G.P. Perera, Vivien Goonewardene, Jack Kotalawela, Nimal Horana, D.W.J. Perera, Chandra Gunasekera, Cholmondley Goonewardene, Wilfred Senanayake, Rajapaksa, Batuwandara Gunawardene, Anil Moonesinghe.

DOCUMENT 14e**Letter from the IEC (Pabloite) to members of the LSSP, May 25, 1964**

The International Executive Committee of the Fourth International took up at its plenum meeting the key problems which you face at present and discussed them at some length. The discussion ended with unanimous endorsement of the letter sent to you by the United Secretariat April 23.

It is clear that throughout Asia, the equilibrium reached at the time of the Geneva agreement of 1954 has been broken and that in every country in this part of the world the class struggle is again sharpening. If the mass movement does not move boldly now, reaction will inevitably set in and the present opportunity will turn into its opposite.

In Ceylon, the SLFP government, acting as the agency of the bourgeoisie, is seeking through its proposals to disintegrate the United Left Front and to associate the LSSP with its bankrupt policies and further decline. The LSSP has reached a crucial moment in its history.

Let the SLFP government appeal to you in vain!

The only real alternative is audacious action by the LSSP. It should serve as the central driving force in mobilizing the ULF, appealing to the masses to establish a United Left Front government on the basis of a genuinely socialist programme. This would prove highly attractive to elements that have been sucked into the SLFP because of its demagogy in the past, help reorient them and open up the possibility for a powerful bloc of the left organization.

The International Executive Committee of the Fourth International sends you its warmest comradely greetings. It hopes that the LSSP as a whole will remain faithful to its long tradition of uncompromising struggle against imperialism and national bourgeoisie, and

that it will successfully resist the manoeuvres of the bourgeois government in order to open the road for genuine representatives of the masses to come to power.

No coalition at the expense of socialist principles and the possibility of a socialist victory!

Forward with the masses in struggle for a government of the United Left Front.

Chapter Seven

The Fourth International after the Ceylon betrayal

The document by G. Healy which forms this chapter, *Problems of the Fourth International*, was written in 1966. It takes up the historical problems of the Trotskyist movement and the origins of Pabloism from the standpoint of the fight to prepare for the revolutionary crisis signalled by the ending of the boom.

DOCUMENT 15

Problems of the Fourth International by G. Healy, August 1966

Introduction

IN APRIL, 1966, the International Committee of the Fourth International called its Third Congress. At this gathering, representatives of Trotskyist organizations in several countries argued out the problems of building the international revolutionary movement.

The task of this movement is to resolve the crisis of leadership which has held back the working class from overthrowing capitalism on a world scale.

Cynics have often sneered at the many splits and disputes which feature in the history of the Marxist movement. This only reveals their adaptation to the bureaucratic apparatus which shackles the workers' movement, channelling its consciousness within the confines of capitalist society.

Fighting with the weapons of gossip they slander those who strive to break the working class from the bureaucratic stranglehold. They play their part in the attempt to debase the ideas of the revolutionary movement.

Marx, Lenin and Trotsky, each in his time, showed that, in order to liberate itself from capital, to establish its political independence, the working class had to become conscious of its historic role. This involved a scientific understanding of the class struggle and, in order to achieve this, a centralized organization, fighting to lead the workers in all their national and international struggles, had to be constructed.

The process of building such a movement is complex and contradictory. It raises problems whose solution embodies a distillation of the experience of the working class in active struggle.

The fight for theory within the revolutionary vanguard of the working class, whose importance is stressed continually in this pamphlet, is thus not an abstract, academic exercise, but is cradled within the living reality of the class struggle itself.

In 1967, the class struggle will sharpen throughout the world, throwing the Stalinist and social-democratic bureaucracies and all their hangers-on into violent crisis. Marxist preparation for these battles must comprise a careful examination of the problems faced by those who have fought to build a conscious revolutionary leadership. For a new generation of revolutionaries, especially, the experiences summarized in these pages are an essential basis for such preparation.

Problems of the Fourth International

World imperialism is drifting rapidly towards its most severe economic crisis since the end of the second world war. Foremost, amongst those countries on the downward plunge is Great Britain. As the unemployment figures commence to climb, hundreds of previously well established businesses are threatened with bankruptcy during the coming months. The Prices and Incomes Bill, which seeks to tie the trade unions firmly to the capitalist state machine, will introduce an era of political strikes which will continuously pose before the working class the problem of power.

The lessons from the seamen's strike confirm this perspective. When the strike began it was looked upon by rank-and-file seamen as an industrial dispute. Yet when the Labour government and the state showed their hands in support of the shipowners, it immediately became clear to these same seamen within a matter of days that theirs was a political struggle against the Wilson government. A rapid political development had taken place in a union which had not engaged in a strike for 50 years.

This experience is an indication that a similar politicalization of the British working class is on the way. A powerful new force is entering the arena of class struggle and that force is the working class, which is now embarking on the road of class struggle in one of the most powerful countries in the world.

For over 25 years it has held back, so long as it could improve its wages and working conditions in a period of capitalist inflationary boom. But this is now a thing of the past.

What the Labour government, the monopolists and the state

machine propose to do today is to attempt in the course of the coming year by means of unemployment and legislation against the trade unions to take away these gains and reduce the standard of living to what it was before the second world war.

A period of unparalleled revolutionary conflict lies ahead.

The Socialist Labour League now shoulders an enormous responsibility — that of constructing the mass revolutionary party which will lead the working class to power. By doing so it will inspire revolutionists in all countries to build similar parties to do the same.

We follow in the traditions of the Bolshevik Party which so far remains the only party in the world, guided by Marxists, to consciously lead a successful socialist revolution.

Because of these aims, our organization and members have to face a constant barrage of lies and hostility from the right-wing traitors of the Labour Party, the fake 'lefts' around 'Tribune', who cover up for them and the Stalinists, as well as a variety of revisionist groups, such as the Pabloites and the Paris 'United Secretariat' who masquerade under the name of Trotskyism, and who have long ago liquidated themselves into the camps of Stalinism and social democracy, depending upon the countries they are operating in.

This is as it should be. The Socialist Labour League is engaged in a fight to a finish against these betrayals of the working class and we won't yield an inch. We didn't in the pre-war days when the might of Stalinism, through its propaganda machine of lies and falsifications, was turned full blast against the international Trotskyist movement, denouncing us as fascists and agents of imperialism in order to cover up Stalin's foul deeds against the working class.

Trotskyism, which is the fight for the development of revolutionary Marxism in the post-Lenin era, can be best described by paraphrasing Trotsky's own description of Leninism — it is warlike from head to foot. In the struggle against its enemies, the Socialist Labour League follows in the footsteps of this tradition.

Our revisionist opponents such as Hansen of the American Socialist Workers' Party — the Party which sent the telegram of condolences to the arch imperialist Mrs. Kennedy when her husband, the President, was assassinated in 1963, are fond of slandering the Socialist Labour League on the grounds that it is insular to world problems, because it is working in Britain, which as everyone knows is an island off the continent of Europe.

Undoubtedly, the Socialist Labour League reflects the strength

and weaknesses of the working class movement, but merely to say that is not enough. We are obliged to examine the history of the working class and the Socialist Labour League in a more serious way.

Behind Hansen's slander there is also a snigger of contempt for the British working class, who, having been the first to arrive on the historical scene, reflect in their thinking the trial and error, improvised empirical methods of thinking which characterize the methods of the industrial capitalists who were forced to develop their industrial machines by 'trial and error'.

Amongst other things, this industrial machine built a huge empire, which in turn supplied vast sources of income, part of which was used by the British capitalist class to corrupt the leaders of the English Labour and trade union movement, as well as enabling the working class to enjoy standards of living even in the darkest days of slump and trade recession, far in excess of their colonial brothers in the Empire.

Thus the working class suffers from two serious handicaps.

The petty-bourgeois leaders and university-trained radicals of the labour movement constantly inject idealist and empirically-formed ideology into their ranks through all manner of propaganda techniques, thus taking advantage of its peculiar national historical origin. In this way, the struggle against Marxism is maintained by the Fabian Society.

The working class have up to now been prevented from relating the theories of Marxism, which supply a conscious understanding of the history of the class struggle, to the historical tasks which face them in Britain. This is the task which must be undertaken by the Socialist Labour League.

Secondly, the crumbs from the table of the Empire which provided them with reforms in the past also tended to make them insular and divide them off from the struggles of the colonial peoples. Today this danger is reflected in the growth and dangers of racialism and forms a stubborn barrier which is exploited to the full by the Tory and Labour leaders as well as miscellaneous groups of fascists in preventing the working class from attaining class consciousness.

But these obstacles, although extremely powerful, must not be taken out of historical context.

We are obliged to take note of a further characteristic of the working class, which it has inherited from the ruling class and which today conceals a highly revolutionary content. We are speaking about the tendency towards compromise.

Again the resources of the empire enabled such a tendency to develop as a dominant method of capitalist rule, under conditions where our rulers rule almost exclusively through the Labour and trade union bureaucracy.

But this was also a characteristic of the period before the seventeenth century Cromwellian Revolution. Trotsky in quoting the French historian Guizot in *Where is Britain Going?* warmly applauds his comment on this period. 'When the time came for drawing the sword', wrote Guizot, 'all were astonished and deeply moved'.

For impressionist demagogues such as Hansen, this 'compromise' is deceptive. To him it appears to bolster up his cliché about 'insularity' but in reality it simply acts as the thinnest of covers for a molecular revolutionary process going on today beneath the surface of class politics.

All appears well in the field of compromise on the top, until suddenly this period is over and there rushes now to the surface a revolutionary era of unprecedented proportions. That is the meaning of the present stage in British politics, a stage in which the working class is about to join the great colonial revolutions of Asia and Africa in struggle against the common imperialist enemy, world imperialism.

The seamen's strike supplied us with a small glimpse of what is on the way. It is this new wave of class struggle that will destroy for ever the historical obstacles which hold the British working class back and enable the revolutionary party to be built.

Hansen in his ignorance of the history of the British working class tries to create an amalgam between its historical difficulties and the Socialist Labour League. This is something which will call forth titters of laughter amongst the anti-theoretical ignoramuses around 'Tribune', 'The Week', and similar centrist publications, but it is nonsense so far as a Marxist interpretation goes.

To take a fixed impression like 'insular' and then relate it in a mechanical way to the revolutionary experiences of the working class now on the order of the day in Britain, is to confuse form with content. To take this fixed impression further and attach it to the SLL and its struggles to build the party is to reveal oneself as a complete bankrupt in the field of Marxism, as a brief analysis of the history of our movement goes to show.

Of course the history of the Trotskyist movement in Britain is cradled within the working class and must directly or indirectly reflect its problems. In fact it has grown up in a struggle against these

problems — that is a constant defence of the international teachings of Marxism and the Fourth International.

Shortly before the founding conference of the Fourth International in 1938 the Workers' International League opposed the unification of British Trotskyists on the tactical grounds that it was necessary to discuss our attitude towards entry into the Labour Party before unification could be achieved. This was a serious mistake which certainly had at its roots a rejection of international responsibilities in favour of a nationalist approach.

But it was corrected in 1943 when some of the present leaders of the Socialist Labour League re-analysed their mistake and explained its origin within the movement.

The correction was made at the second National Congress of the Workers' International League in September 1943 and it was bitterly opposed by the overwhelming majority of those present, led by Jock Haston, now educational director for the right-wing Electrical Trades Union.

Despite this it brought the movement back to a political understanding of internationalism so much so that by March 1944 reunification had been achieved and the Revolutionary Communist Party was founded.

Haston and his majority continued to oppose the policies of the Fourth International, especially towards work inside the Labour Party. During this period, from 1943 onwards, we collaborated closely with the international movement and its various bodies. We fought the opportunist and sectarian effects of Haston's anti-internationalism right up until February 1950 when he deserted the Trotskyist movement and applied to join the Labour Party.

Haston undoubtedly reflected the insular nationalism of the working class. He openly advocated and defended empirical thinking as a means for building the revolutionary party.

In the end he went to the right wing and broke for all time from Marxism.

It was a fitting end, but it may well not have happened in this way had it not been for the struggle which the present leadership of the SLL carried out against him in defence of the programme and policies of the Fourth International.

Having corrected the mistake made in 1938 we have always insisted and defended the principle that it is impossible to build a revolutionary party in Britain except through the clearest understanding of the

role of the Fourth International. We subordinate always building of this party to our international obligations. Any other course would be a return to the barren nationalist course of Haston and company.

Then, in 1951, came Pablo, at that time Secretary of the International, with his theory that because of the imminence of the third world war, the Stalinist parties could, under the impact of this war, transform themselves into revolutionary parties.

His entry policy into the Communist and social-democratic parties now became the vehicle of liquidationist policies. Only the majority of the French section of the Fourth International opposed him at first.

The Socialist Workers' Party supported Pablo against the French section and we made at this point our second most serious mistake in the international movement, because we also supported the decision to expel the French comrades.

We didn't have long to wait to see the bitter fruits of that one. Barely over a year later Pablo had started his groups hell-bent on a liquidationist course inside our organization in Britain and the SWP in the USA.

In Britain he gave full powers to the Lawrence minority to ignore the decisions of our majority. This encouraged them to publicly violate the discipline of our organization. Naturally we expelled them immediately. Later Lawrence and his friends joined the Communist Party.

The SWP meanwhile publicly broke from Pablo's international leadership and issued the 'Open Letter to all Trotskyist Organizations' in November 1953. This letter spoke about the struggle of the French comrades against Pabloism as follows:

By fiat of the International Secretariat, the elected majority of the French section was forbidden to exercise its rights to lead the political and propaganda work of the party. Instead the political bureau and the press were put under the control of a 'parity commission'.

At the time we deeply disapproved this action by which a minority was used to arbitrarily overturn a majority. As soon as we heard about it, we communicated our protest to Pablo.

However, we must admit that we made an error in not taking more vigorous action. This error was due to insufficient appreciation on our part of the real issues involved. We thought the differences between Pablo and the French section were tactical and this led us to side with Pablo, despite our misgivings about his organizational procedure, when, after months of disruptive factional struggle, the majority was expelled.

But at the bottom the differences were programmatic in character. The fact is that the French comrades of the majority saw what was happening more clearly than we did. The Eighth Congress of their party declared that:

‘A grave danger menaces the future and even the existence of the Fourth International . . . Revisionist conceptions, born of cowardice and petty-bourgeois impressionism have appeared within its leadership. The still great weakness of the International, cut off from the life of the sections, has momentarily facilitated the installation of a system of personal rule, basing itself and its anti-democratic methods on revisionism of the Trotskyist programme and abandonment of the Marxist method’.

How easy it is today for Hansen, Cannon and Dobbs to forget what they wrote in 1953. At the time we heartily endorsed the contents of this ‘Open Letter’ and we have never changed our minds.

All these important historical experiences establish one thing very clearly. In sharp contrast to the nationalist insular tendency of the British working class, the education of the present leadership of the SLL and through them the rank-and-file members is internationalist to the core. All our political successes in Britain are due in the main to this basic factor.

The Legacy of Pabloism

It would be very wrong to lay the blame for the development of liquidationist revisionism solely on the shoulders of Pablo. He was one of the principal mediums through which it penetrated the Fourth International, but only one. Pablo was an impressionist and an idealist. His theory about the inevitability of a Third World War fought out under conditions where the Stalinist parties would be transformed into revolutionary parties was impressionist to the core.

It left out of account the reactionary bureaucratic nature of the leaderships of these parties and the role of the international class struggle against imperialism. It superficially saw things from the standpoint of great power politics and the goings-on in the apparatus of the corrupt leaderships.

Once a Marxist departs from a continuous study of the workers’ movement from the standpoint of the struggle to build the revolutionary party, he departs from the science of Marxism and becomes an impressionist.

From impressionism to idealism is an easy jump either way.

After a wrong estimation of the international perspectives Pablo rapidly developed his theory of the self-reform of the Soviet bureaucracy, especially following Stalin's death in 1953.

This was only logical especially since he had already come to the conclusion that the Stalinist leaderships outside the Soviet Union could transform themselves into revolutionary parties. Here he substituted an idealistic conception of the self-reform of a bureaucracy, whose very presence on the international scene represented the results of the counter-revolutionary role of international capitalist pressure on the workers' movement.

From that time, that is from 1953 onwards, degeneration was rapid. The Marxist method was completely cast aside and the road to one betrayal after another was opened up.

In the summer of 1954 just after the split between the International Committee and Pablo, Lawrence and his group in England, together with the Mestre group in France, left him and turned towards the Communist Parties.

Pablo and his tendency gave up all pretences of being a revolutionary tendency and liquidated themselves into the Algerian National Liberation Front (FLN), subordinating themselves to the leadership of Ben Bella and Boumedienne.

Those of their followers such as Germain in Belgium who joined the social-democratic parties rapidly dissolved themselves into the centrist 'left wings'.

The stage was set for the 1964 betrayal in Ceylon when the overwhelming majority of Pablo's section joined the Bandaranaike government, under conditions where even Pablo's heirs, Frank and Germain, had to expel over 500 members of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party.

Nothing like this had ever been seen in the whole history of the Trotskyist movement since its foundation. Just as the sectarian *débaîcle* of the German Communist Party in 1933 allowed Hitler to come to power and necessitated Trotsky declaiming that the Third International was dead, so the Ceylon betrayal signified the complete bankruptcy of Pabloism and the United Secretariat.

The responsibility for building the Fourth International now rests entirely with the parties of the International Committee.

It is at this point, however, that the International Committee should take another look at the tactical question of entry, so that it may avoid the opportunism of Pablo which led to liquidationism and

the sectarianism which has in the past led to the isolation of so many potential revolutionary groups.

The tactic of entry into the social-democratic parties was elaborated by Trotsky around 1934 in order to try and win over to the Fourth International the left-centrist layers of those parties who were hovering between us and Stalinism.

It must be understood that from the outset, Trotsky viewed entry as a tactic and not a principle.

It is necessary to emphasise this because there are still alleged supporters of Trotsky who wrongly insist that it is necessary for our parties to go through the social-democratic or communist parties at some time in their development.

This is the case of the so-called Revolutionary Socialist Labour League (Grant group) in England who in all essentials agree with Pablo's revisionist theories.

In order to liquidate the Fourth International Pablo insisted in practice that entry was a principle. He then went on to adapt his weak forces to the prevailing centrist currents within the social-democracy.

Gradually they completely lost their political bearings and became centrists themselves. The classical example is Belgium.

Although today Germain is expelled from the social-democratic party on the organizational grounds that he wanted minority rights, he still has not declared for a revolutionary party.

On the contrary he continues with a small centrist party whose weekly paper *La Gauche* has less than a 2,400 circulation. Germain did not fight the right wing around the programme and principles of the Fourth International. When he joined their party he became a centrist and remained a centrist even when he was expelled.

This was not Trotsky's conception of entry. He conceived of it as a temporary measure which was necessary in order to fight the right wing and win over members to the Fourth International.

Experiences have shown that this conception needs further elaboration. Entry cannot be successfully carried out unless there is a strong independent revolutionary party functioning actively in the daily experiences of the working class.

Only under exceptional circumstances can total entry of a section of the Fourth International be contemplated, and even then it will be absolutely essential for those who enter to be actively engaged in the struggles of the class so that they can bring their experiences into the fight against the right wing of the apparatus.

The essence of the entry tactic is that the revolutionary party and its leadership must constantly function within the working class *independent* of entry whilst at the same time utilizing its experiences to fight the right wing.

Pablo, Germain and company turned their backs on the struggle of the working class and concentrated instead on a verbal centrist argument against the bureaucratic right wing.

The essence of Marxism which is a continuous analysis of the experiences of the working class by an active participant in the building of the revolutionary party was cast aside. In its place came the idea that things were decided not by the working class but by developments within the bureaucratic apparatus.

Having abandoned a study of the working class for the theory of the inevitability of a Third World War and the self-reform of the Stalinist bureaucracy, Pablo, Germain and company turned the entry tactic into the opportunist opposite of what Trotsky originally proposed.

The work of the Socialist Labour League in the Young Socialists between 1960 and 1964 corrected to the full this mistake. Not only was this work most successful but it proved that by maintaining a strong independent revolutionary organization and combining faction work with serious activity amongst youth in the local areas it was possible to win over the forces necessary to defeat the Labour Party bureaucracy.

We established in practice a united front from within with those youth who were moving to the left, whilst at the same time we exposed the role of the fake lefts in the fight against the right wing.

That, in our opinion, is how Trotsky advocated the application of the entry tactic.

The Pabloites on the United Secretariat are constantly boasting about the strength of their international relations, in the same way as they used to boast about the 'great party' in Ceylon.

In the winter 1960-1961 issue of their magazine 'Fourth International', No. 12, they report their Sixth Congress as follows: 'The VIth World Congress of the Fourth International was held in Switzerland from 10th to 15th January 1961. More than a hundred delegates, fraternal delegates, and invited comrades, coming from about 30 countries of all the continents, participated in its labours'.

In June 1963 the 7th re-unification congress was held and its character was noted as follows in Fall 1963 issue of *International*

Socialist Review: '... the overwhelming majority of the Trotskyist movement representing 26 countries have now been united ...'

Note how the number of countries dropped from 30 to 26.

Now take a look at the representation at the VIIIth World Congress held at the end of 1965.

There were delegates present from Britain, Canada, Mexico, Venezuela, West Germany, Belgium, Austria, Italy, France, Ceylon, Greece, Switzerland, Algeria, Argentina, Denmark and one other country — in all 16 countries, a drop of 10 since the so-called unification of 1963.

Needless to say, this decline was never explained — the Congress was simply noted as 'a great success'.

There were observers from Spain, Iraq and Nigeria, some of whom were also present at the Third Congress of the International Committee held in April 1966.

To describe the two tiny groups (one opportunist and the other sectarian) in Britain as 'a section' is to scrape the barrel to the utmost.

These people represented nothing of the slightest importance, and, in practice, are irreconcilably divided among themselves.

From these examples, it can be seen that no reliance whatsoever can be placed on the way the Pabloite United Secretariat reports its Congresses. Because of revisionist policies, their movement is disintegrating in one country after another.

It was at this VIIIth Congress that Pablo was expelled on the grounds that he and his followers had violated discipline over two years. But his departure did not in any way signify that his political ideas were rejected.

On the contrary, Livio, representing the Italian group and a leading collaborator of Germain and Frank, took the floor to report on the African revolution, claiming that in Egypt and Mali there was a possibility of a socialist transformation without revolution.

Here we have the essence of Pablo's revisionism. But that is not the whole story.

After Livio spoke, Germain introduced an amendment making a definite concession to him. He declared that he is against opposing the Egypt led by the bourgeois nationalist, Nasser.

On the question of Ceylon, the Congress allowed one and a half hours to the discussion and report covering the expulsion of 500 members. As soon as a crisis of this magnitude has to be discussed, Pabloite Congresses are not really interested.

It took just 90 minutes to dismiss what happened in Ceylon.

Although Pablo has been expelled, his political methods still dominate the thinking of the United Secretariat. Pablo has gone, but the legacy of Pabloism lives on.

The Role of the Socialist Workers' Party

The Socialist Workers' Party of the United States cannot for legal reasons be affiliated to the Fourth International. In the past, however, because the founders of this Party, Cannon, Schachtman and Abern, worked in the closest association with Trotsky, it exercised considerable influence within the international movement. During the period of the late twenties and thirties its leadership in collaboration with Trotsky harnessed their experience of work in the mass movement to a greater extent than any other section at that time.

The early successes of the SWP were based on a combination of Trotsky's brilliant political analysis of the international scene as well as the problems of the Trotskyist movement and the maturity of its leadership in relation to their approach to the problems of the working class in the United States. In this respect, James P. Cannon was undoubtedly the most outstanding international Trotskyist leader during Trotsky's lifetime.

How then and under what conditions did the degeneration take place which today has transformed the SWP from being the staunchest defender of Marxism and Trotskyism into the leader of a rump of Pabloite revisionist supporters who have betrayed every principle of Marxism over the past 15 years?

The answer to this question does not lie in the difficult conditions of the cold war and the boom under which the SWP has been operating in the United States, especially since 1949, although these have played a role, but in the origin of the early Trotskyist movement.

From its inception, this movement was based on a profound contradiction.

Its founder, Trotsky, went through all the early political experiences of the pre-revolutionary Soviet Union, the revolution itself, when he led and organized the Red Army, the post-Lenin degeneration and the growth of the Soviet bureaucracy under Stalin.

His supporters in the USA and in other countries came mainly from those who entered the communist movement after the foundation of

the Third International in 1919. Their development was conditioned by the post-World War I defeats of the working class outside the Soviet Union and the growth of Stalinism.

These experiences should not be considered in an unrelated superficial way.

Building the revolutionary party is conditioned by them: but in a more fundamental way it is determined by a consistent struggle for the Marxist philosophy of dialectical materialism against all forms of idealism which is the predominant philosophy of the ruling class.

Only Trotsky had participated in such an experience, especially during the pre-revolutionary period.

Lenin's leadership was constantly strengthened and developed around a consistent struggle for Marxist philosophy against all brands of idealist revisionism. Such a struggle was greatly facilitated by the growth of the revolutionary forces which were the fore-runner of the revolution itself.

Without this experience the revolutionary leadership cannot be trained. The education of a Marxist cadre requires a continuous ideological struggle derived from Marxist theory in participation and study of the workers' movement. Only in this way can leaders be historically selected for the great task of overthrowing capitalist society.

This was precisely the weakness of the Cannon-Trotsky combination.

Trotsky's theoretical genius flowed from the entire revolutionary experience of the Soviet Union, both in its triumph and degeneration.

Cannon's politics, on the other hand, were mainly derived during the period of Soviet degeneration and defeat for the international working class outside the USSR.

His early years in the Communist Party of the USA provided him with a meagre grasp of Marxist theory. Like the rest of the party leaders he was imbued with pragmatism (if it works it is right) and his relation with Trotsky was based on this method.

He correctly saw Trotsky as the co-leader with Lenin of the Russian revolution, and when the break with Stalin took place after Lenin's death, he concluded that Trotsky had the correct political position.

Cannon was strengthened in his conclusion by the immediate conflict of factions within the American Communist Party. William Z. Foster and others joined with Stalin, Cannon took political sides with Trotsky. It was a pragmatic decision dictated by the factional situa-

tion within the CP of the USA which produced important results, especially during Trotsky's lifetime.

But this was not enough so far as the training of the leadership of the SWP went.

Cannon and his supporters accepted Trotsky's leadership without understanding the implications of the theoretical experience which lay behind it.

Their political development was therefore of a one-sided character — in effect they remained pragmatists.

At this point we can see the reason why Trotsky had to wage a struggle on dialectical materialism in 1939-1940 against Burnham and Schachtman.

Although the American Trotskyist movement was 11 years old, he had to begin his struggle against the revisionists by outlining and explaining dialectical materialism, the ABC of Marxism (see *In Defence of Marxism*).

Trotsky's tragic assassination by the Stalinists in August 1940 left Cannon on his own.

Now the real test began, and Cannon faced it in the following way.

The legend was fostered up that the SWP and its members were Trotsky's 'heirs', which to inexperienced people might seem plausible enough. It was implemented by the publication of Trotsky's writings, implying that he had said the last word on all the important questions.

Trotsky's insistence that the SWP should wage a continuous struggle within its ranks for dialectical materialism was ignored. Cannon replaced it with the conception that so long as he reprinted Trotsky's books it was sufficient.

In this way Trotsky was transformed from a revolutionary Marxist into an idol. After he died Cannon went straight over to idealism and kept the old leaders of the SWP in the dark as to his method. They, in any case, were unable to discern it since they were themselves educated under it.

From there on Cannon was forced more and more to rely on pragmatism in his approach to the international as well as American problems.

Such an approach dominated his early relations with Pablo. Cannon desired 'another Trotsky' so he latched on to Pablo.

Almost immediately international relations were resumed after the end of the second World War, Pablo was taken to the USA so that he

could be 'looked over'. He passed 'the test', if you can call it that, and then became the SWP-appointed 'Trotsky' for Western Europe.

So far, so good, but then the real crisis began because Pablo himself needed political assistance and guidance. Cannon desired Pablo to be another Trotsky, but the whole thing was based on a pragmatic illusion. Pablo wasn't Trotsky and yet Cannon wanted Trotsky tailor-made.

Having 'got away' so to speak with his pragmatic relation to Trotsky in the thirties, Cannon was on the look-out for replacements.

This is where the Marxist method came in. Cannon from his insular nationalist United States outlook wanted someone to take charge of 'Fourth International' affairs, so he chose Pablo, under circumstances where Pablo was being pushed from pillar to post by his impressionism. Coming from a middle-class intellectual milieu in Western Europe Pablo was incapable of replacing Trotsky.

So Cannon had what appeared to be a breathing space until 1951. Then Pablo utilized a minority of the French Section to expel a majority.

At first Cannon applauded Pablo on this issue, then, when the latter began to organize a minority inside the SWP, Cannon was spurred into action against Pablo. It was OK presumably when it was going on in France, but quite a different story when it began to happen inside the USA.

The year was 1953 and the full implications of Cannon's pragmatism were now becoming clear to the international movement.

From the end of the Second World War onwards he had utilized the international movement as an international front for what was happening in the United States. Just so long as Pablo kept his nose out of what was going on inside the SWP Cannon was happy.

Now we see the other side of Cannon's pragmatic method.

During the period when Trotsky was alive it produced what appeared to be favourable results. Now after his death these results were dialectically turned into their opposite.

Cannon, who accepted pragmatically Trotsky's political line without question during the period before the Second World War, was now plunged into an extremely different situation after his death.

His pragmatic use of Trotsky was now transferred to a pragmatic use of the Fourth International, which in practice meant that he based himself on a completely American nationalist approach to the international movement.

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But this was not enough so far as the training of the leader SWP went.

Cannon and his supporters accepted Trotsky's leadership understanding the implications of the theoretical experience lay behind it.

Their political development was therefore of a one-sided character — in effect they remained pragmatists.

At this point we can see the reason why Trotsky's struggle on dialectical materialism...

From a pragmatic attitude towards Trotsky and his teaching was but a small step towards American nationalism, which is the most reactionary version of idealist philosophy in the world.

It was this methodology which was responsible for the complete disintegration of the SWP as a Trotskyist organization.

The struggle by Cannon against Pablo in 1953 marked the beginning of the end for the SWP. Pablo's supporters Cochran and Clarke forced Cannon's hand. He fought them back by organizational means — that is he expelled them.

Now, thirteen years later, he and Farrell Dobbs, the present Secretary of the SWP, completely support every point which Cochran and Company fought for in 1953.

In other words, Cannon and Dobbs after expelling Cochran and Clarke then proceeded to adopt their revisionist programme.

The history of Cannon and Dobbs since 1953 is one of expelling those who disagreed with them in order to adopt the policy which those who were expelled advocated. This was the end of the line for the pragmatists of the SWP. From 1953 onwards they were politically speaking turned upside down.

Almost immediately they turned towards the English Trotskyists in order to find an excuse for what they proposed to do. They built up the legend that because the English Trotskyists were the victims of Pablo's attack (they had broken from Pablo by means of the 'Open Letter' [1953]) they needed to save the English Trotskyists which included 'Healy', from Pablo, by way of the 'Open Letter'.

This was a lie. The English Trotskyists in 1953, like the French Trotskyists in 1951, were well able to look after themselves.

When the split with Pablo was over in November 1953, we began immediately to discuss ways and means to bring the differences with Pablo into the open.

In the spring of 1954 we proposed a renewal of the discussion with Pablo and a committee was set up with an equal number from both sides to organize it.

The purpose of this discussion was not to heal the split but to bring out more clearly the fundamental reasons for it.

It was conceived by us as another stage of the struggle against Pablo. The unavoidably abrupt nature of the international split in November 1953 had left a number of comrades in different sections still confused — we wanted to expose Pablo and clarify them.

At first Cannon gave half-hearted support to these proposals, then in the late Autumn of 1954 we suddenly received a letter calling upon us to abandon the discussion. From that moment it was clear that an even more serious conflict was brewing between the International Committee and the SWP.

Even at this early date in 1954, when the split with Pablo was just concluded, the split with the SWP was *on the agenda*.

We believed that the political fight against Pablo was not an issue of abstract Marxist theory but one which was directly related to the struggle to build the party.

We felt that it was necessary to carry the fight against revisionism into the day-to-day work of the sections of the International Committee and ruthlessly expose Pabloism in the process.

The SWP wanted to forget about the fight as soon as it was over. In his usual pragmatic way Cannon couldn't care less about the problems of the international movement just so long as he had defeated Pablo's supporters inside the SWP.

So far as he was concerned it was the SWP first, last and always, no matter what happened to the international movement. Thus did pragmatism merge with nationalism.

The discussion on Pablo's role in the 1953 split was abruptly terminated by the SWP by June 1954. Three matters stood for three years until Cannon, without consultation with the International Committee, wrote to Leslie Goonewardene, the secretary of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party in Ceylon, in April 1957 suggesting that a fresh effort should be made to achieve re-unification between the International Committee and the Pabloites. This was the same Leslie Goonewardene who led the movement into the coalition government

Mrs. Bandaranaike in June 1964.

Cannon was at the end of his pragmatic road, now he had to do a political 'about face' before the entire international movement. Having split from Pablo and his own factions, Cochran and Clarke, in 1953, he now had to find ways and means to accept the policies of those from whom he had split and he had little time to do it since his own 'majority' was breaking up fast.

This is how his ideas were developing.

Almost immediately after the split with Pablo in 1953 George Novack (Wm. F. Warde) announced to Cannon one day that he was in reality a supporter of Pablo's and was on his way over to join Cochran and Clarke.

This caused consternation in the Cannon camp because he had been boosted as their main theoretician.

Immediately they went into action. According to Cannon, Evelyn Reed, Novack's wife, announced she was staying with the SWP and he, Cannon, arranged that they (the Novacks) were to join him in Los Angeles, California as soon as possible.

So they did, and that silenced George Novack, at least for the time being. He didn't break from Cannon but he temporarily kept his views on Pablo to himself.

George Breitman who went to Detroit in 1953 to replace the Cochran faction did the same thing in 1954.

Both Novack and Breitman were Pabloites from the start, but they were also friendly with Cannon. So, for the time being, they went along with him instinctively, knowing very well that sooner or later he would join them.

The reader may well ask: Why did Cannon eventually join the Pabloites?

In answering this question we do not have to refer to Novack (Warde) and Breitman.

The answer lies in Khrushchev's speech at the 20th Congress of the USSR early in 1956. But that, our readers may ask, is surely very difficult to understand — nothing of the sort.

Immediately, that is from the split of 1953, Cannon rejected the ideas which led to Khrushchev's speech. He didn't accept that the struggle against Pabloism was tied up with building revolutionary parties throughout the world and especially in the United States.

Once he believed that the SWP was free from the immediate menace of Pabloism, which to him meant Cochran and Clarke, he just turned his back, politically speaking, on the international movement.

But Khrushchev's speech, which virtually admitted that everything the Trotskyists fought for was right, changed all that.

In effect he posed an all-out struggle to expose and destroy Stalinism. It was at this point that Pabloite revisionism really strangled the international Trotskyist movement.

For five years it had turned the sections towards the possibility that the Stalinist bureaucracy, after Stalin's death, would reform itself. Now the cat was out of the bag.

It became a question as to whether or not the Fourth International would take advantage of Khrushchev's speech and fight as never

before to expose and defeat Stalinism, or whether or not it would adapt itself to Khrushchev's variety of Stalinism.

Cannon then asked for unity with Pablo. That is the real significance of Cannon approaching the Ceylonese renegade Goonewardene in April 1957. He had decided to sell out to the Stalinist bureaucracy and the imperialists.

The Socialist Labour League saw things in an entirely different light. We saw Khrushchev's 20th Congress speech as an opportunity to expose Stalinism and Pabloite adaptation to Stalinism.

When Cannon was looking for unity with the Pabloites in 1957, we were fighting to clarify the 1953 split, and extend the struggle against Pabloism, utilizing Khrushchev's speech in order to do this.

Immediately upon hearing about Cannon's letter to Goonewardene we wrote to the SWP and dissociated ourselves from Cannon.

He wrote back the kind of a letter the lord of the manor writes to a serf. It was a letter from an arrogant American nationalist telling the English comrades where to get off.

We put the question about the importance of prior discussion before unification took place. Cannon said that there was no need for any discussion.

He had in effect completely capitulated to Pabloism. Right at the point when Khrushchev's speech opened up a real opportunity for the Trotskyist movement to fight Stalinism, Cannon ran into the arms of Pablo.

The leadership of the Socialist Labour League lost no opportunity in exposing the Stalinists over Khrushchev's speech. We were prepared, because of our political hostility to Pabloism, to take the fullest opportunity in order to fight the Stalinists — we gained more from his approach than all the Pabloite sections, including the SWP, did gether.

Now let us look a little more closely at Cannon's cadre. Following the split of 1953 and Novack's threat to join Cochran (the American Pabloite) things went from bad to worse inside the leadership of the SWP.

Farrell Dobbs, who, before the split with Pablo, had been elected general secretary of the SWP, found he was unable to carry out his assignments because Cannon, he said, continuously interfered with his work as secretary from Los Angeles. Dobbs came to England early in 1958 in order to gain our support to fight Cannon.

He told us what happened to George Novack and his relations with

Cannon. We insisted that the solution to these problems must be political and accordingly we told him to participate to the full at the first congress of the International Committee which was held in June 1958, although the SWP was not a member because of the Voorhis Act.

But he did nothing of the sort. He was, he said, under instructions not to comment on the political questions.

Just imagine it. Here we were at the first congress of those sections who had fought the revisionism of Pablo, and the section which had led the fight in 1953 had nothing to say!

It was equally clear from the informal discussions with Dobbs that the SWP was being torn asunder by an internal crisis which on the surface appeared to centre around organizational issues.

Its failure to clarify the reasons for the Pablo split now meant that a number of factions inside the party were blindly fighting against each other, without the political issues being clear.

The one thing that did emerge from all this squabbling was the undoubted right-wing revisionist orientation of all the factions.

Cannon did nothing to clear up this political mess; he simply intensified it. He took a position where he could play off the right-wing faction of Murry Weiss against the Dobbs faction. Small wonder that during his visit to Europe in 1958 Dobbs spent most of his time looking for allies in the struggle against Cannon.

Towards the end of September 1958 just before he was due to return to the United States he called for a special meeting of the English and French comrades at which he could deal with the problem of Cannon.

(There is a stenographic report of this meeting available).

At this meeting he announced that in all probability he would be removed from his post of general secretary of the SWP by Cannon when he returned from Europe.

Both ourselves and the French comrades were amazed by such a revelation. We told Dobbs bluntly that under no circumstances could we take any sides between him and Cannon.

It was agreed also that a comrade should travel to Canada late in November 1958 to see if it were possible to assist the leading members of the SWP to overcome this crisis.

Dobbs returned to the USA and things more or less stayed as they were until the visit of a member of the International Committee.

At this meeting Cannon proposed to the English comrade who was

the delegate that they, the British, should join the Americans and break from the French comrades who led the fight, on the grounds that they were 'sectarian'.

We told them that this was not our conception of how an international movement should be educated and built.

Just as we refused to line up with Dobbs against Cannon, so we now refused to line up with Cannon against the French section.

We had made up our minds not to be the pawns in the SWP pragmatic game with the international movement as the board.

The time had almost certainly come for the Socialist Labour League to split openly from the SWP. Since the split with Pablo in 1953 we had utilized every available means to fight his revisionism. Now that it was clear that the SWP had capitulated to Pabloite revisionism, our task was clear — we had to organize the split from Cannon, Dobbs and Co. who had betrayed Trotsky and the Fourth International.

The development and growth of the Socialist Labour League is directly related to the struggle against Pabloite revisionism and the degeneration of the SWP. There can be no compromise on these issues.

The Socialist Labour League is out to destroy Pabloism and its SWP accomplices. There can be and, we repeat, there never will be a compromise on these questions — the fight will go on until we destroy the Pabloites and the revisionist SWP.

Today the Socialist Labour League is, even in the eyes of its bitterest opponents, the strongest section in the international Trotskyist movement. We are confident we can continue along these lines and smash the unprincipled SWP leaders, Cannon, Dobbs and Co.

Who is Joseph Hansen?

The Socialist Labour League delayed its political break from the Socialist Workers' Party until the end of 1960. We wanted, if possible to have a serious discussion inside the International Committee in order to educate our comrades around the nature of the differences. We even arranged a special trip to Canada early February, 1960, in order to meet the main leaders of the SWP to see if there were some common grounds to heal the breach between the two sections. There were none. In our opinion they were moving more and more towards a public acceptance of Pabloite revisionism.

Still we hesitated. When we finally wrote concerning the differences to their National Committee early in January 1961, we hoped that there would still be a discussion under circumstances where the differences would be eventually clarified. We had no such discussion. Apart from a few brief letters of acknowledgement of correspondence between the SWP and the SLL the months dragged by without any discussion, either written or oral.

Suddenly the whole shabby business became clear. A letter from Cannon in Los Angeles instructing the SWP national office in New York not to have any discussion with the Socialist Labour League came into our possession.

The political degeneration of the SWP was out in the open. Here was a party claiming to be Trotskyist, whose leaders had pioneered the Trotskyist movement, the most controversial Marxist movement in the whole of history, deliberately evading discussion.

How was it possible to educate anybody with such a method?

How was it possible to build the Fourth International in this way?

Cannon knew full well that if he began a discussion with the SLL his so-called cadre would fall apart. After all, there had been close on 20 years' collaboration between leading members of the SLL and the SWP.

But Cannon, starting from his pragmatist relation with Trotsky, was by now an opportunist and a political coward.

He took full advantage of the insular 'all American way' in which the leaders in the SWP had been educated. His argument was, by implication: 'Don't discuss with the leaders of the SLL, they are "sectarian" and "insular".'

In other words he fell back on the arguments which the Stalinists had been using against us for almost 30 years in order to defend and justify capitulation to the pressures of American imperialism.

And so, discussion between the SWP and the SLL was halted for over a whole year.

Then Joseph Hansen entered the scene. His job was simple.

'Eventually', said Cannon, 'we cannot avoid discussion so your task Joe is to poison the political atmosphere inside the SWP against the SLL so that when we have to discuss our members will be dead against them'.

By implication he was saying: 'Never mind about principles and truth. We're pragmatists like President John F. Kennedy, so we do what is "best" to preserve ourselves now'.

And Joseph Hansen got to work.

His task, as an ex-Mormon from Salt Lake City, was to discredit the SLL, not by political argument, but by poisonous slander and gossip.

But let us look back a little. *Who is Joseph Hansen?*

Hansen was one of Trotsky's secretaries for a period during his exile in Mexico before his assassination. There were other secretaries such as the present anti-Trotskyist Raya Dunayevskaya.

There are no records available to show that Hansen was politically outstanding as a secretary. Ever since Trotsky's assassination he has been trying to build up a legend about himself, but as the years go by it becomes more and more faded and obscure. One of the reasons why he has gone unchallenged is because those who worked with Trotsky during this period have mostly left the SWP and dropped out of political activity.

Following the assassination, Hansen returned to New York and almost immediately appointed himself as a cheer leader for Cannon. During the period early in 1944, when he and other leaders went to jail following the Minneapolis trial, he was in his element.

His story describing how Cannon left New York is a masterpiece of journalistic bootlicking.

As the crack train gathered speed along the banks of the river, the man soon to be locked in a cell because of his beliefs leaned back in his seat watching the barren trees and the ice-fringed water skim by. The pillars of a famous geologic formation moved in stately procession into the past — scenes of the Hudson warmed by the winter sun for this socialist fighter to remember in the hard days ahead. The sun fell on his hair as the train leaned round a curve and the iron gray waves lighted up luminously. Jim's lips moved: The Palisades are beautiful.

From then on Hansen had and has today a special role inside the SWP leadership. As a member of this leadership once said: 'When it comes to normal polemicizing against opponents there are all sorts of comrades who can undertake this task, but when Cannon wants to sharpen things up, with a real dirty below the belt job, all eyes on the Committee turn automatically in the direction of Joe Hansen'.

This man is tailor-made for this kind of work, for he can write for and against the same argument with equal enthusiasm the moment he is called upon to do so.

In 1952 and 1953 he bitterly attacked the Cochran and Clark faction who were supported by Pablo. He was an enthusiastic supporter of the

'Open Letter' exposing Pablo. For six months following the split, he wrote article after article in the *Militant* in 1954 denouncing Pablo.

As Cannon's interest in the whole affair began to wane because he pragmatically believed that what was left of the SWP was out of harm's way, Hansen stopped writing just as abruptly as he started.

After that he switched to an entirely different controversy, on, believe it or not, 'Cosmetics'.

Writing under the nom de plume of Jack Bustelo he plonked a large mimeographed bulletin into the SWP ranks late in 1954 (see *Struggle for Marxism in the USA*, by Tim Wohlforth, p. 143, Fourth International, Number 3, 1966).

In 1961 when Cannon, out of fear, told his henchmen in New York not to discuss with the SLL Hansen was then a natural for the 'dirty work'.

His job was to listen to all the tired middle-class renegades who had deserted the Trotskyist movement in Britain, chew over their gossip, add a few bits here and there himself and toss the garbage into the disoriented membership of the SWP.

At first Hansen encountered some temporary difficulties. For had not the SWP leaders described the SLL as follows in the Spring 1960 *International Socialist Review*:

In Britain during the past two years a major group of highly qualified intellectuals and workers in the mass movement broke away from the Communist party. The break was programmatic, entailing a thorough review and study of the very 'Stalin-Trotsky' dispute which Cochran and his collaborators put in the same category as the Dempsey-Tunney fight. Among those in Britain who have broken definitively with Stalinism there has been impressive ideological ferment. A significant group, having studied the programmatic issues to the end, turned towards fusion with the British Trotskyists. This resulted in formation of the Socialist Labor League, a group within the Labor Party and the unions dedicated to advancing the Marxist view.

As an organizing centre of both class struggle action by militant unionists and theoretical struggle for Marxism, the SLL has been selected as a target for witch-hunting. The British capitalist press and the right-wing trade union bureaucrats are displaying the keenest alarm over the fact that the SLL has become an inspiring and attractive force for radical youth, for trade union militants for the entire left wing in the Labor Party. The SLL is in the forefront of every struggle to unite workers, students and intellectuals in the fight against British imperialism, for withdrawing British

troops from every part of the world, for ending the H-bomb tests, strengthening the socialist programme of the Labor Party and defeating the right wing's attempts to scuttle the party's stand in favour of public ownership.

The SLL is taking the lead in the fight for full democracy in the unions, the Labor Party and in every aspect of British life. The SLL has shown its fighting mettle in beating back racist attempts to whip up a lynch movement against Negro workers in London.

Where did this magnificent movement come from? It is obviously without a trace of sectarianism or disdainful aloofness from the actual movement and life of the working class. It is popular, energetic and colorful in its public appeal.

The real secret of the strength of the SLL is its concern for the theoretical basis of socialism, its 'preoccupation' if you please with the 'old disputes' and its rejection of every attempt at lightminded improvisation in the field of principle. This is true of the SLL and its leadership as a whole, both those who came recently from the Communist Party as well as the older Trotskyist cadre.

The British Trotskyists prepared for the opening of the kind of opportunities prevalent in their country today and that will surely confront us in the US tomorrow by struggling against their own Cochran faction, the Lawrence group, back in 1953. They faced the same problem as the American Trotskyists in coping with destructive factional intervention on the part of Pablo. They too, had to overcome the effects of a split that was unnecessarily deep due to Pablo's influence. Their success in overcoming the internal dispute in a principled way, in strict accordance with Leninist tradition, is what prepared them to play their magnificent role today.

Had not Hansen himself publicly endorsed in the pages of the weekly *Militant* the statement of the Socialist Labour League on the expulsion of Peter Fryer and four of his cronies in the autumn of 1959, after they had publicly attacked the League?

Of course, and every informed comrade in the international movement knows this, Hansen had to invent his stories about the British Trotskyists.

Hansen set about his task in two ways.

Firstly, there was the issue of Cuba. Hansen, of course, as well as the rest of the SWP leadership, got off to a very slow start so far as Cuba was concerned. The revolution was nearly two years old before they began to discuss it.

Indeed it was Henry Gitaño, a supporter of Murry Weiss, who first started the ball rolling with an article also in the Spring issue of

International Socialist Review. This was followed up with another piece from Hansen himself.

Around that time Dobbs and Hansen visited Cuba and reported favourably on what they saw there.

But Cuba itself did not become an issue of difference between the SLL and the SWP until after we opened up the discussion early in 1961.

For two whole years after the Cuban revolution the SLL and the SWP were able to collaborate with each other despite the implications of the Cuban revolution. Now, however, when Cannon wanted to avoid a discussion on Pabloism, things took a different turn.

Together with the Pabloites, the SWP almost instantaneously, after having ignored the Cuban revolution for two years, now recognized Cuba as a *workers' state*.

This was the first major public turn towards Pabloite methods.

Hansen, who under instructions from Cannon in 1953-54 castigated Pablo for such methods, now became the most devout supporter of them. He argued with equal vehemence in favour, just as he was arguing a few years before against them.

Hansen got busy with his slander. Was it not US imperialism which oppressed the Cuban peoples? Of course it was, and if the SLL hesitated in characterizing Cuba as a 'workers state', did not that automatically mean that the SLL was an ally of US imperialism?

This was the story which he peddled around the SWP in order to poison the political atmosphere against the SLL with whom they collaborated for 20 years.

Alongside all this, members of the SWP were organised to go to Cuba so they could see the 'land of socialism' for themselves.

Coming from the USA and its anti-red, witch-hunting atmosphere, everything which they saw in Cuba seemed fine from the tourist point of view, the one difficulty being that they were there only for a short time.

Nevertheless, it served Hansen's purpose. When the American and Canadian tourists returned he was saying 'Now you see how the SLL helps US imperialism. Don't bother to read their bulletins, Jim Cannon is right not to have discussion with 'supporters of US imperialism, is he not?' — and they in turn, unfortunately said 'Yes' to what was nothing more than shades of Stalinist distortion of Trotskyist method.

The issues, however, were quite different.

The SLL was not necessarily opposed to the designation of Cuba as a 'workers' state'.

We wanted to keep an open mind until after we had an objective discussion with those in the SWP we believed to be our co-thinkers.

They didn't want such a discussion because they were deserting to Pabloism. They were in fact rapidly turning towards the right and to liquidationism into the pacifist movement within the USA. Cuba was just a cover for the project.

For example, in discussing the class nature of the Chinese state in the years 1954-1955, Hansen himself circulated a memorandum to the SWP National Committee 'suggesting a state capitalist theory for China' (see 'The struggle for Marxism in the United States', *Fourth International* Vol 3 No. 3, August 1966).

If it was permissible to have such a discussion inside the SWP in the middle fifties, why not between the SWP and the SLL on Cuba in 1962, especially since we had not characterized Cuba as 'state capitalist' and we were open to be convinced by those whom we believed to be our collaborators?

We wanted discussion over the class nature of the Cuban state — the SWP did not because they were busy capitulating to the liquidationist policy of Pablo.

Their turn to the right wing and the pacifists had now begun in earnest. At all costs they had to break from the SLL in order to get closer to their real international allies — the right wing Pabloites.

But how can such methods build the Fourth International in the revolutionary way that Trotsky wanted it to be built?

The short answer is that they cannot.

That is also why the split between the International Committee and the Pabloites of the Unified Secretariat cannot be healed in such an unprincipled way.

In the autumn and winter of 1961 Hansen was sent on a tour of Latin America in order to confuse and disorient those sections supporting the International Committee.

He utilized the 'workers' state' theory in Cuba to the full in order to separate them from the SLL.

Once again the pragmatic SWP was using the international movement to turn towards Pablo just as it had tried to use it in 1953 against him.

Understandably, the Cuban revolution made a big impact on the Latin American comrades, especially in Chile and the Argentine, but

the practice of placing ready-made labels, such as 'workers' state', without adequate international discussion on such developments is not only dangerous but downright opportunist.

It politically suited the SWP but greatly weakened the comrades in Latin America.

The 'workers' state' theory in Cuba was the vehicle which finally dragged the SWP back into the Pabloite camp. Behind this theory was essentially the idea that a revolutionary party was not necessary.

It met with immediate response from the disorientated petty bourgeois inside the SWP. Led by Hansen and fortified by tourist trips to Cuba, they were ready to believe anything they were told about the SLL.

Cannon gradually dropped his support for the Murry Weiss faction and switched it to Dobbs. Weiss, in turn, resigned and opened a bookshop.

Cannon, it is reported, sent him a donation so that he could buy some books, with a comforting letter saying that he understood how he felt.

After that the road was clear for Dobbs. Hansen naturally fell into line, voting with both hands for Dobbs.

Everything was set for the second stage of the campaign of slander against the SLL.

Early in February 1962 Hansen arrived in Europe for the funeral of Natalia Trotsky.

During his stay he visited England and attended a Central Committee meeting of the Socialist Labour League. On his return to the USA he immediately began a slander campaign against leading members of the SLL around gossip he picked up from renegades, although he never at any time opened his mouth when he was here.

At the meeting we briefly discussed the differences between the SLL and the SWP. Hansen freely admitted that he was a consistent empiricist.

Our next experience with him came later on in 1963, when he arrived in Europe to negotiate closer relations with the Pabloites.

During the summer of 1962 the International Committee, accepting the recommendations of the Socialist Labour League, opened up negotiations with the Pabloite International Secretariat for discussion on the disputed questions.

This was decided after we found it absolutely impossible to draw the SWP into the open as regards their political positions.

Since we knew they now supported Pabloite revisionism we felt that an international discussion with every tendency involved would help the movement re-organise itself, by clarifying the issues.

But the SWP were dead against such a discussion.

They formally agreed with the negotiations we had started because it provided them with organizational reasons to collaborate more openly with the Pabloites.

But now, as in the past, they wanted this collaboration to proceed as if the split in 1953 had never taken place.

Just as discussion was about to open and documents were exchanged, Hansen suddenly announced that a unification had been arranged between a minority of the International Committee affiliates, namely the small Swiss and Canadian sections, supported by the Chinese Peng who represented no-one but himself.

We appealed to them to proceed with the discussion but it fell on deaf ears.

Then in May 1963, just before this farcical unification, Ernest Germain, a leading Pablo man, came to England and told the SLL that irrespective of unification the negotiations would go on with those sections of the International who desired discussion before unification.

He repeated the same proposal when he spoke to our summer school two months later in early August. There are hundreds of comrades who heard him say these things.

After the unification Hansen returned to the USA for further instructions. He arrived back in Europe late in August and immediately told the Pabloites that the SWP was opposed to any discussion with the International Committee, so all negotiations were immediately broken off.

The most disastrous side of this decision was that it prevented all discussion inside the Pabloite ranks about what was happening in Ceylon, where already the majority of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party were preparing to enter the coalition government.

By preventing such a discussion they also prevented the revolutionary minority of the LSSP from waging an all-out political fight against the opportunist majority.

They were silenced by orders of Hansen and Co. right at the time they should have been fighting tooth and nail to clarify the party.

Hansen, Cannon, Dobbs and Co. had achieved what they set out to achieve.

Once more the small Pabloite rump in Paris, now masquerading as the 'Unified Secretariat' became the cover for their 'Fourth International'.

Thus they were able to turn to the pacifists inside the USA without fear of international criticism.

The pragmatic methods flowing from nationalism had now merged with the completely opportunist Pabloite currents. This was essentially Hansen's contribution towards the destruction of Trotskyism, especially in the US and Ceylon.

'The Good Name of Trotskyism in Britain'

In the period especially from 1940 onwards, the leadership of the Socialist Labour League learned much from the Socialist Workers' Party in the USA. Our fundamental criticism of the revisionist policy of this organization today is not intended in any way to denigrate the positive side of that relationship.

The SWP members were especially helpful to us during the period between 1943 and 1949 in the struggle against the Haston clique. This group, which comprised a majority of the English Trotskyist organization, was led essentially by Haston, his wife Mildred Haston and Ted Grant. The Hastons deserted in 1950 and moved towards agreement with the right wing of the Labour Party.

Grant, however, did not take this road. Although he had been the political attorney for Haston, he could not bring himself to agree with the latter's liquidation into the Labour Party. At the same time, he could not bring himself to publicly denounce Haston's desertion from the Trotskyist movement.

When it was proposed on the Political Bureau early in March 1950 that Haston should be expelled for his renegacy, Grant abstained. The man is an incorrigible opportunist.

It was for this reason that Grant was expelled from the Trotskyist movement at the Third World Congress of the Fourth International in August 1951. Ernest Germain proposed the resolution for his expulsion and it was carried unanimously, on the grounds that Grant was a renegade. Even Pablo, who at that time was already scheming to expel a majority of the French section, supported the expulsion.

The split between the forces of Pablo and the International Committee took place in the winter of 1953 and nothing was heard about

Grant until 1957. Pablo was at this time fighting the forces of the International Committee tooth and nail.

When the English organization during 1956 gained numerically from the crisis in the Communist Party following the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Pablo was desperate.

He went to *Tribune*, the weekly paper of the fake 'left' inside the Labour Party, and inserted an advertisement appealing for someone to come forward and support him.

Grant answered the advertisement and offered the same kind of service to Pablo as he had given Haston in his day — he was prepared to stop at nothing in his efforts to slander the English Trotskyists.

Earlier, in 1954, when a leading Trotskyist, Bill Hunter, was being expelled from a north London Labour Party, Grant, who was a member of the Management Committee, abstained when the right wing proposed Hunter's expulsion.

Afterwards he proposed a vote of thanks to the Assistant National Agent of the Labour Party who was present at the meeting and who had instigated the expulsion in the first place.

Naturally, Pablo was delighted with such a recruit. Forgotten was the decision of the Third Congress expelling Grant for covering up for Haston. He was welcomed back as an ally in Pablo's unprincipled revisionist struggle against the English Trotskyists.

Forthwith, he was provided with the label 'official section' in an effort to confuse the situation in England.

The technique employed by Grant and Pablo to disrupt our movement was simple.

Normally the Grant group carries out little or no activity inside the labour movement. It is a thoroughly sectarian group which has opportunistically liquidated itself into the Labour Party.

The tactic of 'deep entry' in fact provided Grant with a cover to do nothing.

On occasions, however, the Grant group comes to life, but this has nothing to do with the struggle of the working class. Such outbursts are invariably connected with the difficulties of the Socialist Labour League.

When someone leaves our organization, such as Peter Fryer, Daniels and Cadogan in 1959, they are immediately approached by the Grant group (in this particular case by Pablo himself), who immediately proceeds to ignore the political reasons why they

deserted the Socialist Labour League in order to glean whatever petty gossip they can against the League. Such gossip is then utilized to obscure the real political issues in dispute.

This is the essence of unprincipled factionalism, the method of the petty bourgeois in the struggle against Marxism.

Whereas the Marxist will always try to reveal the class nature of the political differences, the petty-bourgeois revisionist will endeavour to obscure them with subjective gossip and slander.

This was then the method which Grant and Pablo applied against the SLL from 1957 onwards.

Now, we come to another ally of Pablo at that time, the group headed by T. Cliff, which claims that the 1917 revolution in the Soviet Union has been completely defeated and that Russia is today a state capitalist country.

Cliff arrived in England from Palestine (Israel) in September 1946.

He immediately joined forces with the Haston, Grant group and opposed those leaders who were opposing their opportunist role.

After February, 1950, when Haston deserted the Trotskyist movement, Cliff's small group remained inside the Trotskyist organization, until the Korean war broke out in the summer of 1950.

Delegates from Cliff's group proposed to our annual conference in August 1950 that we denounce the North Koreans as being just as responsible for the war in Korea as the United States imperialists. This position was overwhelmingly rejected by the delegates with one notable exception — Grant.

He attended the conference as a delegate and when the vote was taken against Cliff, *he abstained*.

After the conference, the Cliff group then proceeded to open disruption of the majority conference decisions. On the Birmingham and St. Pancras Trades Councils they proposed resolutions denouncing the North Koreans as being as equally responsible for the war as the American imperialists.

Naturally we expelled them *immediately*.

However, much water has flowed under the bridge since that time.

Today the same Cliff group unites with the pro-Stalinists on the Vietnam Solidarity Committee in proposing 'peace' in South Vietnam. They have joined forces in the campaign against the Prices and Incomes Act with the Stalinists in England, who have betrayed and sabotaged this struggle and opposed the campaigns and demonstrations of the Young Socialists.

In other words the state capitalist anti-Stalinists of the Korean war have now found themselves in the same camp as the Stalinists in 1966.

One of their youth members Mr. Cafoor, openly writes in Communist Party publications whilst, at the same time, he denounces the Young Socialists and the Trotskyists.

So the anti-Stalinists of 1950 become the pro-Stalinists of 1966. Their method is the same.

When the Cliff group refused to defend the Soviet Union and the North Koreans against American imperialism in 1950 they were acting not on the basis of the Marxist method of class analysis, but on the method of petty-bourgeois impressionism. That is why they have wound up supporting the same Stalinism which they opposed in 1950.

Up until the time the SWP refused to discuss with the SLL in 1961, there was no disagreement between us about the revisionist role of the Pablo, Grant and Cliff groups.

Then as soon as Cannon, Hansen and Dobbs made the political shift to Pablo, they also began to fish around in these gossip sewers in order to attack the SLL.

In the autumn of 1964 Hansen took over where Pablo left off and called a conference in an effort to achieve a unification between the Grant group and another small band of middle-class warriors residing in the Midlands.

This latter group moves around in fake 'left' Labour circles and produces a duplicated periodical which is distinguished by the fact that it never deals with a single problem from a Trotskyist point of view.

Apparently its motto is, 'if you want to convince the centrists, you must talk and look like them'.

Hansen's main trump card was that both groups hated the SLL and he imagined that this would be sufficient to keep them together.

On the surface of things the conference appeared to produce a limited success, but shortly afterwards trouble broke out between the group leaders about what they were going to do inside the Labour Party and the whole thing blew apart, despite a last-minute intervention by Hansen himself.

So now the SWP-sponsored 'united secretariat' is without any section in Britain, although it favours the Midlands group more than Grant.

This experience reveals the blind-alley politics of revisionism.

From time to time it is possible for the method of subjectivism and gossip to make an impact on cynics and tired refugees from the class struggle, but this is purely temporary.

No movement can be built on such a basis, which is after all nothing more than a reflection of idealist methods of thinking. The differences between revisionism and revolutionary Marxism today boils itself down to the differences between idealism and dialectical materialism and not what this individual or that individual is supposed to have done.

It is also very easy to exploit those tendencies who slander and gossip.

The police do this constantly. They simply send agents into these groups who will be prepared to join heartily in condemning the SLL. Naturally such leaders as Cliff and Grant, despite their politics, are sincere in their beliefs and have nothing whatsoever to do with the police.

It is simply that the irresponsible anti-SLL factional climate in their groups assists the police.

The SLL leadership has plenty of information at its disposal to prove this and it is the reason why, from time to time, we make it our business to look into the affairs of these relatively tiny organizations.

So far as we are concerned, dealing with the activities of Hansen (who is not a police agent) in Britain was indeed a very simple job. The man has little knowledge of a mass movement activity and is wide open to the crudest impressionism.

The real political battle in Britain since 1960 between ourselves, the state capitalist Tony Cliff group, and the Pabloite Grant group, was waged inside the Young Socialists where both groups joined hands with the right-wing Labour leaders in fighting our tendency.

We won an outright victory against them all, even under conditions where Grant and Cliff joined hands to found the youth paper 'Young Guard' in opposition to the most successful youth paper since the end of the war, 'Keep Left'.

Our paper was proscribed in 1962 and theirs was allowed to function with the blessings of the right-wing leaders.

In spite of all this our youth comrades organized around 'Keep Left' won an outright majority at the Young Socialist national conferences in 1963 and again in 1964.

At this latter conference Hansen supported a united opposition of

the Wilson right wing, the Grant group and the Cliff outfit against 'Keep Left'.

Here is a classical example of real petty-bourgeois factionalism in practice, at a decisive turning point in the conflict with Wilson and Co.

The Tory agents inside the British labour movement, Hansen, Grant, et al., lined up with Wilson.

In a recent pronouncement Hansen declared:

For years rumours have circulated in the British labour movement about Healy's methods. Generally the sources turned out to be dissidents who walked out or were expelled from the Socialist Labour League. Some of the stories they told sounded to Trotskyists in other countries like gross exaggerations and thus tended to be discounted as due to factionalism. Yet it had to be noted that in the international scene, Healy's organization was the only one claiming to represent Trotskyism that had such an ugly reputation in the labour movement because of continual tales about gross violations of the democratic rights of its own members.

Everything that is said here is a lie from beginning to end.

Mr. Joseph Hansen, ex-secretary to Trotsky, and now a renegade from Trotskyism conditionally supports the arch-Stalinist rogue Aptheker (who justified the Moscow Trials and the rape of Hungary on behalf of the Stalinists) in the coming New York elections.

Tell us why is it that you backed the Grant and Cliff groups who supported Wilson, the biggest renegade in the Labour Party since Ramsay MacDonald, when the Young Socialist majority were being expelled in 1964?

You protest, but the facts are clear.

You, Messrs. Hansen, Grant and Cliff *did support Wilson* against the Young Socialists when they were warning the working class to fight Wilson's betrayal in 1964.

They, the Young Socialists, were right, and you the self-proclaimed 'Marxists' were wrong.

You still protest, Mr. Hansen.

All right then, tell us why your duplicated house magazine *World Outlook* refused to publish a single protest about Wilson's attack on the 'Young Socialists'? Yet you can support all sorts of renegades who now make 'left' noises to cover up their renegacy.

Mr. Hansen, you have rejected every principle that Comrade Trotsky fought for.

The 'good name' of Trotskyism in Britain today does not reside with your pet renegades, the Midlands group, Grant or Cliff. It lies with the Young Socialists and the Socialist Labour League.

What 'ugly rumours' does Hansen talk about in relation to the SLL?

Let us list our disagreements with various tendencies since 1938, by asking him directly:

1. Were we right to expel Haston and his tendency in 1950 when they denounced the Fourth International by ultimately joining the right wing of the Labour Party?
2. Were we right in expelling John Lawrence, the disciple of Pablo, in 1953, when he left in 1954 to join the Communist Party?
3. Were we right in expelling Peter Fryer who left us in 1959 when he publicly denounced us to the capitalist press on his way toward writing idealist books on 'sex'?
4. Were we right in expelling Peter Cadogan in 1959 who insisted that he should have the right to denounce the policies of the League publicly? This man is now a leading pacifist opportunist.

But nobody else has been expelled from the SLL since then (1960). What other organization in the working class movement can claim such a record?

Are we intolerant? Of course not. We try to keep every comrade in our movement, but when they join hands with the capitalists publicly, of course we expel them.

But then, and this is the real problem for Hansen, how can he explain the fact that so many, many comrades who join the SLL remain members?

Inside the Socialist Labour League and the Young Socialists are hundreds and hundreds of young people who are fighting side-by-side, day-in and day-out with the SLL and the Young Socialists to build a socialist Britain.

Listen, Hansen! When you talk about the 'good name' of Trotskyism in Britain you are using a phrase to cover up your own support for renegades who have long since deserted the movement.

The Robertson Group of the U.S.A.

An important source of revisionism in the United States today is the protracted and relatively low political development of the working class. The post-war inflationary boom strengthened temporarily many illusions in the viability of American capitalism. At the same time the cold-war witch-hunt resulted in the best militants being expelled from their trade unions and sacked from a large number of the most important industries. The Socialist Workers Party suffered very severely from these setbacks.

The break-up of this situation became discernable in the early 1960s with the emergence of powerful movements amongst student youth around civil rights and later the war in Vietnam. In some respects this development resembled the CND movement in Britain during the late 1950s. They were, and are, predominantly middle-class movements which indirectly reflect the re-emergence of the working class into class politics in the metropolitan capitalist countries.

But for a revolutionary Marxist party to orientate itself exclusively on such manifestations of struggle is a fundamental error in terms of Marxist theory. In practice it means basing the activity of the party around the idea that the middle class can change society, when, in fact, this is the task and the task alone which the working class has to perform under revolutionary leadership.

This does not in any way mean that the working class no longer needs the support of such middle-class layers. It does indeed, but here again the vehicle for consciously guiding such support towards the working class is the Marxist party, which on matters of principle bases itself on the revolutionary role of the working class.

The political degeneration of the SWP internationally was greatly accelerated by its about turn towards the petty-bourgeois radical movement inside the USA.

From here on it was only a stone's throw to sympathizing with the late President Kennedy's wife when he (the President) was assassinated and from demanding that Federal troops be sent into Mississippi to aid the Negroes. This also marked the uncritical turn towards Malcolm X and later the slogan of Black Power.

Whilst it is the duty of the revolutionary party to provide critical

support for such movements in order to direct them towards the working class, the SWP completely capitulated to them.

And yet, without the intervention of the powerful American working class, all these movements are in a blind alley from which there is no way out unless the revolutionary party mobilizes this working class against capitalism.

It is at this point that we can see the real political implications of internationalism for the SWP. The Fourth International — its theory and organizational conceptions — is the only force capable of guiding and rectifying the course of a national section when it starts from impressionism and begins to capitulate to its capitalist environment.

It was precisely when such a need arose that the SWP broke off all its relations with the International Committee of the Fourth International and turned towards the Pabloite revisionists.

Only the International Committee could have at this stage assisted the SWP to overcome its difficulties, but Cannon, Hansen and Dobbs were contemptuous of the Fourth International outside the United States.

They had become arrogant American nationalists who were now hopelessly entangled with the politics of the petty bourgeois in the USA. They wanted the kind of international they could utilize for their own revisionist ends and Pabloism filled the bill.

When the Fourth International was founded in the summer of 1938, it based itself essentially upon the revolutionary potential of the international working class.

Into its theoretical armour Trotsky poured all the lessons and principles derived from the struggles of the modern proletariat against the forces of international capital.

Revolutionary internationalism is inseparable from the Marxist conception that the working class is the *only class* capable of overthrowing capitalist society and establishing socialism.

The revisionist Pabloite conception, which produced the split in the Fourth International in 1953, maintained that sections of the petty-bourgeois Stalinist bureaucracy would, under pressure, move into a leftward direction and substitute themselves for the revolutionary party by taking the power.

Here is the essential revisionist bond which binds the SWP to the rump Pabloite outfit of Germain, Pierre Frank and Livio, which masquerades as the 'Unified Secretariat of the Fourth International' operating from Paris.

From its infancy the group in the USA, which is now led by James Robertson, was nurtured in the worst environment of petty-bourgeois politics, the Shachtman group which denounced the defence of the Soviet Union in 1940 and split from the Fourth International.

The group joined the SWP in the late 1950s at a time when Cannon and Co. were rapidly moving away from the Fourth International. Hence the early anti-internationalist training which Robertson's group brought with it from Shachtman now blended with the anti-internationalism of the SWP.

This did not at all mean that from then on relations between Robertson and the SWP leadership would be plain sailing. The basic core of Robertson's group is first and foremost a clique of petty-bourgeois friends whose politics are determined by the need to maintain at all costs their own little group.

If the preservation of this clique sometimes takes on the form of abstractly defending the correct principles of the Fourth International, then they will turn enthusiastically towards defending them, provided it does not interfere with their little friendly circle.

At the time when Robertson joined the SWP the party leaders, having made up their minds to capitulate to Pabloism, were busily turning their attention towards the liquidation of all opposition to their policies.

They saw in Robertson's group a potential source of such opposition and this immediately raised the future of the clique.

For a time Robertson appeared to move politically in the direction of the Socialist Labour League and the International Committee.

Then came the crucial test. Since the struggle of the SWP was essentially being waged against the International Committee of the Fourth International it became essential that all those who supported the Committee should work under its leadership.

This is something which Robertson would not tolerate. He and his clique wanted the right to say and do as they liked inside the SWP and the USA without any interference from the international movement.

In other words they wanted the political authority of the International Committee without in any way being organizationally responsible to it.

Naturally, bearing in mind the anti-internationalism which was

prevalent in and around the SWP, we could never agree to such a position.

Accordingly, the Committee drew up a list of proposals in 1962 which we insisted must be agreed by all the US participants in the political fight against the revisionist SWP leadership. These were as follows:

1. The tendency expresses its general political agreement with the tendency of the International Committee which has agreement around the 1961 international perspectives presented by the Socialist Labour League. It must therefore begin from the standpoint of its responsibilities towards the political struggle of this tendency in relation to the construction of the revolutionary party in the United States.

The tendency recognises that the building of the SWP as a revolutionary party depends on and derives from its adherence to the revolutionary international perspective and approach.

All discussion and disagreement within the tendency is part of the discussion within the international tendency. Patience will have to be exercised so that while time is allowed for such differences to be adequately discussed internationally, the political aims and functioning of the tendency remain unimpaired.

For this purpose, there will be facilities available for all members of the tendency to express their opinions in a special international tendency bulletin to be published by the Socialist Labour League. This bulletin will have a limited circulation amongst leaders of the international sections who will be invited to comment and participate in the discussion inside the tendency. All written discussion must be carried out within this bulletin.

2. The tendency must pay particular attention to the development of a perspective for work in the United States in relation to the trade union and the Negro movement. The main political work of the tendency within the party will be to patiently explain the nature of the Pabloite revisionism and liquidationism as a method, and its relation to the problem of developing a concrete revolutionary perspective for work in the trade union and Negro movements. (Such a policy must be carefully presented, not in an artificial factional way, but in a way that will make sense to the activists in the party. The elaboration of the

policy is therefore a matter that can only be carried out by most careful preparation.)

The more careful and thoughtful the preparation, the easier it will be to convince people in practice. If the preparation is carried out in a factional and subjective way, then barriers can be raised between the tendency and the rank and file which will slow down the rate of clarification. The main political fight of the tendency must be directed against the right-wing elements in the party, the Weiss group and the Swabeck tendency. This does not in any way mean that we make the slightest concession to the centre element in the party who up to now have been trying to have the best of both worlds, but who have gradually shifted this position, for the time being at least, in a leftward direction. Because this shift to the left on pacifism is carried out empirically, it can easily become a shift to the right under different conditions. What it does is to open a favourable opportunity for a real struggle against the right-wing elements.

An analysis of the Weiss position adopted by the Pabloites, especially the French Pabloites, on Cuba will show a very clear difference between them and the majority of the SWP.

Our strategy should be to establish a political cohesion of our tendency in a way that can effect a united front where possible with the centre elements in the SWP against the right.

3. The tendency must recognise that the SWP is the main instrument for the realization of socialism in the United States. There is no other organization outside that movement which can decisively aid the struggle for socialism at the present time. Our comrades must therefore work as loyal party members; contribute to all aspects of the work, literary and practical, taking part in all its electoral activity and sub-drives and accepting the administrative decisions of the leadership even though we might be very much against them.

Members of the tendency must recognise that the SWP is their party, and they must speak as people who are responsible for their party. The difficulties of the party must not be exploited in a factional way. This must be seen as the overhead price for lack of political clarification. Since the responsibility for this clarification now rests squarely on the shoulders of the tendency, to make factional capital out of the party's difficulties would be nothing more than shelving that task which is the main purpose for the existence of the tendency.

The tendency must not make premature characterizations of the

leadership of the SWP except of those groups such as Weiss and Swabeck who have clearly revealed their Pabloism in theory and practice.

The centre group which is, of course, the majority cannot be described as a finished centrist tendency in the same way as the Pabloites. To be sure there are elements of centrism in its thinking and activity, but these do not predominate. To characterize the SWP majority tendency as a finished centrist tendency is to give up the political battle before it has begun.

We must believe that by common work and political discussion it will be possible to win a majority of the party to adopt a correct line on Pabloism and for the building of the revolutionary party in the United States.

4. The present tendency shall dissolve and shall re-establish itself on the basis of the preceding point.

5. Only those comrades who accept these conditions can be members of the tendency.

Robertson and his clique rejected these proposals out of hand. They were not really concerned with the struggle inside the SWP to clarify the party, they were more concerned about what was to be the future of their own little group, which was now being pressed to make up its mind by two irreconcilable and antagonistic forces — the International Committee and the Pabloite revisionists of the SWP.

Caught by his unprincipled politics in this trap, Robertson beat a hasty retreat into the camp of revisionism.

Right in the middle of the most critical stage of the political struggle between the International Committee and the American Pabloites he preferred to split the weak forces of the Committee within the SWP rather than accept the international recommendations on how the struggle should be conducted.

Thus, Robertson's anti-internationalism played right into the hands of the revisionists and correspondingly strengthened them.

This was a serious warning to the International Committee and the Socialist Labour League as to the treacherous middle-class nature of this group. Still we resolved to proceed in a most patient way to try and educate Robertson and as many of his supporters as possible.

A few days after the split from comrade Wohlforth's group we replied to their arguments justifying the break as follows:

London

November 12, 1962

Dear Comrades,

We have received a letter dated November 4 in the names of L. Harper, L. Ireland, S. Mage, J. Robertson, S. Stoute written on behalf of a majority of the New York section of the Revolutionary Tendency of the SWP.

There appears to be some misunderstanding amongst you about the proposals which we submitted through comrade Phillips. You appear, for example, to be labouring under a misapprehension that these proposals were drafted after we listened to an attack upon you by comrade Phillips.

This, of course, was not the case. If we had any criticisms to make of your good selves, we would do so in writing. We would certainly not listen to any kind of gossip in relation to your activity. We start from the assumption that you want seriously to construct the revolutionary party in the US and we would like to assure you that we are only too happy to discuss with you about the best possible way to do this. We ourselves have, as you know, a long experience of working as a minority faction inside the British Trotskyist movement. We began this work in 1943 and it lasted for seven years. We did not assume leadership rights in England until 1950.

The proposals are based upon experiences we had during that time and are certainly not dictated by comrades Wohlforth and Phillips. During this period we accepted on a number of occasions advice with which we ourselves disagreed, but which we operated in practice because we accepted the revolutionary integrity and rich experience of those comrades who gave it to us. In this way we began to understand the real value of international collaboration.

Between September 1943 and March 1944, we fought a sharp struggle for the unification of all the Trotskyist groups in Britain. At the conference of our organization the Workers' International League in September 1943, I was in a minority of one supporting this proposal. Then advice came from comrades in New York which laid down the terms for unification. These terms were presented as final and could not be debated or discussed. They had to be accepted or rejected as they were by all parties concerned, including our minority.

Since the unprincipled majority of our section wanted to deprive us of an opportunity to continue the struggle against them, they

immediately opened up relations with the opportunist elements in the other groups and decided to accept the terms. Their reasoning was that by moving towards acceptance of such terms they could isolate us by an unprincipled combination. They did just that. When the unification congress took place in March 1944, we were deprived of minority rights on the National Committee of the fused organization, the Revolutionary Communist Party. Prior to this conference we raised the matter with the comrades responsible for the fusion terms but they told us that we could not insist on any rights and that we had also got to accept the terms as they were.

So reluctantly we accepted the terms and went ahead to make the fused organization work. History has since revealed that the fusion was in our favour and not on the side of those who were manoeuvring and intriguing. If we had not accepted the terms and split from the fused organization because we were not given any rights, then surely our tendency would have been destroyed.

I might add that we did not receive minority rights on the National Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party until almost two years later. Everything was done to persecute us as a faction but we refused under any circumstances to split no matter what the differences or to be driven out of the party. Our people were the best workers and nothing could be done to take this right away from them.

Early in the fusion it became clear that the leadership of the Revolutionary Communist Party contained a mixture of ultra-Lefts, opportunists and centrists, but we resisted all attempts to characterize them as a centrist tendency since a premature characterization of this description would have acted as a barrier between ourselves and the rank and file. Many comrades in our own tendency felt strongly about the politics of the majority but they had to resist their feelings in order to undertake a long term perspective of work to equip them to become what they did at a later stage — the leadership of the party.

The international struggle against Pabloite revisionism which resulted in the split of 1953 has now taken on a new form. Due to the lack of political clarification about the nature of this revisionism, the leadership of the SWP are tending to succumb to it as an approach to world problems. But this is by no means a clear-cut development. We know from reading the documents and publications of the party that certain elements such as Weiss, Swabeck, Warde and Hansen have now developed a rounded out Pabloite approach. Others are, however, still very unclear and hesitant because amongst other things the

SWP has a long record of fighting for a principled Trotskyist position, although it cannot, because of the Voorhis Act, participate in international activity.

Unfortunately, the activity of the Pabloites has been to some extent successful in provoking a factional atmosphere between ourselves and the majority. A good percentage of the activity of people like Dowson during his visit here was taken up with misrepresenting small factional points which were then relayed to the US in order to sharpen up the differences. We know only too well the harm that this kind of thing can do. The longer we have to discuss with the SWP, the more opportunity we will have to expose the Pabloites and assist the party itself. Our policy is to speak up clearly and sharply on the political differences and maintain a collaboration with the SWP for as long as possible.

For this reason we have been opposed to any attempt to sharpen up the internal faction struggle inside the SWP no matter what the provocation. Our proposals are designed towards this end in line with our past experience. We do not want to impose them on you. If you do not like to accept them, then there is no need to accept them. All those comrades who do accept them will be considered as part of an international tendency, as we were in the early days of our movement. Contrary to what comrade Mage said in his letter, it is perfectly permissible for this international tendency to discuss its affairs internally either in writing or oral discussion. We are part of a world party and not separate national groupings. The SLL as part of a world movement has every right to establish tendency relations when it feels these are necessary.

You can decide whether or not you want to be part of this international tendency. The SWP in the past has constantly spelled out its dvice — and correctly so — not only to ourselves but to comrades in many parts of the world who have supported it in the various struggles. It is perfectly permissible for you to contribute to an internal tendency bulletin all the opinions which you have about the centrist nature of the SWP leadership and we will seriously discuss them with you.

We do want to bring to an end the internal struggle inside the minority so that comrades can bend their entire efforts towards clarifying the party and helping it in this struggle. We feel sure that if you can see your way to do this we shall make important gains in the future.

We would like to ask you to accept these terms and continue a written discussion with us here. If it were possible you may be able to arrange to visit us some time in the early spring or earlier if it could be managed.

Acceptance of the terms does not mean you give up your political positions. We are asking you to do what we had to do in the past, that is to accept the lessons of international experience and work together with us as part of an international tendency fighting against Pabloite revisionism for revolutionary Marxism.

We are asking you to put the international movement and the building of the party first, before any factional considerations. No one amongst us wants to lose a single comrade as a result of a misunderstanding. What you do is being decided not by us but by yourselves.

The political differences which comrade Phillips has are in some respects much more serious than yours, yet he has decided to accept these terms. We again urge you to do the same.

Awaiting your reply.

Best wishes,

G. Healy

On behalf of the Organizing Committee.

We have reproduced this letter in full so that those who are interested may contrast the educational way in which we tried to assist Robertson, with the lies and slander which he now utilizes against the Socialist Labour League. The same method on our part prevailed during the April 1966 International Congress, which we shall deal with later.

Robertson's split from the International Committee in 1962 was a god-send to the revisionists, and he proceeded to help them in their moves towards the unprincipled unification with the Pabloites during the summer of 1963.

This split was carried out without any prior discussion. This, in turn, prevented the serious situation in Ceylon, which was developing towards a coalition between the Lanka Sama Samaja Party majority and the Bandaranaike government, from being discussed.

Robertson, in his political ignorance and lack of understanding of the struggle which the International Committee had waged against Pabloism since 1953, came out in favour of this unprincipled unity.

In a statement, which he issued in January 1964, he said:

'We also made it crystal clear *in advance* [his emphasis] that should the pro-Pabloist unification win a majority and go into effect, then the dissident and opposing minority internationally who shared our general outlook should go through the experience of the falsely-based unity attempt.'

At the most critical stage of the international struggle against revisionism, when the fate of the Ceylonese section hung in the balance, Robertson, for formally different reasons, found himself in the camp of the revisionists.

He accepted a revisionist unification which has from its inception led to one disaster after another.

Robertson returns to the Politics of the S.W.P.

Their split from the International committee in 1962 did not save Robertson and his group from expulsion from the Socialist Workers' Party. As soon as Cannon, Dobbs, Hansen and Co. had come out in support of the reunification conference with the Pabloites they also made preparation to throw Robertson and his group out of the SWP. This they did in December 1963, after a fake enquiry following so-called charges that in fact amounted to a frame-up.

Robertson went quietly. He did not volunteer to supply the Socialist Labour League and the International Committee with copies of the relevant documents, just as one of his members supplied Hansen and the SWP with correspondence arising from the international conference of the International Committee of the Fourth International last April.

He presented a mildly-written statement to the Control Commission of the SWP which pledged his group to abide 'by discipline,' i.e., the discipline by the Pabloite revisionists and to 'accepting decisions'. Contrast this declaration to the slander and lies which he pours out today in relation to the circumstances of the split from our International Conference.

In addition the chief witness in his favour at the Control Commission inquiry was one of the oldest advocates of unity with the Pabloites, Myra Tanner Weiss. Her testimony reveals the middle-class nature of Robertson's group.

'Dobbs,' she says 'gets up and says they [Robertson's group], want

to split the party, they don't want to remain in an empty shell. These comrades get up and say "We do want to remain in the party. We regard the SWP as being the basic revolutionary cadre in this country". They say [again referring to Robertson] "We will abide by discipline".'

Such a witness is naturally very hostile to the Socialist Labour League. 'Healy' she says 'is a sectarian', and 'Shane Mage [Robertson's chief collaborator at the time] together with Robertson will have nothing to do with his procedural tyranny and bureaucracy.

'Mage', she goes on to say 'discussed his verbal disagreements with Healy . . . I was thoroughly convinced that any collaboration between Healy and Mage and Robertson was out of the question.'

It should be understood that this statement of Myra Tanner Weiss was compiled from the discussions which she previously had with Robertson and Mage.

This same Mage has now left the Robertson group, rejecting Marxism and suggesting that what everybody needs is a dose of the drug LSD. Yet when we characterised him as a renegade, we were indignantly rebuked by two of Robertson's members, Turner and Sherwood, who wrote to us on April 30 insisting that 'he [Mage] is neither anti-Trotskyist nor a renegade'. To this day there are no written documents discussing the differences between Robertson and Mage before the latter departed.

Another small extremely pessimistic group formerly associated with Robertson headed by one Peter Friedlander recently put out a leaflet which asks the question 'Is Marxism dead?' and answers it by saying 'It looks like it'.

The contents of the leaflet go on to reject Marxism and raises a series of questions such as 'Why did Stalinism become a mass movement embodying the most intelligent and dedicated workers and intellectuals, while remaining an organization of mysticism and deceit, a living lie?' and they again supply an answer.

'We are tired of the old Trotskyist formula, which has nevertheless been the best answer so far' — every word a masterpiece of theoretical scepticism.

What they are saying in effect is that 'we are tired of Trotskyism and we're looking for something new'.

Following his expulsion from the SWP Robertson kept up the formal pretence of general political agreement with the International Committee, but this by itself was not enough.

The main question involving the political reasons behind Robertson's split from the International Committee in 1962 still remained unsettled. A further attempt had to be made to see if the political experiences of his group had produced a change in this respect for the better or whether or not the gap had widened.

This was the purpose of the Montreal Conference which took place in October 1965 and brought the Wohlforth and Robertson groups together around a unity agreement. The salient points of this agreement were as follows:

It could not become effective until after the International Conference of the International Committee, April, 1966. We wanted to see if Robertson still maintained his old political hostility towards internationalism before the International Committee agreed to unification. The next most important point was contained in the Section 4, which reads:

4. The American Commission would be empowered to insist that the resolution or resolutions on perspectives, which was to be presented to the Unification Conference, accepted the principles embodied in the decisions of the first four Congresses of the Communist International, the resolutions and documents agreed to by the 1938 Founding Conference of the Fourth International and the International resolution on perspectives adopted by the International Committee of the Fourth International Conference April 1966.

Tactical disagreements on the USA would not be an obstacle to unity provided they did not contravene the above decisions. They would be left to the majority of delegates at the Unification Conference to decide. The International Committee of the Fourth International reserves the right to make its political position on these matters known to the delegates at the Unification Conference if it considers this necessary.

Both groups accepted these proposals unanimously and it was now left to the experience of the International Conference to see if unification could be realised.

Over the past few months, Robertson, actively assisted by Hansen of the SWP (one of the men who supported his expulsion in 1963), has been busy spreading lies, slander and gossip about what happened at this conference.

We are not in the least interested in such politically degenerated methods, except in so far as they reveal the political method of those who peddle such stories around. A ready-made audience for this sort

of thing always exists in the ranks of disorientated petty bourgeois who have no belief in the power of the working class to change society, and, as a result, no confidence in their ability to build a revolutionary party.

In the months preceding the conference we had a glimpse of the unprincipled kind of politics which Robertson pursues in practice. A member of his group, Mark Tishman, who was temporarily resident in Britain, collaborated closely with the renegade state capitalist group of Tony Cliff. (Immediately the International Conference was over he supplied this group with a full report of what took place).

A few weeks before the conference, Robertson proposed that this man should be one of his group's alternative delegates.

Our first reaction, knowing Tishman's associates, was to refuse this request, but we did not want to place any obstacles to Robertson attending the conference so we allowed the proposal to go through.

When Robertson and his delegation arrived in England for the international conference they were treated with the utmost courtesy. The Young Socialists invited them to their annual conference at Morecambe as their guests where their nominee spoke as a fraternal delegate.

To facilitate their political work at the conference an apartment one minute away from the meeting place was placed at their disposal. No other international delegation enjoyed such good conditions of work.

We were sincerely working for the success of the unification, if it could be achieved on a principled political basis. If this could be attained we did not want the slightest hitch in the arrangements.

The conference opened with the main political report presented by comrade Cliff Slaughter.

On the morning of the third day (Wednesday) Robertson intervened and, whilst expressing his general political agreement with the report, proceeded, as was his right, to make certain criticisms.

About ten minutes before the afternoon session was due to commence, Robertson said he wanted to rest because he was tired, having been working on a document on US perspectives the night before.

He had in fact been assigned to write this document as a result of the Montreal Conference decisions nearly seven months previously. Having left it to the last moment, he now claimed that he was tired and could not listen to the discussion of his own report.

Having made political criticisms he was not interested in hearing the answers.

Such arrogance immediately revealed the real role of this petty-bourgeois leader. For, if he was not prepared to listen to those who had differences with him in the international movement, it was reasonable to assume that he would not be prepared to listen to those who had differences with him in the proposed fused organisation in the United States.

He was, first and foremost, a clique leader who relied on his little group of cult worshippers to support and provide him with a majority at all costs.

If he didn't want to listen to criticism then he did not feel obliged to do so since he was assured of a clique vote in favour of such a position.

It was clear that since Robertson felt that he would have a majority inside the fused group in the USA the Wohlforth minority could be curbed effectively and if necessary driven out at a later stage.

It was now established for all to see the kind of unprincipled unification which Robertson was working for.

But still the international conference was anxious to give him every opportunity to change his opinions. When it resumed in the afternoon a special messenger (Tishman) was sent to Robertson's apartment asking him to return to the conference and participate in the discussion on his report.

So far as physical tiredness was concerned, he was no more tired than any of the other delegates, some of whom had been concerned with the organisation of the conference, and others who had travelled long distances.

Robertson refused to return, knowing that such a refusal would be looked upon very seriously by the conference. It was obvious that he was not really concerned with the political work of the conference but saw it merely as a stepping stone towards an unprincipled unification inside the USA where his clique felt they had a majority.

It now became necessary to put this wrong approach to the test and that is what we proceeded to do.

When he returned later in the evening, he was asked to accept the authority of the conference and apologise for his absence. This he refused to do.

He was then allowed time to think out his position and remain until the vote was taken on the political report. During the interval a number of delegates tried to prevail on him to accept the authority of the conference, even if he did this under protest. But he adamantly refused to do anything of the sort.

Such a reaction then prompted the question — if Robertson wouldn't accept the authority of the conference, there was not the slightest doubt that he would ignore the advice of the international movement if he became the leader of the fused organization in the United States. In other words, section 4 of the unification agreement would become meaningless.

Naturally, Robertson, Hansen and Co. like to snigger about the discipline of the International Conference, but all this arises from the fact that they have an entirely different conception of responsibilities to the Fourth International than we have.

For us the conference was the highest and most authoritative body in the international movement. It embodied all the lessons from the theoretical and practical struggle of the Fourth International since it was founded in 1938. These included the experience of the international communist movement to apply the policies of the first four congresses of the Third Communist International in the period before Stalinist bureaucratic degeneration. There is no other body more politically authoritative today than the International Committee elected by the April conference.

When Robertson decided to split from this conference because he would not accept its political authority he split from the international Trotskyist movement.

He could have stayed even if he disagreed with the decisions. Indeed, one of his closest disciples, Rose Jersawitz, wrote in a letter dated April 9, 'In hindsight, it was probably a mistake for Jim [Robertson] not to have attended that session, or to have done or said anything which could have been misinterpreted for that matter'.

Without knowing it, Rose Jersawitz has let the cat out of the bag so far as Robertson's alleged 'illness' is concerned. She knew, better than anyone else, since she was a member of his delegation, that his 'illness' or 'tiredness' need not have prevented him from participating in the conference.

This was nothing more than a cheap fraud and she pulls back from repeating it.

Likewise, the allegation that the conference wanted Robertson to denounce himself as a petty bourgeois is just a down-right lie. It did nothing of the sort.

She had, of course, a definite political point view so far as her estimations of the conference went, and that was, together with the French group Voix Ouvrière, a confirmed centrist position. In a letter

dated May 6 she reports a conversation with Hardy, a representative of Voix Ouvrière.

On rebuilding the FI this task remains for us. The IC was (and maybe is) a hindrance only in so far as the illusion is held that they might have the capacity can best be shattered by going ahead with the task on two fronts: (1) building our own national sections and aiding those we can; (2) establishing as much of a dialogue as possible between as many tendencies as possible. V.O. plans to have an international mimeo publication soon, taking out the various pol. and org. questions beginning with recent conference. In this way we are hoping to begin an exchange with ICers and will attempt to draw in US, Pabloites and Posadasites as well as many 'independents' (such as us) and contacts of internationals (such as Japan) as possible. And to begin to establish working relationships, personal exchanges, travelling, translation aids etc. In other words to begin the establishment of the org. committee which we had expected to come out of the conference. (me — Rose) I said that I did not think we were in a position to initiate or even play a major role in these activities.

In other words, they envisaged a type of conference such as was organised by what Trotsky described as the International Bureau of squeezed lemons, the three and three quarter international, in the years before the Second World War.

The Independent Labour Party and others were members of this bureau which advocated 'all inclusive' conferences with opportunists, revisionists and others.

Hardy of Voix Ouvrière and Rose Jersawitz, Robertson and Co. wanted a similar type of conference where Pabloites and Posadists participated in order to finally agree that no one would be responsible for what was decided. Thus they could all go their own way immediately the conference was over.

In a letter written on May 23, 1965, when arrangements were already under way for the Montreal meeting, G. White, a colleague of Robertson's from Berkeley, placed a question mark over the issue of unification with the International Committee. 'What about our relations with Posadas?' he said. The Posadas group is an ultra-left split off group from the Pabloites in Latin America.

It is now clear that Robertson proceeded in the period before the conference as a man with two political faces.

One of these was turned towards his clique, assuring them that since they would have a majority in the fused group, they had nothing to fear from Wohlforth.

The other was turned towards the International Committee Conference, mouthing left phrases whilst at the same time doing everything to avoid being brought under the discipline of the Committee.

He was prepared in December 1963 to work under the discipline of Cannon, Hansen and Dobbs group of revisionists but he was not prepared to work under the discipline of the International Committee in 1966.

It was very natural therefore for Hansen of the SWP to offer full support to Robertson in his unprincipled fight with the International Committee after the conference was over.

It was equally natural for Robertson to uncritically accept this support. He ordered bundles of their pamphlet attacking the International Committee and distributed them everywhere he could.

An unprincipled united front was launched against the International Committee, but with absolutely no success.

The anti-internationalist Robertson had merely rejoined the anti-internationalist SWP and nobody really cared two hoots what either of them would do. They had this much in common.

The SWP since Trotsky's death had utilized the Fourth International as a front, behind which they carried out their nationalist orientation inside the USA. Robertson wanted to use the International Committee of the Fourth International as a front behind which he arranged an unprincipled unification inside the USA for purely national reasons.

The 'real issue' at the conference is summed up by his disciple Tishman when he posed the question in his letter of May 7 as to 'Whether the present international committee . . . constitutes the sole organized successor to the Trotskyist movement?'

He, together with Robertson, rejects this, we support it — that is why a definitive split had to take place both with Robertson and the Voix Ouvrière group in France.

Following a highly-successful conference it was a good, clear, politically-motivated split on the principled issue of responsibility for carrying out the decisions of the international conference.

All the lessons which we had to learn in England from the experiences of the Founding Conference of the Fourth International in 1938 were applied at this juncture.

We have broken from Robertson and his anti-internationalism for all time.

There is no future for such a group, no matter how much activity it carries out. Revolutionary parties who will take the power can only be built henceforth on the principles, organization and discipline of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

The Socialist Labour League

The history of the Fourth International, and before it the Left Opposition inside the Soviet Union, is devoted entirely to a defence and application of revolutionary Marxism. This is not an abstract question. It is one which has required the concrete investigation of all major happenings inside the international labour movement over the past 30 years. But the success of such investigation could not have been achieved, above all by Trotsky, without a continuous study of all the day-to-day happenings in his own organization, the Fourth International.

The most important Marxist analysis of the origin and role of the Soviet bureaucracy is undoubtedly *The Revolution Betrayed* which appeared in the late 1930s. At the time when Trotsky was writing this book he was also actively intervening and seeking solutions to the hundred and one different problems which affected the various sections of his movement.

It was a period of entry into the centrist and social-democratic parties, and the difficulties were numerous. But all this was in the political day's work so far as Trotsky was concerned.

It was, in fact intimately bound up with writing the *Revolution Betrayed*, as well as the dozens of other articles which appeared in his name during those years.

So far as circumstances would allow, he was an active participant in the building of revolutionary parties until the day he was assassinated by Stalin's agent.

This was his greatness, and it was the crowning achievement of his political life, because it fused his whole thinking, being with Lenin and Leninism.

No revolutionary fighter ever got closer to applying the real meaning of Lenin's teachings than Trotsky. He was Lenin's great disciple, because at all stages he fought to fuse theory with practice. To him the theoretical analysis of Stalin's bureaucratic degeneration was inseparable from building the sections of the Fourth International.

As usual, he came under fire from the centrists of the Independent Labour Party and the London Bureau. Since the hallmark of centrism is contempt for theory, they rounded on Trotsky for 'splitting hairs'.

Today the ILP has been reduced to the status of a small sect. The London Bureau disappeared long ago and with it any connections it had on the international field. Its old leaders who are still alive, such as Lord Brockway, have for some time come to terms of co-existence with the Establishment.

In comparison to the fate of these anti-theory specialists, the Socialist Labour League goes forward amongst the youth and industrial workers and has established itself a much more influential position than ever the ILP enjoyed, even in its hey-day.

Anti-theory methods take different forms. There are those who try to place themselves on a moral pedestal 'above disputes' by playing upon the weaknesses of people who just want to carry out practical activity, without bothering about reading and thinking.

In countries such as Britain where, in the past, the development of the class struggle has been slow, such people have sown confusion, invariably winding up in the camp of the opportunists around the Labour Party.

Their spokesmen are to be found chiefly in the ranks of the fake Parliamentary 'left'.

The Stalinists in the Communist Party are constantly denouncing the Socialist Labour League as 'sectarian'. By using this term, they endeavour to prevent a serious discussion on the political differences.

Close on their heels come the Socialist Workers' Party of the USA, the Pabloite Unified Secretariat in Paris, the state capitalist group of Tony Cliff in England and the small gang of Pabloites, Messrs. Jordan, Tate, Coates, etc., who worship at the shrine of the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation.

On every conceivable occasion they take time out to explain the SLL away as 'sectarian'.

When the SLL and the Young Socialists mobilize 1,500 trade unionists and youth in a demonstration, they say it is 'sectarian and unimportant'. When 500 Young Socialists travel to Liège in Belgium, they look the other way and say it doesn't matter — yet they themselves only represent a tiny handful.

However, this does not at all mean that such groups are Stalinist in their complete political outlook.

For the Stalinists, the use of the word 'sectarian' is merely a continuation of their description of the Trotskyist forces as fascist agents of Wall Street. Between Trotskyism and Stalinism there can be no compromise.

Although Stalin has been dead for over 13 years, the basic revisionist ideas for which he stood still dominate the thinking of the Communist parties all over the world. Stalin represented the most privileged bureaucratic caste ever to arise in the international workers' movement during the history of capitalism.

This bureaucratic caste in turn reflected a profound opportunist degeneration in the Soviet Union which is today expressed in the policy of the 'peaceful road to socialism'.

This policy emphasizes that the bureaucracy wants peace with capitalism at all costs, which means that it is constantly in conflict with the working class, whose problems can only be solved by the overthrow of capitalism.

So far as the Soviet bureaucracy is concerned, their privileges come first and in order to protect them they are constantly prepared to do a deal with the imperialists at the expense of the working class.

Trotsky fought for the establishment of international socialism, which was Lenin's policy. In doing so he came into violent conflict with the Stalinists who persecuted, framed and murdered the majority of Lenin's Central Committee during the 1917 Revolution because they opposed them. They murdered some of the most prominent of Trotsky's secretaries, and, in the end, Trotsky himself.

For us today, Stalin is dead, but the ideas of Stalinism live on. Any revisionist tendencies which in one form or another adapt themselves politically to the Stalinists are, in our opinion, mortal enemies. This is the essence of our split from the Pabloites and other revisionists.

Let us start with the Pabloite Unified Secretariat.

They broke from Trotskyism in 1951 by developing the theory that de-Stalinization after Stalin's death meant a decisive change in the Stalinist bureaucracy. Five years later the Stalinist chieftain, Khrushchev, drowned the Hungarian Revolution against the Rakosi-Gero bureaucracy in a sea of blood.

At that time the Pabloites formally criticized Khrushchev's intervention, but at the international youth demonstration in Liège, Belgium, on October 15, they called in the police to remove banners from the French and English contingents who advocated support for the Hungarian Revolution on the occasion of its tenth anniversary.

Herein lies the difference between the Stalinists and the Unified Secretariat-revisionist capitulators to bureaucracy.

During the Hungarian revolution there was a powerful outburst of imperialist propaganda against the Soviet Union which took full advantage of the criminal actions of Khrushchev.

The gentlemen supporters of the Unified Secretariat found little difficulty at that time in condemning these actions. Today, it is different.

Now Johnson needs the Soviet bureaucracy to help to strangle the Vietnamese revolution, as well as the rising tide of revolutionary opposition from the working class in the metropolitan capitalist countries.

The youth, who perhaps more than any other section of the working-class movement enter politics as a result of a struggle against bureaucracy, are proving a real danger to the Soviet bureaucracy, which is moving steadily towards agreement with the arch-imperialists.

The Pabloite Unified Secretariat senses this rapprochement, and now emerges as the 'left cover' for bureaucracy and imperialism, and calls in the police to deal with the Young Socialists who commemorate the Hungarian Revolution.

One of the most spectacular developments in the USA in recent years has been the vast movement to the left amongst the middle-class intelligentsia and the university youth. Unfortunately, this movement still remains isolated from the working class.

The policy of the Communist Party of the United States is to turn it politically towards the capitalist Democratic Party, by taking advantage of this isolation.

However, it faces certain difficulties in the forthcoming Congressional Elections. Because there is widespread opposition to the Democratic Party, the Communist Party, has, especially in New York, to arrange a stepping stone towards it.

That is the reason why Aptheker, a leading United States Stalinist, is standing for office in Brooklyn. He supports to the hilt the Democratic Party orientation of the Communist Party. A vote for Aptheker today is an invitation to be led by the nose to the Democratic Party tomorrow.

At this point the Socialist Workers' Party intervenes and gives critical support to him. Whilst it criticizes his attitude towards the Democratic Party, it nevertheless advocates voting for him. The

significance of such a decision cannot be estimated solely within the geographical boundaries of New York.

Aptheker is an old Stalinist hack who has toed the Party line at all times, especially over Hungary. He is prepared to support not only the Democratic Party but any deal which the Soviet bureaucrats cook up with Johnson to betray the Vietnamese revolution. He is deliberately trying to manoeuvre United States radicals towards the capitalist Democratic Party.

By exploiting the use of the word 'critical support for Aptheker', the SWP is merely covering up the fact that it is initiating a sly, stage-by-stage orientation towards the Democratic Party itself.

If the SWP was really seriously inclined towards an exposure of Stalinism, and warning those who will be confused by Aptheker, then it should openly expose him and the counter-revolutionary policies of the Communist Party of the United States today.

The SWP will not take long to find out that revisionism must ultimately lead towards political capitulation to the politics of the capitalist parties.

On the experience of Liège, the weekly paper *Militant*, published by the SWP, remains silent, although it had a number of leading members present who were aware that the police were called in to take down the banners of the British and French Young Socialists.

So be it, gentlemen. When you say A. for Aptheker, you will be soon shouting P. for the police.

The state capitalist group of Cliff characterizes the Soviet Union as a capitalist country. On the surface this group is supposed to be very hostile towards Stalinism, but this is purely superficial.

By designating the Soviet Union as a capitalist country it contemptuously dismisses the economic conquests which remain as a result of the 1917 revolution. Over the past few years, this position has enabled it to cuddle up closer to the Labour Party right wing in the struggle against the Young Socialists.

Now that these same Young Socialists have emerged as a powerful force against the Prices and Incomes Act, the state capitalists weigh in whatever support they can muster behind the Stalinists.

From serving the social-democratic bureaucracy, they now embrace the agents of the Stalinist bureaucracy. Up until recently this change of ally did not bring them into open alliance with the Pabloites. However, the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation has established the bridgehead.

On that Committee the three open supporters of the Paris Unified Secretariat joined hands with the state capitalists recently in an attempt to prevent a speaker from the Socialist Labour League from exposing the counter-revolutionary role of the Soviet bureaucracy in relation to the war in Vietnam.

Thus all of those revisionist forces, no matter what their reservations about the role of Stalinism, inevitably find themselves in the same camp when it comes to providing a left cover for imperialism. Trust Bertrand Russell to thoughtfully provide the platform for such united action.

These anti-Marxists reject the principle that the working class can emancipate itself and overthrow capitalism through the building of a revolutionary party. They are turned exclusively towards the politics of the petty-bourgeois revisionists.

As a result, they constantly tend towards liquidation into Labour and social-democratic parties in some countries, and the Stalinist parties in others.

The Socialist Labour League has taken its stand clearly against these parties and their counter-revolutionary role. We politically oppose them and have set our course firmly towards the building of the revolutionary party, within the framework of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

This does not at all mean that we will not carry out an entry into their ranks in order to do battle against them as we have done in the past. It means that our principled conception of the struggle to develop Marxism against revisionism and its reformist and Stalinist allies is inseparable from the day-to-day struggles to build the revolutionary party.

The Socialist Labour League follows in the footsteps of Lenin and Trotsky in the constant struggle to develop Marxist theory.

Appendix

Once again,
discussion is rejected

DOCUMENT 16a

Statement on talks with the Unified Secretariat July 7, 1970

Fourth Congress of the IC in preparation

The preparation for the fourth International Congress convened by the International Committee of the Fourth International is now going ahead in the sections affiliated to the Committee.

As part of this preparation the Committee requested G. Healy, the national secretary of the Socialist Labour League, to contact representatives of the Unified Secretariat for informal talks around the possibility of joint discussion centred on outstanding political differences and directed towards the holding of a joint international conference.

Two meetings were held at which G. Healy stressed the politically favourable situation in W. Europe for the building of the Fourth International.

The comrades from the Unified Secretariat agreed with this, but thought that talks at this stage may be premature because of the deep-going political differences which existed between the respective organizations.

They also felt that some attacks went beyond 'the framework of political polemic'. They cited especially the Moscoso affair in Bolivia. The IC representative suggested that a joint commission could be set up to investigate such problems, thereby allowing the joint political discussion to proceed in an objective atmosphere.

He made it clear that if this was agreed to, joint work would be possible, leading up to the conference.

Joint work without discussion may well lead to further difficulties.

The representatives of the Unified Secretariat then said they had no mandate to discuss such matters, but would report the talks back to their organizations.

All Trotskyists and sympathizers will, we are sure, support the positive proposals of the International Committee. We urge the members and supporters of the Unified Secretariat to reply in a similar way.

DOCUMENT 16b**Further comments on the need for joint discussion, by G. Healy, September 8, 1970**

Considerable interest has been aroused by the reports which have appeared concerning the two meetings between myself and members of the Unified Secretariat.

The Secretariat itself issued a statement in July which said, amongst other things:

'The Fourth International is, of course, in favour of unifying revolutionary forces wherever possible on a principled basis. We are therefore prepared to re-examine the question of the SLL and OT unifying with the Fourth International if objective evidence should show that this is feasible.

'The SLL and OT might well begin this process by beginning to discuss their political and theoretical differences with us in a frank and comradely way, without the use of slander or falsifying the positions we hold, and by beginning to engage in common actions on such elementary things as defence of victims of the class struggle.'

The International Marxist Group, its English affiliate, commenting on this, issued a statement on August 23, 1970, which said:

' . . . it shows quite clearly that the United Secretariat *rejected* Healy's fake unity proposals. These have not been accepted, and there are *no* internal discussions taking place'.

At no time did I or anyone else from the International Committee make proposals as such for unity to the United Secretariat. In the Workers Press of July 7 we summarized the reasons for our approach as follows:

'As part of this preparation the Committee requested G. Healy, the national secretary of the Socialist Labour League, to contact represen-

tatives of the Unified Secretariat for informal talks around the possibility of joint discussion centred on outstanding political difference and directed towards the holding of a joint international conference.

We are more firmly convinced than ever that there is a basis for such an approach, and we accept as a positive step forward the recommendation of the Unified Secretariat that 'The SLL and OT might well begin this process by beginning to discuss their political and theoretical differences with us in a frank and comradely way'.

We are prepared to accept this, otherwise it would have been useless to have made any approach in the first place.

Factional manoeuvring over 'unity' as such would convince no one, and we have no intention of engaging in this.

The comrades of the Unified Secretariat are quite correct to stress that the stage before us is not one of 'unity' as such. We see it as an effort on both sides to re-examine the favourable objective situation to see whether or not some advances could be made along this road.

Our position today is consistent with the proposals we made in 1963 when the Unified Secretariat was formed. To refresh our readers' memories these were as follows:

1. That a world congress of the forces of the IC and IS should be convened during the autumn of 1964;
2. That a joint committee of representatives of the two organizations should regularly meet to prepare this conference and to work out practical ways and means for co-operation in the different countries;
3. This committee should set out to prepare a joint resolution on world perspectives for the conference. This resolution would outline the points of agreement as well as disagreement. During the preparation of the resolution, all the sections would be constantly informed of the work of the committee. In this way a genuine and positive discussion involving the differences would be organized;
4. Congress insisted that this discussion must take place in all sections, not only in the leaderships, but in the ranks. Unless this decision was carried out, it would be impossible for the international movement to develop new cadres which would be able to provide adequate political leadership in the next period. A proper circulation of all documents must take place;
5. Joint discussion between the members of the sections, particularly in W. Europe, should be organized. Whilst these discussions would deal with the differences, Congress believed that they should be extended to include

a discussion on the practical work of the various sections in a way that would bring the members of these sections closer together. Such a discussion would also have an all-round effect on the education of the cadres.

These proposals are to be immediately transmitted to the International Secretariat, with the hope that the joint work can begin immediately. (Reproduced from *World Outlook* edited by Joseph Hansen, November 22, 1963).

Unfortunately, the Unified Secretariat did not accept these proposals at the time, but the objective conditions are today entirely different and much more favourable.

The working class of Britain and W. Europe is moving towards open class conflict and into revolutionary politics on a scale never before experienced by our movement since it was founded by Comrade Trotsky.

Both the organizations of the International Committee and the Unified Secretariat are thrust more and more into the bitterest struggles against the counter-revolutionary forces of Stalinism and social democracy.

The building of mass revolutionary parties based on the working class is within our reach in a number of important countries.

We are convinced that Comrade Trotsky would want us to have such discussions if he were alive today. Indeed, it is entirely in accordance with the traditions of our movement in the years following his assassination.

In 1948, the Second World Congress of the Fourth International brought us together with the Shachtmanites for a joint congress to see if, despite the great political differences, unity was possible.

Subsequently, it was shown that the differences were too great, but that in no way cut across the valuable political experience of the conference.

We mention this experience, since comrades of the Unified Secretariat, quite understandably, raise the sharpness of the political differences between us as a possible barrier to the proposed talks.

They are by no means as sharp as they were with Shachtman in 1948.

These, in fact, were aggravated greatly by the two distinctly different political positions pursued by them and us in relation to the defence of the USSR during the Second World War.

There was nothing cynical about the work of our Second Congress in relation to Shachtman.

Neither is there anything cynical about our proposals today. They arise within a much more favourable political situation.

All of us agree that there should be no evasion of the fullest and frankest discussion on all the disputed questions.

We entirely agree with the Unified Secretariat that no important political difference should be evaded.

This is essential if the youth especially are to be educated in a principled way.

To assist a comradely approach for such discussion as suggested by the Unified Secretariat, we are prepared to enter into mutual agreement that this be no longer conducted in our public press, but internally within our respective organizations.

We are ready now to meet and fix a date when such an internal discussion would commence.

It is our opinion that there are now serious forces on both sides that want to have the discussion.

We await a reply from the Unified Secretariat.

DOCUMENT 17a

Letter from Tim Wohlforth to Jack Barnes,
October 5, 1973

Dear Comrade Barnes,

As you know, I have been seeking to meet with a representative of the Socialist Workers Party. I have made several phone calls to this effect making it clear that I was taking this initiative on behalf of the International Committee, with which the Workers League is in political solidarity, as well as on behalf of the Workers League.

The purpose of this initiative is to seek the support of the Socialist Workers Party in urging upon the United Secretariat, with which it is in political solidarity, a discussion as outlined in the International Committee statement 'For A Discussion on The Problems of the Fourth International.' This statement appeared in the Wednesday, August 29 issue of the *Workers Press* and the September 24 issue of the *Bulletin*.

We continue to be interested in holding a discussion with you or any other representative of the Socialist Workers Party to see if a way can be found to bring about such a genuine discussion as outlined in the above mentioned statement.

We are hoping to hear from you in the near future.

Yours fraternally,
Tim Wohlforth
National Secretary
Workers League

cc: G. Healy

DOCUMENT 17b

**Letter from Jack Barnes to Tim Wohlforth,
October 20, 1973**

Dear Comrade Wohlforth,

I have attached the September 19, 1970, United Secretariat statement on the 'unity' discussions then being sought by Gerry Healy in behalf of the 'International Committee.' It closed as follows:

'To summarize: The International Committee has characterized the United Secretariat of the Fourth International and the Socialist Workers Party as 'servants of the class enemy,' who 'decided to sell out to the Stalinist bureaucracy and the imperialists,' whose actions have placed them 'outside the camp of Trotskyism and of the working class,' and who must be dealt with as 'political scabs of the worst sort.'

'No other conclusion is possible: Either (1) in making advances towards us, the leaders of the International Committee have decided to sell out to the Stalinist bureaucracy and the imperialists, and are following a course that will place them outside the camp of Trotskyism and of the working class; or, (2) the leaders of the International Committee have begun to recognize how wrong they have been in their characterization of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International and its cothinkers in other countries but do not want to acknowledge their grievous errors, still less engage in public self-criticism.

'If the leaders of the International Committee have changed their opinion, then it is their duty to make public their political reasons for changing. On what specific political issues have they altered their views? We await their explanations with interest.

'Of course another possibility exists — that Comrade Healy's approach to the Socialist Workers Party, are only part of a 'unity' maneuver in the 'war' being conducted by the leaders of the Socialist Labour League against the Fourth International and the organizations sympathetic to its views.

'This would seem to be the most likely possibility were it not for the fact that Comrade Healy has expressly issued a public assurance that he has 'no intention' of engaging in 'factional maneuvering' over unity 'as such.'

'Comrade Healy's public avowal that no unity maneuver is involved makes it all the more imperative that the International Committee publicly clarify its stand on the alternatives indicated above.'

Since that time neither in their actions nor their press have the Socialist Labour League or the Workers League indicated any reconsideration of their characterizations of the United Secretariat and the Socialist Workers Party. In fact, the very public statement by the International Committee,' which you now advance as a basis for 'discussion', characterizes the United Secretariat and the Socialist Workers Party as 'revisionists' totally unable 'to return to the basic principles of Trotskyism.' The Socialist Workers Party is slandered as having 'opportunistically degenerated even further in the last ten years'; that is, further than being 'servants of the class enemy,' deciding 'to sell out to the Stalinist bureaucracy and the imperialists,' and engaging in actions placing the party 'outside the camp of Trotskyism and of the working class.'

In view of your failure to respond to the United Secretariat statement of September 19, 1970, your failure to indicate by any other means that you have modified your views of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International and the Socialist Workers Party, and your persistence in continuing up to this moment to publicly misrepresent and lie about our political positions, we see no reason for altering our previous refusal to engage in private parlays with representatives of the 'International Committee.'

Fraternally,
Jack Barnes
National Secretary
Socialist Workers Party

cc: United Secretariat
Gerry Healy

DOCUMENT 17c**Letter from the International Committee to
Jack Barnes, December 12, 1973**

Dear Comrade Barnes,

Our attention has been drawn to your letter of October 20, 1973 to Comrade Tim Wohlforth. The letter is a reply to Cde. Wohlforth's request to meet with a representative of the Socialist Workers Party. His purpose was 'to seek the support of the SWP in urging upon the United Secretariat, with which it is in political solidarity, a discussion as outlined in the IC statement 'For a Discussion on the Problems of the Fourth International' (*Workers Press*, August 29).

Your reply rejects this request on the same grounds as those given by the United Secretariat in refusing a discussion in 1970, viz., that the IC and its sections have denounced the SWP and the United Secretariat as 'revisionists,' as having decided to 'sell out to the Stalinist bureaucracy and the imperialists,' as being 'outside the camp of Trotskyism and of the working class,' etc.

We can only construe this argument as an evasion, to avoid discussion. It is contrary to all the traditions of the revolutionary movement to which you avow your adherence. The most fundamental division at the base of the independent existence of the Trotskyist movement, the division between Marxism and counter-revolutionary Stalinism, did not prevent Trotsky from constantly engaging the Stalinists in public debate. He did not withdraw his characterization of Stalinism's counter-revolutionary nature to do so.

When Trotsky delivered his historic statement 'I Stake My Life' to the American Committee for the Defence of Leon Trotsky, he was not unaware (any more than were James Cannon and the leaders of the SWP!) that this Committee contained liberals and Social Democrats whose political actions placed them in the camp of reaction. These were the attitudes taken by Trotsky in cases of unmistakable and unchangeable class positions of the tendencies involved.

Furthermore, your use of the United Secretariat's statement of 1970 as the basis of your reply is calculated to give the impression that you are in agreement with them. However, it is precisely on the questions we propose for discussion, fundamental historical questions, that such agreement does not exist. We remind you once again: the SWP has been obliged to raise, (along with other political disagreements) public differences with the United Secretariat about the split in the world movement since 1953. The SWP's own picture of itself as the defender of Marxism then and since is a gross distortion, but the point here is that the IC could no get the SWP into a discussion on these same questions in 1961-63! Instead, the questions were suppressed on the grounds that they would obstruct the phony agreement for 'reunification' in 1963. Now that the fundamental questions lever their way to the front, the SWP suppresses discussion once again!

Indeed in 1961 the discussion proposed by the SLL was actually agreed to begin, so far as the International Secretariat (the name then of the United Secretariat) was concerned.

It was the SWP who blocked the discussion. It was the same story after the split with Pablo in 1953. In the months following, the IC sections in Europe were in favour of a discussion with the Pabloites to get to the roots of the split, and it was the SWP who refused.

The SWP cannot treat the history of the 1953 split as its exclusive property, something it can bring out of storage and use for its own immediate purposes in relation to the Unified Secretariat. The 1953 split questions concern the whole movement of world Trotskyism. All the participants, and all those who have joined the movement since under the conditions of the split, must have the opportunity to discuss it. It is a necessity for rearming the Trotskyist movement, just as it was in 1961-63. For the SWP to put forward its own one-sided version of the 1953 split, and to reject discussion yet again after 20 years, is indication of a narrow national outlook, a contempt for the international movement.

And to add to this the transparent excuse that it is impossible to discuss with opponents who condemn you politically — that is fraud. Did not Lenin characterize Trotsky as 'Judas Trotsky' and find many other choice epithets for him in the years before 1917? Did these mean that no discussion was possible? Look for example at one of Lenin's articles, *warning* the young generation of revolutionists against Trotsky:

DOCUMENT 17c

Letter from the International Committee to
Jack Barnes, December 12 1933

. . . he is typical of all the five coteries abroad, which, in fact, are also vacillating between Liquidators and the Party.

In the period of the old *Iskra* (1901-03) these waverers, who flitted from the 'Economists' to the 'Iskra-ists' and back again were dubbed 'Tushino' deserters (the name given in the Turbulent Times in Russia to soldiers who deserted from one camp to another).

When we discuss Liquidationism, we discuss a definite ideological trend which grew up in the course of many years, the roots of which are interlaced with those of 'Menshevism' and 'Economism' in the 20 years history of Marxism, and which is connected with the policy and ideology of a definite class, the liberal bourgeoisie.

Lenin's verdict that the political tendencies outside Bolshevism had roots which were 'connected with the policy and ideology of . . . the liberal bourgeoisie,' did not and could not serve as a block to any discussion, on his part or on the part of Trotsky. It is necessary to begin from the objective needs of the movement, and today that means involving all sections of the International Committee and the 'Unified Secretariat' and those in solidarity with it, including the SWP, in the discussion which has become necessary, and has begun, on the roots of the 1953 split. Indeed Trotsky's own development necessitated the overcoming of his earlier objections to Lenin's objectivity and centralism, and the SWP would do well to recall his verdict on those pre-1917 years (*My Life*, pp. 161-2.):

Revolutionary centralism is a harsh, imperative, and exacting principle. It often takes the guise of absolute ruthlessness in its relation to individual members, to whole groups of former associates. It is not without significance that the words 'irreconcilable' and 'rentless' are among Lenin's favourites. It is only the most impassioned, revolutionary striving for a definite end — a striving that is utterly free from anything base or personal — that can justify such a personal ruthlessness. In 1903, the whole point at issue was nothing more than Lenin's desire to get Axelrod and Zasluch off the editorial board. My attitude toward them was full of respect and there was an element of personal affection as well. Lenin also thought highly of them for what they had done in the past. But he believed that they were becoming an impediment for the future. This led him to conclude that they must be removed from their position of leadership. I could not agree. My whole being seemed to protest against this merciless cutting off of the older ones when they were at last on the threshold of an organized party. It was my indignation at his attitude that really led to my parting with him at the second congress. His behaviour seemed unpardonable to me, both horrible and outrageous. And yet, politically it was right and necessary, from the point of view of organization. The break with the older ones, who

remained in the preparatory stages, was inevitable in any case. Lenin understood this before any one else did. He made an attempt to keep Plekhanov by separating him from Zasluch and Axelrod. But this, too, was quite futile, as subsequent events soon proved.'

The response of the SWP to take up the IC's and Comrade Wohlforth's approaches for discussion is in marked contrast to the failure, *within* the United Secretariat, to take up principled questions in case they cause organizational problems.

We refer in particular to the notorious Lawless question in the IMG in Britain. In case the SWP is not familiar with the facts of this case, we will summarize them. Here is a man, Lawless, who remains a member of the IMG and is publicly defended by them, despite the fact that his activities throughout the recent 'terrorists bombs' campaign in Britain are incompatible with membership of any organization claiming to be revolutionary.

To highlight just some of the aspects of his conduct: He took a telephoned statement from Dublin, purporting to come from the Irish Republican Publicity Bureau (IRPB), and took it to the Press Association with the intention of making some money as a freelance journalist.

He also telephoned Scotland Yard and told them he had a statement from the Provisional IRA claiming responsibility for a bomb campaign in the West End.

He has variously claimed that he made this call to protect himself from possible prosecution and to gather information for the article he was writing. Neither of these mutually contradictory statements can be condoned.

When the Provisional IRA repudiated the so-called IRPB statement issued by Lawless to the capitalist press — they say it is 'bogus' and a 'hoax' — Lawless persistently refused to admit he had been wittingly or unwittingly misled. On the contrary, he proceeded to give a series of interviews to the capitalist press, radio, and television in which he insisted that the Provisionals *were* responsible and the police were not taking the situation seriously enough.

This opened the door for the Tory government, Scotland Yard, and the capitalist press to create an atmosphere of hysteria and repression in which Irish workers, republican groups, and left-wing organizations, including the IMG itself, were subjected to raids and harassment. It also provided the state with a vicious anti-IRA climate on the eve of the Belfast Ten trial.

When Detective Chief Superintendent Roy Habershon, one of Scotland Yard's leading political police officers, 'requested' that Lawless make a statement, Lawless volunteered to visit Scotland Yard and sign a statement, the contents of which have never been made public.

Now, the IMG is the recognized British section of the United Secretariat, and defends Lawless. Can the SWP coexist in solidarity with Lawless, the IMG, and the United Secretariat? Assuming that this is the first time the SWP has been made familiar with the facts of this case and the dangers obviously resulting from it, will the SWP act alongside the IC in driving Lawless out of the movement? The question cannot be avoided; it was carried by Lawless and by the IMG into the midst of the capitalist press.

To allow this case to be covered up, while at the same time refusing discussion with the IC on the grounds that we characterize you politically in class terms — that would be opportunism of the worst order. We therefore hope you will urgently reverse your decision to reject the approach made on behalf of the IC by C. Je. Wohlforth. The discussion proposed is an objective need of the whole revolutionary movement.

Yours fraternally,
International Committee.

Glossary of Names

BANDA, Michael — Member of International Committee of Fourth International and of Central Committee of Socialist Labour League during the period covered by these volumes.

BEHAN, Brian — Joined Trotskyist movement from CPGB in 1957. Expelled from SLL in 1959, and afterwards became an anti-communist.

BLEIBTREU-FAVRE — One of the leaders of the PCI majority in 1953. Expelled as an opportunist tendency one year later.

BLOCH, Gérard — One of leaders of PCI majority in 1953. Now in revisionist OCI leadership.

BREITMAN, George — Leading member of SWP, and principal spokesman on Negro question.

BURNHAM, James — Leader, together with Schachtman and Abern, of the petty bourgeois opposition in the SWP in 1939-40. Subscribed to the revisionist theory of state capitalism. Split with Schachtman after his expulsion from the SWP. Author of *The Managerial Revolution*.

BURNS — Pseudonym for secretary of the British Section of the Fourth International (G. Healy), which became the Socialist Labour League in 1959 and then the Workers' Revolutionary Party in 1973.

CADOGAN, Peter — Ex-member of CPGB and ex-member of SLL. Joined CND on leaving SLL. Secretary of South Place Ethical Society.

CANNON, James P. — Founder of Trotskyist movement in the United States, expelled from the Communist Party in 1928. Leader of the SWP until he retired in 1960s. Supported Trotsky in the fight against the petty bourgeois opposition of Schachtman and Burnham in 1939-40. Imprisoned during Second World War. Author of 'Theses on the American Revolution' in 1946 (see Introduction to Volume Two). Responsible for the 'Open Letter to the World Trotskyist Movement' of 1953, which denounced Pabloite revisionism and founded the International Committee. In the period 1961-63, together with Hansen, guided the SWP back into the revisionist camp.

CAPA — Pseudonym for Nahuel Moreno, leader of the Argentinian section of International Committee until 1963, when they joined with Hansen and SWP in reunification with the Pabloites. Now leads the reformist PST (Socialist Workers' Party of Argentina).

CLARKE, George — Led the formation of a Pabloite faction with Cochran in the SWP after Third World Congress in 1951, at which he represented SWP in 1953. Split from Pablo at 4th Pabloite Congress in 1954 to form American Socialist Union with Cochran and Bartell.

CLIFF, T. — Palestinian Trotskyist who moved to Britain at end of war. Abandoned Trotskyism for state capitalist position. Now leads revisionist International Socialism group.

COCHRAN, Bert — One time leader of the auto worker faction of the SWP. With George Clark led supporters in SWP of Pablo tendency. Expelled in 1953. Wrote on Eastern Europe and other problems under name of E. R. Frank in period 1946-53. Formed American Socialist Union with Clark and Bartell after split with Pablo in 1954.

DOBBS, Farrell — A leader of the Minneapolis Teamsters strike in 1934. Leading member of SWP from 1940s, and its Secretary during period covered by these volumes.

DOWSON, Ross — Leader of Canadian section of Fourth International who opposed Pablo in 1953 but fully supported SWP's return to Pabloism in 1961. Now leads reformist right-wing group in opposition to SWP in Canada.

FRANK, Pierre — Collaborator of Molinier in pre-war French section of Fourth International. Leader of supporters of Pabloites in 1951 in French section. Today a leading spokesman of the 'United Secretariat'.

FRYER, Peter — *Daily Worker* correspondent for Eastern Europe at the time of 1956 Hungarian Revolution. Author of *Hungarian Tragedy*. Broke from Communist Party; was for a period a member of the Trotskyist movement. Expelled in 1959.

GERMAIN, Ernest — See MANDEL

GOONEWARDENE, Leslie (pseudonym Tilak)— Leading member of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party which betrayed Trotskyism and entered the Bandaranaike coalition in 1964. Imprisoned during Second World War. Founder member of Bolshevik Leninist Party of India. Advocate of entry into Indian Socialist Party in the 1940s, and one of leading proponents of coalition in Ceylon.

GRANT, E. — Member of British section of Fourth International during 1940's. Supported Haston against the Fourth International. Unanimously expelled together with Haston at Third Congress of Fourth International in 1951. Later joined Pablo as leader of revisionist Revolutionary Socialist League in the late 1950s. Broke with Pablo to enter Labour Party and supported witch-hunt of Young Socialists in 1960s. Now heads revisionist 'Militant' group which opposes placing demands on Labour Government and calls for support for minimum programme.

HANSEN, Joseph — One of leaders of SWP since late 1930s. Secretary and bodyguard to Trotsky in Mexico. Prominent in faction fight against Cochranites; after 1953 split took lead in opposing discussion of differences with Pabloites. Held principal responsibility for the international relations of SWP in the period covered by these volumes. In forefront of 'reunification' manoeuvres of 1962-63. Leads SWP since Cannon's retirement in 1960s. Author of *Too Many Babies*.

HASTON, Jock — Leader of Workers' International League, one of the two major Trotskyist organizations in Britain in pre-war period. Arrested and imprisoned during the war for anti-war activities. Secretary of Revolutionary Communist Party, set up in 1944 as British section of Fourth International. Directed the Trotskyist movement until the RCP formally dissolved in 1947 to enter Labour Party. Expelled by Fourth International in 1951 for capitulation to Social Democracy. Subsequently joined right wing in trade unions as educational director of EPTU under the late Sir Leslie Cannon.

HUGEMBERT-VALDES --Leader of Chilean section of International Committee until 1963, when it joined with Hansen and the SWP in the 'reunification' with the Pabloites. Arrested and imprisoned during Pinochet coup in Chile.

JACQUES — Pseudonym for Buchbinder, leader of Swiss section. Supported 'Open Letter' of SWP in 1953. Joined with SWP in 1963 to support reunification. Subsequently became a pacifist.

KERRY, Tom — Long-standing member of SWP and author of articles on history of Fourth International published by SWP in 1973.

KOLPE (Kailas Chandhra) — Member of semi-anarchist Indian Mazdoor Trotskyist Group during Second World War. Joined Pabloites. Leader of revisionist Socialist Workers' Party of India.

LAMBERT, Pierre — Leading member of the PCI (French section) majority in opposition to Pablo, expelled by him prior to 1953 split. Joined in formation of International Committee. Secretary of revisionist Organisation Communiste Internationaliste. Helped betray 1968 General Strike and split from International Committee in 1971. Defender and apologist for Social Democracy and Stalinism in France.

LAWRENCE, John — Took the revisionist position of Pablo against the majority of the British section of the Fourth International in 1953 period. Immediately afterwards joined the Communist Party, which he later left to become an anarchist.

MAGE, Shane — Follower of Robertson tendency in USA.

MAITAN, Livio — Leading member of Pabloite revisionists since 1953. Secretary of their Italian section, and a major spokesman of pro-guerrilla faction in 'United Secretariat'.

MANDEL, Ernest (Ernest Germain) — Member of European Secretariat of Fourth International and of Belgian section during Second World War. Betrayed majority of French section in 1951 to join Pablo. Major supporter of Pablo in 1953 split. Author of many revisionist works on 'neo-capitalism'. Betrayed Belgian General Strike in 1961. Secretary of 'United Secretariat' since 'reunification'. Heads the faction of 'United Secretariat' which is again at loggerheads with SWP today and includes IMG in Britain, Ligue Communiste in France, various guerrilla groupings in Latin America and a faction expelled from SWP in the summer of 1974.

MARCY — Leader of a faction in SWP which labelled the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 as fascist and split from SWP before 1959 Convention.

MESTRE, Michèle — Leading member of minority in French section (PCI) which supported Pablo tendency in 1953 period.

MOSCOSO (Gonzalez Moscoso) — Leading Bolivian Pabloite, now in National Liberation Front supporting General Torres against existing military regime.

NOVACK, George (pseudonym William F. Warde) — Leading member of SWP and prominent philosophical idealist. Sympathetic to Pablo at time of 1953 split, but stayed with Cannon.

OEHLER, Hugo — Well-known sectarian in American Trotskyist movement who opposed entry work in the mass reformist parties.

PABLO, Michel (Gabriel Raptis) — Worked in International Secretariat of Fourth International during Second World War, becoming Secretary in post-war period. In the period 1948-53 developed theory that mass pressure on Stalinist parties could transform them into revolutionary leaderships. His tendency broke from Trotskyism in 1953, calling itself the 'International Secretariat'. Shortly after 1963 'reunification' with SWP, was expelled from 'United Secretariat' with minority tendency standing openly for liquidation. Became a minister in the abortive bourgeois government of Ben Bella in Algeria.

PEARCE, Brian — Left CPGB after Hungarian Revolution to join SLL. Author of many pamphlets on British labour history.

PENG, Shu-Chih (also known as Peng Shu-tse, S. T. Peng) — Leader with Chen du Tsiu of Chinese CP in 1924-27. Opposed to Stalin's policy of subordination to Kuomintang but accepted Stalinist-Menshevik concept of two-stage revolution. Associated himself with Trotskyist opposition after defeat of 1927 revolution. Abstained from class struggle in China in sectarian and propagandistic manner; completely disoriented by recrudescence of civil war in China in 1947; fled to Hongkong and Paris after coming to power of Mao Tse Tung. Member of International Committee from 1954 until leaving it to rejoin Pabloites, in political agreement with SWP, in 1963.

PERERA, Dr. N. M. — Founder of LSSP. Leader of Ceylon Federation of Labour. Imprisoned during war and escaped to India. Right-wing parliamentarian; Minister of Finance in two coalition governments.

PHILIPS, Art — Leading trade unionist in SWP. Supported state capitalist position on Russia.

POSADAS, Juan — Leader of Pabloite group in Argentina in 1950s. Expelled with his tendency from Pabloite movement in 1962. Notorious for advocacy of 'preventative nuclear war' by Soviet Union.

PRESTON — Pseudonym for secretary of the International Committee (G. Healy) in the period 1953-1963.

PRIVAS — Supporter of Pablo tendency in PCI in 1953 period.

RENARD, Daniel — Leading member of the French section of the Fourth International (PCI) at the time of the 1953 split.

ROBERTSON — Expelled with Wohlforth from SWP. Formed revisionist Spartacist group. Expelled from International Committee at 1966 Conference.

RODRIGUEZ, P. (Pierre Broué) — One of leaders of PCI, then of revisionist OCI. Author of works on Spanish and French history.

SCHACHTMAN, Max — Founder member of American Trotskyist movement with Cannon and Abern. Led opposition to Trotsky in SWP over Russo-Finnish war and occupation of Poland. An advocate of 'bureaucratic collectivism'. Split with SWP in 1940 to set up Workers' Party, which he dissolved to enter Socialist Party of USA and to join the Congress for Cultural Freedom — a CIA-subsidized organization. Author of *Behind the Moscow Trials*. Died 1972.

de SILVA, Dr. Colvin R. — Leader of LSSP, imprisoned and escaped to India to form Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India during war. Leading parliamentarian in LSSP; prominent coalitionist.

SINCLAIR, W. — Pseudonym for W. Hunter (British section), author of the document 'Under a Stolen Flag'. Member of SLL and of WRP.

SLAUGHTER, Cliff — Member of International Committee of Fourth International and of Central Committee of Socialist Labour League during the period covered by these volumes.

SMITH — Pseudonym for Farrell Dobbs.

SWABECK, Arne — Founder member of SWP; left to join Maoists in 1960s.

WEISS, Murry — Leading member of SWP in 1950s and early 1960s. Supported Cannon against SLL.

WEISS, Myra Tanner — Leading member of SWP.

WOHLFORTH, Tim — Led opposition tendency in SWP at time of unprincipled 'reunification' of 1962-63. Expelled from SWP for demanding discussion on Ceylon coalition, and formed Workers' League, in sympathy with International Committee.

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In today's conditions of capitalist crisis, only the International Committee of the Fourth International stands on a record of fighting for revolutionary leadership in the working class. To carry forward this struggle now, when every revisionist tendency is striving to turn the working class back into the arms of the bureaucracy, an understanding of its history is essential.

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