

SWP

discussion bulletin

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PLENUM DISCUSSION OF WORLD MOVEMENT

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Editor's Note

This is the first of a series of bulletins containing the resolutions, reports, discussion and summaries dealing with the world movement at the June 1962 plenum of the National Committee.

The plenum voted as follows on the majority resolution, "Problems of the Fourth International," and the minority resolution, "In Defense of a Revolutionary Perspective," contained in this bulletin:

	<u>For Majority Resolution</u>	<u>For Minority Resolution</u>
Regular NC members	17	1
Alternate NC members	13	1
Consultative*	13	2

(*Includes members of Control Commission, heads of N.O. departments, party branch organizers, members of editorial board of magazine and members of youth executive committee invited to the plenum on a consultative basis.)

B.W. of Connecticut, present on a consultative basis, submitted this statement: "I should like to vote against both resolutions with the following statement: The present discussion is, of course, a continuation of the 1961 convention discussion. While I support the majority position on the Cuban revolution and recognize its crucial importance, and also favor the unification of the International after a sound political foundation has been laid through a thorough international discussion, I am compelled to vote, not to abstain, but to vote, against both resolutions. The majority resolution is, in my opinion, essentially a centrist and opportunist document, which abandons several basic and hard-won Trotskyist positions, in an understandable but false objective of a tactical approach to centrists. The minority position, echoing the SLL, is a sectarian, non-dialectical document which bars rapprochement to the IS tendency under a barrage of excessively rigid ultra-left formulations, which in practice could stultify the growth and development of the International."

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Concerning further discussion of the subject, this motion was adopted by the plenum: "Following the plenum reports to the branches to continue discussion on the world movement in literary form."

PROBLEMS OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

-- AND THE NEXT STEPS

(Adopted by National Committee June 15, 1962)

New developments in world politics -- the fracturing of Stalinist monolithism and the growing differentiations among the Communist states and parties; the rise of the colonial revolution from which independent revolutionary tendencies like Castroism have emerged; the premonitory stirrings among the workers in several imperialist strongholds -- are opening up important avenues for the organizational growth of the Fourth International and the expansion of its ideas and influence. These opportunities may be missed if the fragmented forces of the world Trotskyist movement cannot combine to make the most of them.

The problems involved in reconstituting the organized revolutionary leadership of the world working class are now preoccupying Trotskyists on all continents. An international discussion has been started to ascertain what political bases and organizational steps can best provide a solution.

The Socialist Workers Party made its first contribution to this new discussion in a resolution, "The World Struggle for Socialism," adopted at its June 1961 convention. The Socialist Labour League of England also adopted a resolution, "The World Prospects of Socialism," at its 1961 annual conference. This differs in important respects from the positions taken by the SWP. Since then a group of comrades led by Tim Wohlforth and A. Phillips have submitted a platform inside the SWP, "In Defense of a Revolutionary Perspective," based on the position put forward by the SLL.

There are, of course, many things in the lengthy SLL document with which we fully agree. Taking these for granted, the following contribution to the discussion will deal with the major points of disagreement or misunderstanding that have arisen between us and the SLL.

These involve four questions:

(1) The colonial revolution, in particular Cuba and Algeria.

(2) Relations between the revolutionary movement in the underdeveloped and the industrially advanced countries in the world struggle for socialism.

(3) Ways and means of building mass parties of revolutionary Marxism.

(4) Reunification of the Trotskyist forces.

Section I

Two Views of the Cuban Revolution

Of all our disagreements with the SLL on current political policy, the most important concerns Cuba because this is a problem of a living and developing socialist revolution. We have reached divergent appraisals of the Cuban Revolution and its course of development, the character of the Cuban state and the nature of the Castro leadership. This is no small matter, since Cuba is the touchstone today of revolutionary politics for all socialist militants, above all in the Western hemisphere.

Here is why:

1. A workers state has been established in Cuba, a consequence of the first victorious socialist revolution in the Americas.

2. Cuba stands in the vanguard of Latin-American progress. To 200,000,000 people Cuba provides an inspiring example of how to win freedom from imperialism, eradicate capitalist-landlord exploitation, and tackle the major economic-social problems of a backward country. As the revolution moves ahead, it continues to blaze new trails in many fields.

3. The overturn in Cuba constitutes the first act in the development of the socialist revolution of the Americas which includes both the United States and Canada.

4. By extending the socialist revolution into the New World, Cuba has raised the entire colonial revolutionary process to a new plateau of achievement.

5. The triumph of the Cuban workers and peasants has dealt a stunning blow to U.S. imperialism at its very doorstep. It has exposed the hypocrisy and brutality of the Yankee colossus, its weakness in its own heartland, and confirmed the growing strength of the anti-imperialist camp.

6. The course of the Revolution since 1959 has given fresh confirmation to the correctness of the theory of the permanent revolution, first vindicated in Russia of 1917, subsequently in Yugoslavia and China, and now in Cuba.

7. This is the first socialist revolution since the Second World War whose leadership had never been tied to Moscow. This by-passing of Stalinism by a brilliant and daring group of young Cuban revolutionists has noteworthy implications.

a) It shows the colonial peoples striving for emancipation a political alternative to the Stalinized Communist parties.

b) From the first its regime has been far more honest, democratic and identified with the peoples' interests than the states deformed by Stalinism, and its foreign policy has been more consistently revolutionary.

c) Confronting the Communist parties, particularly in Latin America with the difficult problem of coping with the revolutionary course of action exemplified and advocated by Castro, it both intensifies the crisis of Stalinism and advances a positive solution to that crisis.

d) It provides an immediate rallying center for all revolutionary currents in the Americas.

Despite their differences with one another or with the Castro regime, the Trotskyists everywhere have defended the Cuban revolution against imperialist intervention and its agents and have worked hard to mobilize support in its behalf. But the actual and potential developments of this revolution impose tasks upon the Marxists which go much beyond the elementary duty of expressing solidarity with an oppressed small nation fighting for its independence.

The profoundly democratic and socialist tendencies of the Cuban revolution have propelled it to a point higher than that attained socially in any sector of the colonial revolution except in China, North Korea and North Viet Nam, and politically far beyond these. Beginning as a struggle for democracy and land reform, embracing even some bourgeois elements in the opposition coalition, the revolution passed over from its bourgeois democratic origins to an anti-imperialist, proletarian-peasant stage in which the power and property of native and foreign capitalism were expropriated, agrarian relations thoroughly

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transformed, the workers and peasants armed, the economy planned, foreign trade made into a state monopoly and a government set up functioning in the interests of the impoverished masses.

These fundamental changes converted Cuba into a workers state, a workers state that has displayed profoundly democratic and socialist tendencies although the institutions of proletarian democracy have yet to be worked out and stabilized under the revolutionary Workers and Peasants Government. This was certified by the fact that the central leadership and forces of the regime have clashed with and publicly denounced the bureaucratism which such leaders of the Stalinist Popular Socialist Party as Escalante attempted to impose. All this was noted and recognized by the SWP as the events occurred.

Despite any errors or inadequacies, the record shows the July 26 forces headed by Fidel Castro to be a revolutionary tendency that has increasingly taken Marxist positions on domestic and foreign policies, while clarifying its own thinking in the process.

Under these circumstances, we believe the Trotskyists of Cuba should seek to enter and take their place in the soon-to-be-formed unified revolutionary party where they can work loyally, patiently and confidently for the implementation of the fully revolutionary-socialist program which they represent.

In addition to mobilizing support for the Cuban cause, as they are doing, the Trotskyists throughout Latin America should try to bring together all those forces, regardless of their specific origins, which are ready to take the Cuban experience as the point of departure for the revolutionary struggles in their own countries.

From the first hour the SWP as well as its Canadian co-thinkers took the initiative to rally support for Cuba, opposing the aggressions of Big Business and its government and counter-revolutionary agents. From the first we told the truth about the aims and achievements of the Revolution. These efforts to inform the American and Canadian people and to expose the lies of the capitalist press have been motivated not only by considerations of solidarity with the struggles of the Latin-American masses but also to protect the interests of the workers of the United States against the criminal plots of the monopolists and militarists.

* * *

The Socialist Labour League, on the other hand, has followed a basically different course toward the revolutionary

events in Cuba. The gist of their position is expressed in the following excerpts from their 1961 Resolution on the International Situation, reprinted in the Winter 1961-62 Labour Review.

1. The Agrarian Reform "in its content and motivation remains a capitalist reform and does not transcend capitalist property relations in the countryside." (p. 117)

2. "The Castro regime is Bonapartist in structure and petty-bourgeois in composition. .. On all decisive and fundamental questions which impinge upon the power and wealth of the national bourgeoisie as a whole, however, the regime comes down on the side of capitalism." (p. 118)

3. "By attempting to form a 'single party of the revolution,' by attacking the Left Wing of the July 26 Movement and by its refusal to convene a Constituent Assembly on the basis of secret and universal suffrage, the Castro regime reveals more and more its class limitations in carrying the democratic revolution to the end. The attacks against the POR are further evidence of this trend." (p. 118)

Thus, according to the SLL, Cuban society today has a capitalist economic foundation and a bourgeois state headed by a petty-bourgeois Bonapartist government which has not even been able to fulfill the democratic demands of the people. This appraisal conflicts with the facts on all essential points.

What are the reasons for these fundamental errors?

1. The SLL comrades have failed to observe the qualitative transition of the Cuban Revolution from its initial national-democratic phase over to its proletarian-socialist stage. The decisive change came between August-October 1960 when the nationalizations in the major areas of Cuban industry changed the basic social-economic structure of the country.

2. This blindness is due to an incorrect conception of the interplay between the objective and subjective factors in shaping the course of the revolutionary process. The SLL comrades tend to invert this relationship by giving primacy to the subjective factor.

Here is the key passage on this point in the SLL Resolution which indicates how its treatment of the Cuban events came to be misguided: "To see the colonial revolution as automatically extending, under its own momentum, is to encourage the serious revisions of Marxism already discussed. It is

nonsense to speak of the theory of the permanent revolution being 'confirmed' without the leadership of a Marxist party and without the perspective of a spread to the advanced countries." (p. 117)

If this means what it says, then capitalism can under no circumstances be overthrown in a colonial country unless and until a full-fledged Marxist leadership stands at the head of the revolution and its regime. While they have not expressed it with that much clarity, this is the basic concept which the SLL comrades have applied in their attempted analysis of the Cuban reality.

Facts, however, are stubborn things. It is a fact that capitalism was eliminated in 1960 and no longer constitutes the basis of Cuban social and economic life -- and this overturn was directed by a leadership which did not explicitly call itself Marxist until a year and a half after the overthrow of capitalism and does not avow Trotskyism to this day.

As the precedents of the Soviet Union under Stalinism and then of Eastern Europe, Yugoslavia and China demonstrate, Cuba could not logically be defined as anything but a workers state even if its political structure were not democratic and its leadership were non-Marxist. But the SLL comrades do not want to admit even this much. They correctly view the deformed states in Eastern Europe dominated by the Kremlin as non-capitalist but they refuse to grant that status to the uncorrupted workers regime in Cuba. They set aside the traditional Marxist standards for determining the character of a workers state and advance instead purely political criteria. They so exaggerate the importance of the subjective factor that they lose sight of the fundamental changes in the basic property relations.

There is no warrant either in the method of Marxism or the traditions of Trotskyism for this procedure. The Transitional Program of the Fourth International says that in our epoch: "The historical crisis of mankind is reduced to the crisis of revolutionary leadership." The SLL reiterates this correct declaration. But their Resolution overlooks the fact that it is the conclusion from a prior consideration of "The Objective Prerequisites for Socialist Revolution."

The Transitional Program gives first place to the objective conditions within which the proletariat and its leadership operate: "The orientation of the masses is determined

first by the objective conditions of decaying capitalism and second, by the treacherous politics of the old workers' organizations. Of these factors, the first of course is the decisive one: the laws of history are stronger than the bureaucratic apparatus."

From this it might appear that the programmatic charter of the Fourth International also lapses into the sin of "objectivism." In reality, it sticks to the materialist method of Marxism. For the leadership factor cannot be converted into the sovereign ruler of history. As Trotsky emphasized in Stalinism and Bolshevism: "...the party is not the only factor of development and on a larger historical scale is not the decisive one." (p. 14, see 1960 edition). The class struggle remains the fundamental driving force. To view the progress of the class struggle as dependent first and most of all upon the presence or absence of an adequate Marxist leadership is to stand social reality on its head and not on its feet.

main point
our problem - to explain how this process is working out differently than it did in the 1930s

If the revolutionary forces do not have a suitable leadership prepared in advance of their drive toward supreme power, they are compelled to create or recreate one in the process of the revolution. Even Lenin's Bolshevik party had to be reoriented by his April Theses and reformed between February and October 1917.

In case after case in the 1920's and 1930's and in many cases thereafter, the vanguard was not able to do this in time. Major revolutionary opportunities miscarried. This resulted in catastrophes -- fascism, Stalinist degeneration of the USSR, the Second World War and the threat of a third world war. The conclusion is unmistakable: It is imperative to work at all times and everywhere for the formation of a revolutionary Marxist party. That is the reason for the existence of the Fourth International.

However, all this does not gainsay that in Cuba events have taken a more complex and favorable course than they did in the places where the revolutionary opportunities miscarried. After making the armed struggle against Batista a principle of their movement, the Castro leadership, of petty-bourgeois intellectual origin and formation, strove to keep step with the line of march and requirements of the revolution by identifying themselves more and more closely with the interests of the peasants and workers. Transcending their initial objectives, which were limited largely to winning political democracy and agrarian reform, they re-equipped themselves and their movement with broader and deeper revolutionary ideas

and perspectives. These at a certain point explicitly merged with Marxism. Their ideological evolution is far from ended.

It would be wrong, as the "New Lefts" and others do, to simplify this case, deny the need for a Marxist party, and convert that into an abstract rule applicable to the political development of the revolution in general. Here, too, the Cubans are proving to be better revolutionists than such theoreticians, for they are proceeding to organize a Marxist-Leninist party. This step forward now becomes part of the example of the Cuban revolution which will have immediate and enduring influence on the thinking of revolutionists throughout Latin America and elsewhere. This new step can also help speed the progress of the revolutionary socialist movement in such imperialist centers as the United States. The "New Lefts" will shortly find themselves singularly isolated in their hasty generalization from the first phase of the Cuban experience.

On the other hand, it is wrong for the SLL to deny the proletarian character of the Cuban state because its leadership was a little late in recognizing kinship with scientific socialism. There are other ways of arriving at Marxist conclusions and putting them into practice than by being recruited one by one through propaganda and education to an established Trotskyist group. The militants of the July 26 Movement have demonstrated that lessons learned in revolutionary action can lead to the same results on an even larger scale and in a shorter time. In the Second Declaration of Havana Fidel Castro sets forth many of the essential ideas of the permanent revolution in the light of the experiences of the Cuban people. The conscious recognition of the validity of scientific socialism by the Cuban leaders is a tremendous victory for revolutionary Marxism which will influence the entire further direction and development of the Latin-American countries.

The Cuban experience demonstrates once again that the ultimate determinant in the outbreak, course and outcome of a revolutionary struggle is the relationship of class forces on a national and world scale, and not the subjective political factors alone. In this period of the ascendance of the world revolution Cuba has provided positive proof of a lesson illustrated in a negative way during the previous period of world reaction.

Explaining the political defeat of Bolshevism in the Soviet Union in answer to those who tried to pin it on the original sins of Lenin's party, Trotsky pointed out that

"Bolshevism considered itself as one of the factors of history, the 'conscious' factor -- a very important but not the decisive one. We never sinned in historical subjectivism. We saw the decisive factor -- on the existing basis of productive forces -- in the class struggle, not only on a national but an international scale." (Stalinism and Bolshevism, p. 12)

The favorable course of the Cuban Revolution was determined by far more powerful and fundamental forces than the original character and aims of the Castro leadership. Among these were the urgency of land reform, the fusion of the sugar workers with the peasants in the countryside, the total rottenness of the Batista regime, and above all, the rapacity and arrogance of U.S. imperialism. It was promoted by the existence, aid and example of the workers states.

This is not to detract in the least from the tremendous role played by Fidel Castro and his associates in carrying the revolution through to its logical conclusion. The daring evinced in launching armed struggle was carried to historical heights after they took power by breaking with the bourgeoisie and going forward against U.S. imperialism toward socialism.

This in turn demonstrates how important leadership is when momentous decisions have to be taken. Somewhat unexpectedly, the comrades who insist so strongly at this date on the vital necessity of correct leadership have here a most convincing example to illustrate their thesis. And it could hardly be otherwise in a revolution that developed as swiftly and profoundly as this one. Such is the dialectical way of viewing the interaction between the objective and subjective conditions in the revolutionary process.

The turn of events in Cuba has perplexed tendencies inclined to isolate the question of mass leadership from the totality of conditions and to make that single factor predominant. Communist Party theoreticians, for example, have maintained that Cuba could not be a workers state because neither the revolution nor the regime issuing from it were headed by the CP. They termed it a national democratic revolution which took state-capitalist measures. The Cuban CP finally gave up this view, quietly ducking the task of offering an adequate theoretical explanation, and the others will likely follow, as recent declarations from Moscow indicate.

The SLL has followed a symmetrical type of reasoning -- except that it insists no workers state can be established unless a revolutionary Marxist, that is, Trotskyist, party

has directed the revolution and heads the regime. However, it applies this rule only to Cuba and not to those countries whose governments are directed by the Communist parties, as in Eastern Europe and China.

The SLL underestimates the significance of the Cuban Revolution for the development of the socialist movement and the strengthening of Trotskyism in the Americas. As we have emphasized, the Cuban Revolution, following in the sequence of the Russian and Chinese revolutions, cannot be regarded as a purely particular and peripheral case without departing from the dialectical method. All the problems and solutions of revolutionary politics in the colonial world today are focussed most sharply in Cuba.

The future of Latin-American Trotskyism depends upon its ability to absorb the lessons of the Cuban Revolution and to apply them in regrouping the authentic revolutionary forces. On this key question the Latin-American Trotskyists have made a good accounting. Through their own independent analyses, they came to conclusions about the Cuban revolution identical in all major respects to those of the SWP and our Canadian co-thinkers. The common results provided a valuable mutual check on the correctness of the positions that were reached as well as a new basis for comradely collaboration in advancing the Trotskyist movement.

In the United States, from whence the major menace to the life of the Cuban Revolution comes, Cuba is as important for the revolutionary vanguard as the Algerian question has been for France. The SLL Resolution displays no recognition of the fact that an incorrect policy could seriously harm our prospects and shove the SWP for a long time to the sidelines as an impotent sect. Our generally correct attitude has enabled the SWP to play a prominent role in the Cuba defense movement and to attract new elements, especially among the youth, to the cause of revolutionary socialism.

Our theoretical and political contributions were the most solid in the American radical movement, became the ideological axis for the counter-offensive against the propaganda of the State Department and its agents, and drew the favorable attention of a whole new layer attracted by the Cuban Revolution, including such significant figures as C. Wright Mills. This work and the accompanying participation in demonstrations, etc., in conjunction with activity in other fields, decisively advanced the SWP from its previous isolation to its present prominence in the American radical movement.

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On the other hand, the fallacious theoretical approach of the SLL to the Cuban Revolution has impeded practical activities. The SLL lost the initiative in Cuban defense efforts to centrist forces in England. Their rejection of an Embassy invitation to celebrate the Cuban Revolution on January 1, 1962 needlessly widened the gulf between the British Trotskyists and the Cuban revolutionists. Recently the SLL has started promoting a "Food for Cuba" campaign. This kind of solidarity action is sure to be appreciated by the hard-pressed Cubans. We hope this improvement in their practical work will be followed by reconsideration of their theoretical views on the Cuban Revolution.

Section 2

Algeria: Victory or Tragedy?

The lack of objective judgment evinced by the SLL toward the Cuban Revolution can likewise be seen in its treatment of the present turning point in the Algerian Revolution.

For more than seven years the Algerian rebels had to strain every resource to win national liberation from French rule. Now they have signed a cease-fire which, for all its shortcomings, substantially realizes this wholly progressive aim. How has the SLL appraised de Gaulle's de facto recognition of Algeria's right to independence?

The March 10, 1962 Newsletter article on this subject, under the headline of "Algeria's Tragedy," stated: "This settlement is the most cynical deal which a nationalist leadership has ever made with a colonial power." The article went on to depict the agreement as a sellout giving French capitalism what it essentially sought.

The SWP made a different estimate. The March 26 Militant story, captioned "Algerian Pact Blow to French Imperialism," said: "The heroic, seven-and-a-half-year fight of the Algerian people has finally forced French imperialism to concede independence to the North African colonies... The FLN negotiators made some real concessions to their opponents on economic and military matters and also incorporated into the pact some face-saving words for the French -- undoubtedly needed by de Gaulle in his struggle with the ultra-right Secret Army and the fascists who opposed any settlement whatever. But the key issue, Algeria's political independence, appears to be unequivocally established."

The contrast is clear. Whereas the SLL maximizes the concessions and minimizes the most important feature of the agreement, the gaining of independence, the Militant rightly does the opposite. Blame for the concessions ought to be imposed not primarily upon the Algerian leaders, but upon the SP and CP leaderships in France who restrained the French workers from supporting the Algerians, strengthened the hand of the imperialists, and left the rebel fighters in the lurch. Instead of bringing this fact forward in a situation where it is most pertinent, the Newsletter concentrates its condemnation upon the FLN leadership.

The FLN had to wage a bloody seven-year war without help from the French workers. That is the real source of the weakness which forced their compromise. Admitting that the clauses do contain dangers for the further development of their revolution, can the agreement as such be stigmatized as a "shameful sellout," a defeat for the revolution and a victory for French imperialism, as the SLL contends?

This judgment is utterly false. The agreement wrested from de Gaulle against OAS resistance is a major victory for the Algerian people, for the Arab and colonial revolution. It is a jolting setback to French and world imperialism. Of course, it is far from a complete and final victory. But it lifts the struggle for national independence and social liberation in that country to a higher stage and places the revolution upon firmer and more favorable grounds for the solution of its next tasks.

These were briefly indicated in the conclusion to an editorial on "The Algerian Revolution" in the April 2 Militant, which pointed out that two roads are now open for its further evolution. These are the road of Tunisia under Bourghiba; retaining capitalism in a backward country -- or the Cuban road. "The first step in Algeria is the consolidation of independence, the second must be the socialist transformation of Algerian society." The Marxists there will strive to fight together with the worker-plebeians against the bourgeois elements in the nationalist camp in order to direct the revolution along the second course.

* * *

Between them Cuba and Algeria encompass most of the basic problems confronting the Marxists in the present stage of the colonial revolution. The disorientation displayed by the SLL in regard to these two revolutions flows from their wrong method of approach to the fundamental processes at work.

The root cause of the errors in both cases is the same: a loss of Marxist objectivity, disregard and depreciation of all other factors in the situation but the character of the official leadership. The subjective method of analysis results in over-simplified and sectarian conclusions.

There is no argument between us that the success of the colonial revolution requires leadership from a Marxist party and that the creation of such parties must be the primary and ceaseless aim of all Trotskyists. However, the recognition and declaration of this truth only formulates the problem; it far from provides the solution in practice. The real problem is this: how can these objectives be implemented and realized in cases where the masses have already plunged into anti-imperialist action, and even into armed struggle for independence, under other types of leadership? Today this includes almost all the undeveloped countries except Ceylon.

The Marxists have their own socialist program and aims which correspond to the basic needs of the workers and peasants which bring them into opposition to the bourgeois elements, and which distinguish them from the petty-bourgeois radicals in the national independence movements. They should participate in the forefront of the revolution at each stage -- including its nationalist stage in colonial and semi-colonial lands -- taking into account the concrete conditions of the struggle, in order to draw and direct the movement forward from its national-democratic beginning to its proletarian-socialist culmination. Throughout the process they have to make alliances with the most combative elements among the leaders and the ranks while bringing forward their own program and proposals in contending for leadership.

No single formula can suffice to settle the many practical and tactical problems encountered along the way. But one thing is sure. Any ultimatic approach to the living movement of the masses as it advances from one stage to the next, which refuses to recognize the real relations involved, would cut off the Trotskyists from influencing the struggle, directing it along the proper paths, and coming to its head. It would obstruct and render impossible the construction of the kind of party the revolutionary forces need.

Unfortunately, this is what the false positions of the SLL tend to do in the cases of Cuba and Algeria in particular and the colonial revolution as a whole!

Section 3

The Relations Between the Underdeveloped and Industrially Advanced Countries in the Strategy of the World Revolution

The SWP Convention Resolution of June 1961 states: "The strategic necessity of the world revolution at its present juncture is to combine into one mighty movement these three titanic historical processes; the anti-capitalist struggles of the workers in the highly industrialized imperialist centers; the anti-imperialist movements of the colonial peoples; and the anti-bureaucratic movements of the workers, peasants and intellectuals in the Soviet countries." (International Socialist Review, Summer, 1961, p. 90)

The SLL Resolution sets the matter in a narrower context: "It is upon this revolutionary crisis, with its dialectical relationship between the struggle of the workers in the advanced countries and of those oppressed by imperialism in the colonies and former colonies, that Marxists base their revolutionary strategy." (Labour Review, Winter 1961, p. 86)

Even if we set aside -- for the moment -- consideration of the international importance and far-reaching consequences of the de-Stalinization process in the Soviet bloc and the Communist parties, how should we view the interaction between the other two major components of world revolution?

It is a fact that the main arena and most dynamic sector of the world revolution is today located in the underdeveloped countries where imperialism and capitalism are breaking at their weakest links. The explosiveness and advances of the insurgent colonial movements from Asia through the Middle East and Africa to Latin America stand out in sharp contrast with the prolonged passivity of the labor movement in the advanced industrial countries where imperialism retains its strongholds.

This situation has induced some commentators to award the colonial revolutions a permanently paramount role in the struggle for world socialism, thereby canceling out as unrealistic for an indefinite time any prospects for the conquest of power by the workers in the advanced countries. They would make eternal a state of affairs based upon a correlation of class forces which obtains for a specific but limited period in the total process of the unfolding world revolution.

These proponents of the enduring primacy of the colonial revolution do not understand the dynamics of the permanent revolution on the world arena. They fail to grasp the meaning of the irregular rate with which the different constituent sectors of the anti-capitalist battalions enter into action or the central place occupied by the workers in the metropolitan centers in the over-all struggle for socialism.

The peoples of the underdeveloped areas and the workers in the industrialized countries are predestined allies in the fight against capitalism. The intolerable conditions imposed by imperialism upon the colonial masses have driven them into revolt before the workers in the metropolitan centers were prepared to settle accounts with their own capitalists.

The struggles of the colonial peoples for national sovereignty, economic emancipation and social progress form one of the mightiest factors in clearing the way for a new world order. By shaking the power, property and privileges of the imperialists, every forward step, every victory of the colonial masses thrusts international capitalism off balance and weakens its positions. Where, as in China, North Korea, North Viet Nam and now Cuba, these movements have wrenched loose from capitalism, they have directly and tremendously strengthened the world socialist cause.

The struggles of the colonial peoples not only deal blows to the imperialist rulers; their consequences can help prod the workers in the metropolitan countries into action on their own account, as the Algerian war has affected France and the Angolan uprising is upsetting Salazar's dictatorship in Portugal.

Even authoritative defenders of capitalism admit that since the end of the Second World War the socialist movement has been gaining at the expense of international capitalism. Today one-third of the human race has thrown off capitalist relations, and this trend is continuing. The impressive successes of the Soviet bloc in many fields and the advances of the colonial revolution have considerably weakened imperialism and shifted the balance of class forces on a world scale to its detriment.

But it is necessary to make a sober appraisal of the comparative strengths of the rival class camps from a world-historical standpoint. These achievements have not dislodged the monopolists and militarists from their central strongholds

or disarmed them. Entrenched imperialism retains all its capacities for destruction and has enough nuclear weapons to overkill humanity at least fifty times. Unless and until the hold of imperialism is broken on its own grounds -- above all, in the heartland of the United States -- the prospects for socialism remain uncertain and all its accomplishments to date are in peril.

The crux of the problem of world politics today does not lie in the changing relations between the Big Two super-states of the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., as so many think, but in the relations between the workers and capitalist rulers in the highly industrialized countries. This conclusion applies with equal force to the period we have passed through since the end of the Second World War, to the current deadlock in world politics, and to the period ahead.

The fundamental features of world politics for the past fifteen years have been shaped by two major facts. One is that the advances of the revolution have been restricted to the less developed parts of the globe. The other is that the workers in the more advanced countries have been unable to challenge or were held back from ending capitalist rule.

These circumstances have enabled the imperialist governments to carry on their cold war and witch-hunting policies without much internal opposition. They have helped strengthen the Stalinist bureaucrats by deterring the workers in the Soviet bloc from moving more vigorously to restore or to establish democratic proletarian regimes for fear of imperialist intervention. In addition, lack of support by the labor movement in the imperialist states has created great difficulties for the liberation struggles of the colonial peoples.

This point is crucially important because our emphasis upon the passivity and activity, the setbacks and successes, of the workers in the imperialist strongholds marks us off from all other tendencies in the radical movement and, above all, from those who adhere to the Stalinist view or a modification of it.

The followers of Khrushchev, for example, see socialism already achieved in the Soviet Union and bound to spread to the rest of the world through the economic, diplomatic and military ascendancy of the Soviet states. In line with this tenet, they assign in practice a subordinate role to the

independent class struggles of the workers in the West. The movement for socialism is going to be decided, they think, by the extension of the power of the Soviet bloc.

The Soviet advances are undeniably an immense component part of the drive toward socialism. They undermine world capitalism, reinforce the countries where capitalism has been abolished, popularize some of the ideas of socialism and its basic economic superiority over capitalism, and prepare invaluable positions for the future society.

But however impressive their proportions, however fast they accumulate, and however far-reaching their influence, these achievements, limited to the less developed sections of world society, cannot decide the destinies of either capitalism or socialism. Above all, they cannot substitute for the promotion of the struggle for workers power in the citadels of capitalism.

Why is this struggle central in changing the present world situation?

First, because the material requirements for the superior social system: technique, science, industry and its skilled workers are most highly concentrated in the advanced countries. So long as these remain in capitalist hands, humanity cannot arrive at socialism.

Second, the headquarters, the power-sources of the class enemy are located there. The victory of the workers in the West is no longer simply the necessary requisite for opening the gates to a higher stage of social development, as it was in the days of Marx and Engels, Lenin and Trotsky. With the advent of nuclear weapons it has become urgent for the very survival of humanity. For, so long as the monopolists hold down the workers in the West, the road to the socialist future remains mined with nuclear explosives and the whole human race is threatened with extermination.

The central role of the industrial workers of the imperialist countries in the struggle for socialism is underscored in the following two paragraphs from the SWP Resolution of June 1961:

"The confinement of revolutionary advances to the less developed parts of the world, together with the pronounced political lag in the West, has set its stamp upon our entire period. This negative feature, the most important element in the current reality, involves the citadels of imperialist

power as well as the proletarian forces that must be mobilized to take them. The key to the world situation is here. Not until the workers in the industrially advanced countries dominate the political arena with all their mighty social weight will the struggle for socialism be won.

"The chief problem is how to loosen the deadlock, break the stalemate, by overcoming the passivity of the workers in this decisive sector of the international class struggle. Until this is done, there can be no decisive change, no qualitative transformation in the world-wide relation of forces, no great new period of historical advancement opened up, no scoring of an irreversible victory for socialism, no guarantee that atomic war will not convert our planet into a radioactive desert." (International Socialist Review, Summer 1961, p. 92)

This most recent statement adopted by the national convention should serve to dispose of any allegations that the SWP has changed its fundamental position, that it now unduly inflates the role of the colonial revolution and underestimates the proletarian struggle in the advanced countries and has thereby lost or is in danger of losing the perspective of world revolution. It should be clear enough to convince anyone not predisposed to believe the contrary.

Section 4

How Can Mass Parties of Revolutionary Socialism Be Created?

Here is the very first point which the document of the Wohlforth-Phillips group counterposes to the positions of the SWP leadership. "We look to the working class and only the working class as the revolutionary force in modern society." (In Defense of a Revolutionary Perspective, p. 15.)

The notion that all other social forces form one reactionary mass counterposed to the working class is not Marxist. Scientific socialism teaches that the working class is the central, most consistent and reliable revolutionary power in modern society which leads in struggle and in the building of socialism all other potentially revolutionary forces such as the peasants, lower middle classes and the intellectuals. The declaration of the Wohlforth-Phillips group quoted above is especially dangerous and misleading in reference to the colonial revolutions in Asia, the Near East, Africa and Latin America where the armed struggle of the insurgent peasantry has played and will play a colossal role.

This same one-sided proposition provides the sociological premise for the sectarian political conclusions of this tendency and the criticisms they direct against us.

The chief charge in the indictment of the SWP, most sharply enunciated by the adherents of the SLL viewpoint in the Wohlforth-Phillips group, is that we are abandoning the concept of "the creation of revolutionary mass parties, that is, Trotskyist parties, as essential to the victory of socialism in every country in the world." (Ibid., p. 15)

This accusation appears all the more baseless in view of the Resolution adopted at the 1961 Convention which begins and ends with an affirmation and even accentuation of the decisive importance of revolutionary Marxist leadership in the struggle for socialism. A refutation beyond that scarcely seems necessary. But with these critics it is perhaps advisable to call attention to the 34 year history of the SWP and the career of its central cadres. The record is impeccable. Our party owes its origin and existence to the conscious recognition of the need to build a revolutionary-socialist party and the failure of other political organizations and tendencies to fulfill it. Some of our veterans have devoted half a century or more to the job of creating the required leadership, not only in this country but in the movements of the Second, Third and Fourth Internationals.

If such objective proofs from a long and honorable record fail to satisfy our newly arrived critics then the real source of the differences must be sought elsewhere. And, in fact, the disagreements do not center on recognizing the necessity for Trotskyist parties but rather on the ways and means by which they can be strengthened and expanded under the given conditions of the class struggle and the present size and situation of our own forces.

It is one thing to acknowledge that a revolutionary party is needed and quite another to assemble and weld together the forces to form it. Mere citation of abstract formulas, repetition of correct but commonplace phrases, quotations from Lenin, Trotsky -- and even Cannon (from what the critics regard as his better days)-- will not suffice.

The problem is far from new. Our cadres, nationally and internationally, have been grappling with it for decades and are still far from its ultimate solution. Moreover, at each big turn in applying practical steps towards its solution, we have encountered resistance from scholastic sectar-

ians and infantile leftists in our own ranks acquainted with important formulas but not so well equipped to apply them correctly and judiciously in the complex course of the class struggle.

During our first five years as Trotskyists (1928-1933) we had to build our original forces by recruiting cadres one by one mostly from the CP. When the triumph of Hitlerism and the rise of industrial unionism shook up the Social Democracy and the radical movement after 1933, larger opportunities opened up for us. In 1934 the American Trotskyists proposed and made a fusion with the American Workers Party and then in 1936 entered the Socialist Party.

Both of these tactical turns toward fusion with newly radicalized elements encountered fierce, unrelenting opposition from the sectarian Oehlerites who accused us -- that long ago! -- of giving up the principle of the independent revolutionary party. They, too, were not averse to leveling charges like liquidationism, accommodationism, betrayal of the banner and similar crimes. Finally, to submit it all to the test of events, they went their own way. The results are known. The Oehlerites vanished while U.S. Trotskyism increased its numbers and influence without surrendering a single one of its principles.

The Oehlerite diagnosis had as little substance then as its belated echo among the Wohlforth-Philips group has today. This was confirmed when, after a hard period of isolation enforced by the cold-war atmosphere, a serious threat of liquidationism did arise in our party with the appearance of the Cochran tendency in 1953. We quickly understood what they meant by their demand to "junk the old Trotskyism." We fought these genuine liquidators of an independent revolutionary party to a finish -- their finish, not ours!

More recent is the precedent of the Marcyites. They, who are so lenient toward the policies of the Russian, Chinese and Albanian bureaucracies, could not tolerate our activities in the regroupment ferment provoked by Khrushchev's revelations in 1956. They viewed our participation in the United Socialist ticket at the 1958 New York elections as inexcusable softness toward revisionist elements, the first step on the road to liquidation of the party. They did not wait for any further steps. Like the Oehlerites before them they split and founded their own little cult.

Echoes of the Marcyite criticisms of the SWP leadership can now be heard in the SLL Resolution warning against

"a search for a shorter way, for alliances which may impose accommodations to alien trends, for regroupments without solid theoretical bases, for programmatic adaptations to suit what are assumed to be American peculiarities..." (p. 110)

The regroupment experience from 1956 to 1959 tested our capacity to respond energetically and skillfully to shake-ups in radical circles and to the appearance of new currents moving in a revolutionary direction. The experience demonstrated that our cadres had not petrified into doctrinaires, despite prolonged isolation. The SWP alone of all the political groups on the left gained influence, numbers and prestige during this period which witnessed the disintegration of the CP and the dissolution of the Shachtmanites and Cochranites. Then in 1960 a strengthened SWP entered the Presidential campaign under its own banner and full program to conduct a memorable defense of the Cuban Revolution.

Both sides of these past internal struggles are pertinent to the current disputes in our movement. Hysterical cries about the dangers of "revisionism, accommodationism, centrism, and empiricism" (the keynotes resounding throughout the Wohlforth-Phillips document) will not divert us from the main task. The crucial problem now, as before, is not to reiterate the need for Trotskyist parties, which we have known for a long time and which we didn't learn from them, but rather how we can broaden our existing cadres into a strong and dominant revolutionary power.

The cadres, once organized, never cease recruiting new members on an individual basis. But a mass party cannot be created by this means alone. Other methods are needed to convert a propaganda group into a party of mass action and influence. Experience has shown conclusively that the way to bring together wider forces is through collaboration, fusions and unifications with leftward-moving currents freshly radicalized by the class struggle.

Limiting our review to the twentieth century, the history of Lenin's Bolshevik Party involved more than splits. It also involved unifications and attempted unifications with other tendencies in the Russian Social Democracy, including the Mensheviks. Five years after 1912 when the Bolsheviks first constituted themselves as an independent party, and in the midst of the 1917 revolution, they merged with Trotsky and his Inter-District group -- a fateful decision which helped pave the way for the victory in October. Even after the con-

quest of power, the Bolsheviks held the door of the party open for any signs of a revolutionary turn by the left Mensheviks or the Communist-Anarchists.

The Communist parties of Germany, England and the U.S. were all formed after the First World War, not by molecular accretions to the single original nucleus, but by fusions of a number of groups, none of which had originally been Bolshevik.

The same methods were employed by Trotsky in building the Fourth International during his lifetime. After the basic cadres of international Trotskyism had been consolidated, he initiated a series of discussions and negotiations with left-centrist elements in independent parties and others still connected with the Second and Third Internationals, in order to augment the forces of the movement.

Having learned from Lenin and Trotsky the indicated ways to change a small propaganda group into a mass party, we ought to be busy trying to put them into practice. The problem is by no means limited to the reunification of these parties and groups which today formally acknowledge the program of Trotskyism. If our movement should fail to foresee and consciously aim at collaboration and eventual unification with new people who are actually engaged in carrying through a socialist revolution, as in Cuba, or striving toward it as in Algeria, or just awakening to its necessity as in the U.S., and other countries, it would shrivel into a futile sect instead of becoming the growing revolutionary force that Trotsky envisaged and which we have sought to realize.

The necessity of creating a new revolutionary leadership of the working class was set forth in the Transitional Program of 1938 and repeated in the Manifesto of the Emergency Conference of the Fourth International in 1940. There it was explained that this would be a prolonged process in which the tiny minority of existing cadres would have to engage in many kinds of flexible tactical operations. New forces would have to be gained and the revolutionary mass party forged "in the flame of events."

To grow and really become mass leaders, the Trotskyists must take the initiative in reaching out toward all leftward-moving currents and individuals breaking loose from previous allegiances and becoming responsive to revolutionary action and ideas. The anti-Stalinist, anti-Khrushchevist and pro-Leninist tendencies emerging in the Communist parties, the

socialist revolutionists of superb quality in Cuba and other countries of the colonial revolution, the militant workers and youth who are repelled by reformism, pacifism, centrism and Stalinism in the industrialized lands, must be met with a sensitive and receptive attitude in order to win them to the program and outlook of the permanent revolution. To address dire warnings in our direction about the dreadful dangers of sliding into "pragmatic methods and theoretical accommodation," (Labour Review, p. 110) or losing our revolutionary perspective whenever we turn in the direction of new forces of this kind, does not help but only hinders success in building the world party of socialist revolution.

It would be ridiculous of us to refuse to grant others the right to come to revolutionary Marxism in their own way, which may not be ours. This applies above all to such figures as the heads of the Cuban July 26 Movement who have not simply talked about a socialist revolution but have made and are leading one.

We are duty bound to seek and find common ground with all such revolutionary tendencies in order to acquaint them with the heritage of Trotskyism -- and also to learn something from them. If the leaders of the Wohlforth group cannot see this from the history of Marxism and Leninism, they ought at least to be able to see it from their own political evolution. Not so long ago they were radical middle-class student-intellectuals in the left wing of the Shachtmanite group. Although they were far from being orthodox Trotskyists we did not hesitate for a moment to conclude an alliance with them in the struggle against their own right wing. We listened very carefully to their estimate of their own experiences and to their criticisms of us. We tried to learn from them. We accepted proposals they suggested. And even before they formally joined our party we proposed that they take over dominant direction of the youth movement.

If we had adopted toward them the same rigid, self-righteous attitude that they prescribe as the ideal norm, they would hardly be in a position today to lecture and scold us on the imaginary dangers of "a drift from a revolutionary world perspective." Nevertheless, we do not regret our flexible and open-minded approach to them nor will we refuse it to those who will come later. Let us hope that these others will learn more quickly and thoroughly that sectarianism, feeding upon unjustified organizational exclusiveness and scholasticism, can be as harmful to the healthy growth of a living movement as opportunism.

Section 5

Proposals for Reunifying World Trotskyism

The disunity of the international Trotskyist forces has lasted since 1953. We believe the time has come to end it.

In our opinion, three main reasons were responsible for the rupture nine years ago. One was an apparent tendency shown by the International Secretariat, under Pablo's direction, to conciliate with Stalinism and look upon the Soviet bureaucracy as capable of self-reformation into a political agency of the working class and to impose this view without prior discussion or authorization upon other sections of the movement. This tendency was most explicitly expressed by Clarke in our own party, by the I.S. failure to condemn the role of Soviet military intervention in the East German uprising, and by its attitude in the French General Strike of 1953.

Second was its apparent conception that a small literary circle could constitute a full-scale authoritative international leadership superseding and substituting itself for self-governing parties in the various countries. This view and method of operating tended to prevent leaders and cadres in various sections from standing on their own feet.

Third, the super-centralization of the I.S. resulted in arbitrary interference within those national sections which had leaders of different opinions accustomed to think for themselves on problems confronting their parties and the world movement. This was disruptive, provoking unnecessary splits.

Internationalism does not begin and end, as some think, with setting up a central authority, armed with disciplinary powers, to issue directives which the national organizations must unquestionably obey. In our opinion internationalism is essentially a process of comradely discussion and collaboration in which the constituent sections of the world movement exchange views and jointly work out, if possible, common positions on the most vital problems of world politics. Discipline in action follows from that, but cannot substitute for it.

Strong revolutionary parties and responsible leaderships can be created in each country only if they are truly representative of its ranks. The leaders must be raised up out of the party work and struggles, be trusted by the members and democratically chosen by them. The members are the only ones who can install and remove them. As Trotsky once

said: "Leadership is a natural growth out of a living party organism. It cannot be arbitrarily removed by outside forces without leaving a gaping wound that does not heal."

Later, considerable differences developed on the application and aims of the entrust tactic in relation to reformist and Stalinist parties.

Because of Pablo's dominating role in the International Secretariat, we labelled these tendencies "Pabloism" and, as orthodox Trotskyists, opposed them as vigorously as we could, supporting the faction organized under the guidance of the International Committee. We sought, however, to avoid falling into a posture of dead-end factionalism that would have barred a priori any possibilities of healing the rupture.

Since 1953 significant changes have taken place.

The first sign of a turnabout came in 1954 when the I.S. backed away from the pro-Stalinist tendencies it had inspired and protected in France, Great Britain and the U.S. This was certified by the break with Clarke, Lawrence and Mestre, three figures who pressed the I.S. line to its logical conclusion, the first abandoning Trotskyism, the latter two joining the CP with their followers.

Then in 1956 the I.S. reacted very differently to the Polish and Hungarian events than it did to the East German uprising and the French General Strike in 1953. They took positions substantially the same as the orthodox Trotskyists.

This narrowing of the political differences between the two factions of the world Trotskyist movement made it possible to seek reunification with the proper conditions and organizational safeguards. This was the origin and motivation of the SWP parity proposal of 1957. Unfortunately, this proposal was rejected by the I.S. Furthermore, while the English and French representatives on the International Committee supported the SWP unity proposal in words, they sabotaged it in practice.

Nevertheless the SWP continued to stand firm on the position that the diminishing of divergences on the key political issues of the day made unification desirable, although we did not think it would be easily or speedily brought about because of the obstacles on both sides. We rejected the view which the SLL began to develop that the political differences

between the two tendencies had widened and become so profound that co-existence in a single movement was unwarranted or impossible. If the necessary organizational guarantees were properly handled we believed co-existence in a common organization could prove workable.

Today the unfolding crisis of world Stalinism, the progressive development of the Cuban Revolution, and the renewed interest in Trotskyism make unification all the more urgent, and we intend to fight for it against any opposition from any source.

A cohesive world movement would be a powerful pole of attraction for Communist dissidents and other militants who are looking for the Leninist road. At the same time the political positions of the majority of the I.S., a number of I.C. affiliated groups, and some Trotskyist organizations affiliated with neither side on most of the vital issues of the day, from the de-Stalinization process and the Sino-Soviet conflict to the Cuban Revolution, are so close that they are indistinguishable to any unprejudiced reader of their respective publications. If the organization blocks can be surmounted, as we believe they can, there is no reason why unity cannot be achieved.

How can the existing deadlock be broken and what steps should be taken to promote the preconditions for reunification?

A good beginning has been made in the recent I.C. proposals for a Parity Commission of the two groups to organize an international discussion and conduct joint work for the rehabilitation of Trotsky, aid to Cuba, etc. This should be supplemented by exchange of articles in the press, coordination of work in different fields, and the renewal of collaboration between divided sections.

The international discussion should be carried on, not in order to produce new splits and splinters, but to facilitate the prospects of unification. All differences of opinion on the most important questions should be presented and made known to everyone. The course and outcome of the discussion should demonstrate precisely what the areas of agreement and disagreement are among the different tendencies within the world movement. The object should be not to freeze old lines of demarcation and to manufacture new divisions but to clear the way for all viewpoints to express themselves.

At the appropriate time a call should be issued for a World Re-unification Congress. This could be held within

a year or sooner, if possible. No group should be shut out of the preparation or participation in the Congress but ample room should be afforded for the expression of all tendencies. Every effort should be made to invite the participation of all Trotskyist groups formally outside the existing international organizations and to secure participation or observation by new interested revolutionary currents.

The aim should be to consolidate a homogeneous and integrated international leadership with adequate and democratic representation for every political minority at the Congress. There should be no ultimatism or exclusiveness in constituting the Congress; no effort to impose monolithism of thought in the world movement following the Congress; and no disciplinary measures against the national sections between the Unification Congress and its successor.

The Congress should reaffirm the necessity for a world movement governed by the organizational principles formulated in the Transitional Program adopted by the Founding Congress of the Fourth International. "Without inner democracy -- no revolutionary education. Without discipline -- no revolutionary action. The inner structure of the Fourth International is based on the principle of democratic centralism; full freedom in discussion, complete unity in action."

The tactical procedures in building the party in every country must be considered separately according to the conditions in each case.

The Congress should make it explicit, however, that entrism work must be accompanied by independent external expression of the full Trotskyist program and positions and that members must be recruited and educated around the full Trotskyist program. Also, that the ultimate aim of all entrism activities is the formation of mass parties on the basis of revolutionary Marxism.

These points can be included in documents to be prepared and adopted by the Congress on ways and means of constructing revolutionary mass parties.

Some of the differences of the past must be left for later discussion or historical adjudication. But these differences, which do not vitally affect current policy, should not be permitted to divert the forces in the I.C. and the I.S.

who really want unity, and are determined, as we are, to bring it about.

Unification, in the Lenin-Trotsky tradition, does not exclude, but rather presupposes further discussion, including the discussion of past differences. But all such discussions, in our opinion, can be conducted most fruitfully now in a united international movement.

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IN DEFENSE OF A REVOLUTIONARY PERSPECTIVE

-- A Statement of Basic Position

The decisive instrument of the proletarian revolution is the party of the class-conscious vanguard. Failing the leadership of such a party, the most favorable revolutionary situations, which arise from the objective circumstances, cannot be carried through to the final victory of the proletariat and the beginnings of the planned reorganization of society on socialist foundations. This was demonstrated most conclusively -- and positively -- in the 1917 Russian Revolution. This same principled lesson derives no less irrefutably -- even though negatively -- from the entire world experience of the epoch of wars, revolutions and colonial uprisings that began with the outbreak of the First World War in 1914.

"Theses on the American Revolution" --
adopted at the 12th National Convention
of the SWP in Chicago, November 15-18, 1946.

Introduction: The Method of Marxism

The contradictory character of the present historical period presents the gravest dangers, as well as the highest potentialities, to the Trotskyist movement. The combination of the great revolutionary upsurge throughout the colonial and non-capitalist sectors of the world with the seeming stabilization and progress of capitalism in its heartland; the prolonged crisis of proletarian leadership and domination of the world labor movement by social-democratic and Stalinist agents of capital combined with the continual resurgence of working class struggle; these are the terms of a situation in which our world movement constantly risks ideological disorientation and consequent political collapse as a revolutionary force. Only the fullest grasp of the dialectical materialist method, the constant development of Marxist theory, will enable our movement, in a perpetually changing reality, to preserve and develop its revolutionary perspective.

The essence of the political methodology of Marxism is to pose all problems actively from the specific and purposive viewpoint of the only consistently revolutionary class in modern society, the proletariat. This proletarian class viewpoint has its highest expression in the scientific theory of Marxism. Marxists, in other words, analyze all problems in terms of a rigorous and scientific theoretical structure. At the same time they are full participants in the historical process itself as the most advanced section of the working class and their action is guided by theory. Thus the conclusions derived from Marxist theory, and accordingly the theory itself, are continually being tested in practice.

"Revisionism" is the view that every new development requires the abandonment in practice of basic aspects of previously held theory.

Ultimately this drift from the dialectical materialist method leads to a drift from the working class itself. Marxism, on the contrary, develops through the continual integration of new elements, new realities, into its theoretical structure. It explicitly criticizes and rejects, where necessary, erroneous or outlived propositions, while maintaining at every point its character as a systematic, rigorous and unified scientific structure.

The pressure of the capitalist class is most intense precisely against this methodology of Marxism, which its ideological agents revile as dogmatic fanaticism. Unless Trotskyists are able to use and develop Marxist theory they, like many other Marxists before them, inevitably succumb to this pressure, fall into a vulgar, pragmatic, empiricist view of reality, and convert Marxian theory into a set of sacred dogmas useful only to provide labels which can be slapped on an unruly and uncomprehended reality.

Particularly in the present period, when the working class seems to the empiricist to be under the complete and everlasting domination of reformist bureaucracies, this ideological pressure is the result of a terribly strong social pressure. The Trotskyist groups feel small and isolated at the very moment that significant leftist forces are clearly in motion throughout the world. These forces, however, are under the leadership of non-proletarian tendencies: "left" social democrats, Stalinists of one or another variety, and "revolutionary" bourgeois or petty-bourgeois groups in the colonial countries.

The revolutionary party, if it does not possess a real comprehension of the methodology of Marxism, is condemned merely to reflect the contradiction between its own relative isolation and the mass upsurges. This reflective pose finds expression in an objectivist outlook where one views from afar an unfolding panoramic process from which the conscious active factor is completely divorced. Instead of posing the problem of principled struggle against these ultimately pro-capitalist leaderships with the goal of developing a new proletarian leadership, the party then seeks only to influence the movement as it is and in order to affect the policy of the existing leadership, enters into a process of political, organizational and theoretical accommodation to, and regroupment with, these alien tendencies.

Once the thread of Marxist theory is lost, the concepts of other social forces come to dominate the thought of socialists. The party thus comes to lose its revolutionary perspective -- it comes to see in other political and social groupings, rather than in the working class led by its Marxist vanguard, the leadership of the revolution. The Trotskyists relegate themselves to an auxiliary role in the historical process.

The world Trotskyist movement has been in a political crisis for over ten years. This crisis has been caused by the failure of theory and leadership in the Fourth International, resulting in the loss of a revolutionary perspective by important sections of the Trotskyist movement under conditions of isolation from the masses and under pressure from the capitalist class through its petty-bourgeois agents

within the labor movement. Only the re-establishment of a revolutionary perspective in our world movement and the definitive rooting out of defeatist, accommodationist, and essentially liquidationist politics from our ranks can lay the basis for the rebuilding of our world cadres and thus for the victory of the world revolution.

It was Pablo's theory of accommodation to alien tendencies that led those Trotskyists determined to preserve a revolutionary perspective to break with the International Secretariat (IS) in 1953, a move crippling to the International, but deemed by the party at that time to be essential to the preservation of a principled revolutionary movement. However, the continued paralysis of our world forces since that time and the present deep division within the International Committee (IC) are signs that the forces that were operating on Pablo were also affecting, to a lesser degree, the Socialist Workers Party. With the passage of the eight years since the split the signs of this same disease in our own ranks are reaching major proportions. We feel that this process has now reached a point where resistance is essential.

In this statement we are attempting to assess the degree to which this empiricist methodology and these accommodationist views have penetrated our party and what we feel can be done to reaffirm our revolutionary world perspective. It is only on this political basis that we will be able to rebuild our world forces. This statement is our contribution to the forthcoming party plenum which, in our opinion, should prepare the party for participation in the discussion now going on in our world movement. As this discussion is preliminary to the forthcoming World Congress of Trotskyism, called by the International Committee of the Fourth International, our political participation in it is essential.

The Nature of Pabloism

Pabloism is essentially a revisionist current within the Trotskyist movement internationally which has lost a revolutionary world perspective during the post-war period of capitalist boom and the subsequent relative inactivity of the working class in the advanced countries. The Pabloites tend to replace the role of the working class and its organized vanguard -- that is, the world Trotskyist movement -- with other forces which seem to offer greater chances of success. Fundamental to their political approach is an "objectivist" world outlook which sees capitalism collapsing and Stalinism shattering under the impact of an abstract panoramic world historic process, thus removing the necessity for the conscious intervention of the working class through its Marxist vanguard. The role of the Trotskyists is relegated to that of a pressure group on the existing leaderships of the workers' organizations which are being swept along by this revolutionary process.

In its methodology the Pablo group is essentially empiricist. It reacts to the constantly changing world political situation with seemingly radical changes of political line but without recognizing, much less giving a theoretical accounting for, the previous errors. Underlying these reversals, however, is a fundamental proposition:

the existence of a "new world reality" in which the balance of forces has shifted definitively in favor of socialism and in which, accordingly, resolution of "the crisis of proletarian leadership" is no longer the sine qua non of the world socialist revolution. On this basis, the Pabloites have consistently maintained their objectivist approach, and have proposed one substitute after another for the revolutionary role of the working class and its Marxist vanguard.

In 1949 Pablo put forward his theoretical conception of "centuries of deformed workers states." Reacting impressionistically to the expansion of Stalinism in East Europe and China he envisioned a whole historic epoch during which bureaucratized states of the Stalinist type, not workers' democracy, would prevail. This theory was as deeply revisionist as that of Burnham and Shachtman, which projected a historical epoch for "bureaucratic collectivism." Like the Shachtman-Burnham theory, this theory denied a revolutionary perspective for our movement and saw in Stalinism the objective expression of the revolutionary forces in the world.

Soon thereafter, Pablo, in his "War-Revolution Thesis" made this theoretical abandonment the basis for a new political line. World War III, he forecast, would break out in the immediate future. This war would be essentially a class war. It would result in the victory of the Red Army (aided by the European workers led by the Communist parties), and the formation in Germany, France and England of "deformed workers states." The experience of East Europe and China would be repeated in the advanced capitalist countries of the West. Therefore, in the short time remaining before the onset of the "War-Revolution," it was essential for the Fourth International to integrate itself, on any terms and at all costs, into the Stalinist parties (where there were mass parties) which would soon "project a revolutionary orientation" and emerge as the objective leaders of the European revolution.

These concepts (never subsequently repudiated by Pablo) were present in somewhat concealed form, in the main theses of the Third World Congress of the F.I. (1951) and immediately thereafter were openly revealed as the practical orientation of the Pablo leadership. During the period around the Third World Congress, Pablo carried on a worldwide factional battle against the French, British and Canadian sections of the world movement in order to develop forces capable of carrying out this essentially liquidationist entry into the Stalinist parties. In this country the Cochran grouping was a legitimate reflection of Pabloism. There were two elements involved in the Cochran group. The Bartell-Clarke wing wished to adapt to the Stalinist movement in this country while the Cochran wing wished to adapt to the labor bureaucracy. Both sections of this liquidationist minority shared with Pablo the same objectivist outlook which no longer gave to our world forces any independent role.

The "Fourth (1954), Fifth (1957) and Sixth (1961) World Congresses" (these were not "world congresses" but rather meetings of a revisionist faction of the world movement) of the Pabloites have all expressed this outlook. There were, of course, important political shifts as the Pabloites responded impressionistically to the changes in the

world situation. The later congresses do not emphasize the imminence of war, nor is everything banked on the onrolling sweep of Stalinism. Rather they tend to see the Stalinist bureaucracy collapsing automatically without the necessity of our own conscious intervention.

As a new substitute for the working class and its vanguard, the colonial revolution tends to replace the Stalinist bureaucracy, damaging the critical importance of the advanced working class and its struggles. The Sixth World Congress formally declares that the new "epicenter of World Revolution is in the colonial sector." Thus socialism is now advancing on the tide of leaderless revolution in the colonial countries.

In 1949 it was a form of Stalinism that would prevail for centuries; in 1951 it was imminent war that would force the Stalinists to project a revolutionary orientation; today it is the colonial revolution that is unfolding automatically. At no time has it been the working class organized under Marxist leadership that is central in the world revolutionary strategy of Pabloism.

On the tactical level the Pabloites generalized their deep entrnist perspective to include the social democratic and centrist parties in Europe and the national bourgeois formations in the colonial areas. They entered these parties with an adaptationist political line; they were seeking to pressure the leadership of the centrist opposition into becoming the revolutionary leadership; they were not entering in order to build a new alternative revolutionary leadership based on the rank-and-file workers.

The role of Pabloism in England and in Belgium expresses clearly in action the true nature of this tendency. In England our comrades have devoted many years to the development of an alternative revolutionary leadership to both the right-wing Labour Party leadership and the Stalinists. They have based their tactics at all times on the rank-and-file class conscious workers.

The Pabloites in Britain, with the full support of the IS center, have had another orientation. They have attempted to function as a pressure group on centrist trends within the BLP. Thus they state in Socialist Fight (organ of the English Pabloites): "Above all pressure must be applied at Branch and district level" and the Fourth International (Fall, 1960) sees "The central task of the British revolutionary Marxists" not as the building of an alternative revolutionary leadership, but rather "regrouping inside the Labour Party, all these scattered forces of the labor left." When our British comrades organized the Socialist Labour League, the Pabloites joined the hue and cry of the BLP leadership and the capitalist press and attacked them for "irresponsible adventurism."

Since the formation of the SLL, our comrades have continued to gain substantially within the BLP especially from the youth. The Pabloites, on the other hand, have been unable to build an effective group in England. The British experience has dramatically proved

that only an entry policy based entirely on an attempt to create an alternative revolutionary leadership representing the true interests of the rank-and-file workers can build an effective force. Such a policy is based fundamentally on the maintenance of a revolutionary world perspective for the working class under Marxist leadership. The policy of the Pabloites in Britain is a reflection of their abandonment of a revolutionary world perspective; their seeing in others the forces with revolutionary potential. Thus the differences between Pabloism and Trotskyism in England are fundamental, not simply tactical.

The same lesson can be learned from the Belgian experience. In Belgium the Pabloites have had a group functioning for several years under the leadership of one of the IS's central international figures. This group has devoted its energies to seeking positions of influence within centrist circles in Belgium rather than attempting to develop roots on a rank-and-file basis in the Belgian working class. During the 1960-61 Belgian General Strike, the most important radical development on the Continent in several years, the Belgian Pabloites were unable to put forward a revolutionary political line independent of the centrist circles they were working in. Thus Trotskyism played no independent political role in the revolutionary events and the strike generally failed because of the inadequacy of the centrist trade union leaders that the Pabloites were supporting. The inability of the Pabloites to play an independent role in these crucial events was simply an expression of a central political outlook which places little emphasis on the revolutionary role of our movement.

After 12 years of experimentation the Pabloites have little to show for their efforts. The European movement has been decimated under their leadership. The Latin-American sections of the IS are small and weak. The only organizations on the continent having real working class roots are affiliated with the IC. In Asia all they have is the formal affiliation of the ISSP (Ceylon) which, over the years, has been evolving in an opportunist direction and at present has reached the point of giving critical support to the bourgeois government.

The International Committee, despite its organizational weaknesses and political problems that have plagued it (due to lack of clarity on Pabloism in some groups), contains the only sections of our world movement that have shown substantial, solid growth. The development of the British section from a small group into a sizable, effective organization with deep roots in the working class and significant support among the youth is a major development for the whole world movement. The growth of the new Japanese section and of the Chileans and Peruvians was based on their break with Pablo.

The experience of our Chilean group illustrates this pattern. In 1954 the Chilean Trotskyist group split over the decision of the "Fourth World Congress" that it should carry out a deep entry tactic in the SP. Fifty members of the group followed the IS's instructions and entered the SP while only five comrades refused to enter and broke

with the IS. These five comrades became the nucleus of the present section of the IC in Chile. This section today is the strongest Trotskyist force in Chile with important roots in the Chilean trade union movement and a very fine potential for the future.

The Argentine section of the IC, however, like the LSSP, has fallen into an essentially Pabloite political line. Its adaptation to the current left capitalist leadership of the Argentine working class has brought it to glorify Peron and to present itself merely as a left-Peronista movement. Organizational advantage bought at such a price can only pave the way for ultimate disaster. The evolution of the Argentine group can be attributed to the failure of the IC to carry through the political struggle against Pabloism in the period since the 1953 split.

Our whole approach to the problem of our world movement must therefore begin with an understanding that Pabloism is a revisionist current which negates the essential revolutionary content of Trotskyism while still clinging to a formal adherence to Trotskyism. It is as much a revision of Trotskyism as Kautskyism was of Marxism. The present division of our world forces is the most fundamental and longest lasting political crisis in the whole history of our world movement. What is at issue is the preservation of Trotskyism itself!

In 1953, our party, in the "Open Letter" (Militant, 11/11/53), declared that "The lines of cleavage between Pablo's revisionism and Orthodox Trotskyism are so deep that no compromise is possible either politically or organizationally." The political evaluation of Pabloism as revisionism is as correct now as it was then and must be the basis for any Trotskyist approach to this tendency.

The Differences with the SLL

Over the past year, differences within the IC forces that had been smouldering for some time broke out into the open. Differences first began to crop up between the SWP and the Socialist Labour League over conflicting approaches towards Pabloism. The SLL insisted that the time had come to deal with Pabloism politically rather than simply with organizational unity proposals. The British felt that a political approach must begin with an understanding of Pabloism as a revisionist political current. They therefore insisted that a full political discussion must precede any unity moves internationally, for the unification of the world movement must be based firmly on a sound principled political program.

The SWP majority defended exactly the opposite approach. They saw political differences between themselves and the Pabloites growing less. Quite logically, from this point of view, they therefore emphasized the organizational basis for unity, taking it for granted that the political basis existed.

When a situation occurs within our world movement creating confusion on such an essential question as the role of the movement itself, it is necessary to prepare a document which presents the essential views

of Trotskyism in application to the current world situation. Then it is possible, on the basis of discussion around such a basic document, to determine exactly wherein lie the agreements and disagreements in our world forces. The SLL took on this responsibility and prepared its International Resolution.

This resolution puts forward all the essentials of a revolutionary perspective. It starts with the centers of world capitalism, understanding that it is the struggle of the working class in these centers which is critical for the development of the World Revolution. It replaces ephemeral hopes in an automatic revolutionary process in the colonial countries with revolutionary optimism about the future struggles of the working class in the advanced countries. It sees in the working class the only force in modern society that can overthrow capitalism on a world-wide basis. It sees the world Trotskyist movement as the only movement which represents the true interests of the working class -- as the only movement capable of carrying through the world revolution. It sees in the existing cadres of world Trotskyism the essential conscious factor in the modern world. It relates all revolutionary tactics, all revolutionary strategy to the development of the working class and its vanguard -- the world cadres of Trotskyism. It puts Trotskyism, embodied in the living human beings organized into existent groups and parties, back into our historical perspective.

Significantly, the majority responded to this initiative, not by warmly supporting this important effort, but by producing an international resolution of its own. While the SWP document is not designed as a worked out theoretical alternative to the position of the SLL -- it is equivocal, and contains in eclectic fashion many absolutely correct propositions -- as a whole it expresses a different political position from that of the SLL. Certainly, if it did not, it would be difficult to explain why the majority wrote the resolution immediately after receiving the SLL resolution. It is also significant that the majority rejected minority amendments containing the same essential line as the SLL resolution because, they claimed, these amendments projected a line contradictory to the majority resolution.

The SWP Majority's International Line

The majority international resolution marks an important political step in the direction of the objectivist international outlook and methodology of the Pabloites. The resolution begins by claiming that the victory of the Chinese Revolution "definitively altered the world relation of forces in favor of socialism." This concept permeates the document and is repeated throughout in one form or another.

The conception of a qualitative transformation of the world situation is the essence of the Pabloite "new world reality" which can be found in the documents of the "Third, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth World Congresses." In our 1953 resolution "Against Pabloist Revisionism" (Discussion Bulletin A-12, November, 1953), which analyzed the central document of Pablo's "Fourth World Congress," "The Rise and Decline of Stalinism," we rejected this concept, stating: "A rounded review and realistic resume of the net result of the march of the international

revolution from 1943 to 1953 leads to this conclusion. With all its achievements and greater potentialities, the failure of the revolution to conquer in one of the major industrialized countries has thus far prevented the revolutionary forces of the working class from growing strong enough to overwhelm the Kremlin oligarchy and give irresistible impetus to the disintegration of Stalinism. There has not yet been such a qualitative alteration in the world relationship of class forces.

"Up to date the counter-revolutionary intervention of the bureaucracy itself in world politics has forestalled the objective conditions for such a consummation. It caused the revolution to recede in Western Europe, weakened the working class in relation to the class enemy, and facilitated the mobilization of the world counter-revolution. The struggle between the forces of revolution and counter-revolution is still inconclusive, and far from being settled. This very inconclusiveness, which it strives to maintain, at the present time works to the advantage of the Kremlin."

This brings us to the heart of the matter. In 1953 our party rejected the concept that the balance of forces is now in favor of revolution. We did this because, in our opinion, the decisive factor was the conscious element. As long as the working class does not come to power in an advanced country, the revolutionary forces cannot be dominant on a world scale. Stalinism and social democracy are essential forces preventing the working class from coming to power in these countries -- therefore it is our task to defeat them and create a Trotskyist vanguard movement of the working class. This was our strategic orientation in 1953.

Today the SWP resolution claims that the forces of revolution are dominant despite the fact that the working class since 1953 has not come to power in an advanced country and our own forces remain weak. Thus, consciously or not, the SWP leadership has accepted the central theoretical position of Pabloite revisionism.

This objectivism is reflected in other ways throughout the document. The resolution tends to minimize the danger of Stalinism as a world counter-revolutionary force. In fact it goes so far as to suggest that Khrushchev is taking a "left turn," allying himself with the colonial revolution. Without specifying the counter-revolutionary objectives and methods of Kremlin diplomacy, the resolution "recognizes" that "in the diplomatic arena, since the death of Stalin, the Soviet Union has displayed growing boldness and flexibility, scoring gains among the 'neutral' countries through aid programs and through exposures of Washington's aggressive policies" and that "in this 'new reality' of enormous pressures, inviting openings and deadly dangers, the Soviet bureaucracy has had to revise and adapt and shift its line." In the Plenum discussion on Cuba last year Comrade Stein made the same point in a more blatant fashion, stating: "...The Soviet Union is compelled today, instead of playing a counter-revolutionary role -- to place itself on the side of revolution." (SWP Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 22, No. 2, p. 21.)

In 1953 the Pabloites took an identical stand in their resolution. They did not claim that Stalinism was no longer a counter-revolutionary force -- rather they claimed it no longer could be effective as a counter-revolutionary force because of the objective sweep of revolution. At that time we stated clearly:

"It is true that world conditions militate against the Kremlin's consummation of any lasting deals with imperialism or its bargains with the national bourgeoisie. But the objective consequences of its attempts to maintain the status quo or arrive at such agreements have much more than 'limited and ephemeral' practical effects. Its maneuvers help block the advance of the revolutionary movement and adversely affect the world relationship of forces. The bureaucracy together with its agencies is not simply a passive reflector and acted-upon object of the world relationship of forces; the bureaucracy acts and reacts on the international arena as a potent factor in shaping the latter ... Not only is the vanguard miseducated by this minimizing of the pernicious results of the Kremlin's course, but it is disarmed in the struggle to dispel illusions about Stalinism among the workers in order to break them from Stalinist influence... The fact that the Soviet bureaucracy couldn't 'smash and arrest' the Yugoslav and Chinese revolutions where the revolutionary tide broke through its dikes, doesn't wipe out the fact that elsewhere, by and large, the bureaucracy succeeded in turning the revolutionary tide in the opposite direction. This has influenced the relationship of forces for an entire period."

In addition to minimizing the real danger of Stalinism as a counter-revolutionary world force, the resolution accepts the Pabloite view that the changes in the world objective situation have ended the isolation of the Soviet Union and declares bluntly: "The Soviet Union is no longer isolated internationally." But in 1953 we stated:

"How then, can it be so unqualifiedly asserted in the resolution that the isolation of the S.U. has disappeared? The isolation has been modified and mitigated, but not at all removed. The pressures of the imperialist environment weigh upon the entire life of the Soviet people."

At that time we insisted that only the breakthrough of revolution in Western Europe could end the isolation of the Soviet Union.

Much of the treatment of Stalinism in the resolution is given over to speculation on the fissures within the bureaucracy with the "break-up of Stalinist monolithism." However, in 1953 we clearly stated:

"The proposition that no significant segment of the bureaucracy will align itself with the masses against its own material interests does not mean that the bureaucracy would not manifest deep cleavages under the impact of an uprising. Such disorganization, disintegration and demoralization was observable in East Germany. But the function of a revolutionary policy is to organize, mobilize and help lead the masses in their struggle, not to look for, even less to bank upon any break in the bureaucracy."

In 1953 we reasserted the essential concept of the Transitional Program that the destruction of Stalinism required the conscious intervention and revolutionary struggle of the working class both within the Soviet countries and in the advanced countries. And for the victory of such struggle a Marxist vanguard party was essential. Much is made in the 1953 statement of the fact that while the Pabloite resolution formally mentions the political revolution it does not specifically refer to our strategy of creating Trotskyist parties in these countries. The current SWP resolution not only does not mention the need to create these parties -- it does not even mention the political revolution. Instead the restoration of Soviet democracy is treated simply as a reflex of the objective changes in the world situation and within the Soviet Union:

The majority resolution formally states that the struggle of the working class in the advanced countries is the critical struggle and thus differentiates itself from the position of the Pabloite "Sixth World Congress" resolutions. However, this correct proposition, far from being central to the resolution and its perspectives for revolutionary strategy, was in fact inserted only after the rest of the document had been written. Thus in contrast to the uncritical optimism pervading its sections on the colonial revolution, the sections on the advanced countries are mere commentary, lacking in revolutionary analysis and perspective. In fact the SLL resolution treats the American scene and its relationship to the world revolution more fully and more adequately than does the American document itself.

Our central task of creating Marxist parties in all countries of the world is not given proper emphasis in the resolution. Within a general context which gives main weight to objective factors which have already tipped the scales in favor of revolution, it is stated: "Now mighty forces, gathering on a world scale, project the creation of such parties in the very process of revolution." While every effort must be made to create revolutionary parties during a revolutionary uprising, it is also the duty of our movement to explain that this is no simple task. The failure of the European revolution following the victorious Russian Revolution was due to the failure to create effective Marxist parties in the various European countries prior to the development of revolutionary situations. The resolution does not make this point; rather the implication is that in the "new world reality" the "mighty forces" (what forces? the objective tide of revolution?) will create the needed party automatically as the revolution unfolds. This is indeed a serious weakness of the resolution and another expression of an "objectivist" outlook which minimizes the importance of the arduous task of creating the revolutionary vanguard.

It is our opinion that the international resolution of the majority represents a serious departure from the essential views of our movement in the direction of the revisionist political thinking of the Pabloites. This political move has been taken hesitatingly, ambiguously, and therefore the resolution is eclectic. But the move is nevertheless being taken. The failure of the party to fight politically against Pabloism internationally is now leading to the growth of Pabloite methods of thinking in our own movement.

Cuba, China, and Guinea

Pabloite methods of thought have penetrated different layers of the party in differing degrees and around different political questions. For instance, the entire national leadership of the party was swept up in the Cuban events and lost sight of the basic strategic approach that our movement must take towards such a revolution. The party's whole orientation was towards the governing apparatus in Cuba and its leaders. It was hoped that through its virtually uncritical support to this government, the leadership could be won over wholesale to Trotskyism. A Trotskyist approach to Cuba, however, must begin with the working class, not the governmental apparatus. The Trotskyists should remain politically independent of the Castro government even though they may deem it tactically advisable to enter the single party. The Trotskyists should urge the workers to consciously struggle for democratic control over the governing apparatus rather than expecting the government to hand over such control to them on its own. Our strategic orientation in Cuba, as everywhere, should be based on the workers themselves rather than on other forces which we hope will be transformed into Trotskyists by mass pressure.

Others in the party have begun to carry out the logical implications of this Pabloite approach in other areas, and the results of their efforts should pull up short every party member. For instance, Arne Swabek and John Liang have shown that they see the logic of the majority's position better than does the majority itself: Mao could, like Castro, produce a real workers' state without relying on the workers support in the revolution, without workers democracy, and without, presumably, a Marxist party either. Swabek and Liang proclaimed the Chinese CP to be no longer Stalinist, and if not exactly Trotskyist, something well on the road to that. They declared that the Chinese workers state is not deformed, but genuine; and that the slogan of the political revolution as applied to China must be withdrawn. Here again, on a much more significant scale, workers democracy -- worker's control -- is regarded as optional and accessory, the role of the working class is undermined, and the revolutionary task is assigned to another, hostile political tendency. Making Mao an honorary Trotskyist does not change the significance of this position.

Frances James, in an article issued during the Cuba discussion, suggests that Guinea is becoming a workers state. In the short time since she wrote this article events have proved how disastrous such impressionism can be. Sekou Toure has imprisoned Communist and other opponents, has suppressed an important teachers' strike, and has launched an attack against "Marxist disruptors." Frances James' line in Guinea or Ghana or Mali would be completely suicidal for our forces there.

These approaches towards Cuba, China and Guinea are but concrete expression of the Pabloite objectivist line. Neither the party leadership on Cuba, nor Swabek on China, nor James on Guinea, have a revolutionary orientation which starts with the working class and the task of organizing its Trotskyist vanguard.

The Drift from the International

The essential differences in our party and our world movement are brought into focus by one question, the question of the International. As accommodationism makes further inroads into the SWP, the political break with Pablo is more and more seen as easily remediable. Our differences with Pablo, say the majority, are narrowing. This is true, but it is the American majority that has shifted its ground, not the IS. As Pabloism becomes more and more acceptable to the majority, conversely, the SLL with its firm adherence to the Trotskyist position and the principles of the Open Letter, becomes an embarrassment. It is obvious from the published exchange of letters between the SLL and the SWP, from James P. Cannon's "Letters to the Center," from the political critique of the SWP international resolution presented by the SLL within the IC, that our long established and deep-rooted solidarity with the British section has been seriously eroded. That such a situation should be allowed to develop without any discussion whatsoever within the ranks of our party is an intolerable state of affairs.

It was the political inspiration of the SWP with its Open Letter which brought the IC into existence. When we issued the Open Letter we took upon ourselves the responsibility for the split in the International. Yet, as the British have charged and documented, we have been politically neglectful of it since its founding. Now when a most fundamental political conflict breaks out between the party majority and the British section, the majority does everything it can to prevent a political discussion of the serious political questions that have been raised. The majority international resolution was originally prepared as a contribution to the international discussion. The British comrades have presented their opinions of this resolution -- now it is the responsibility of the party majority to defend its political line within the world movement. The British have responsibly brought their critique of the SWP resolution to the International Committee. This Committee, with only one opposing vote, expressed its opposition to the line of the SWP Resolution at its July meeting. Then in December the IC voted in favor of the general line of a revised version of the SLL international resolution.

We fully support the general line of the international resolution of the International Committee of the Fourth International, though we disagree with major aspects of its evaluation of the Cuban Revolution. We are in fundamental political solidarity with the International Committee and its sections throughout the world. It is this resolution and this solidarity which are the principal bases upon which we stand. Where does the majority stand? Why will it not carry out its political responsibility to defend its views within a world organization it did so much to bring into existence?

If the present drift of the SWP continues unchecked it will lead to one of two equally disastrous situations. The SWP majority may carry its political coming together with the Pabloites to its proper conclusion and announce its solidarity with the IS or some faction within it as against the IC. Or, the SWP majority may drift away from

any political relationship with the IC or the IS. Thus it would break from its 30 years' tradition of political solidarity and support to the party of the world revolution, the Fourth International. Such a drift away from the world organization of Trotskyism would be a sign that a provincialism which has not been completely absent from the SWP in the past has taken a profound grip on the organization, a grip which cannot but be disastrous for the party's domestic course as well. It was the essentially provincial outlook of the LSSP, its real lack of deep concern or connection with the Fourth International, which has contributed to its present opportunistic domestic course. Such inevitably will be the future of the SWP if it continues to drift away from the Fourth International. A return to real support and political participation in the International is the indispensable first step toward the reaffirmation of a revolutionary world perspective.

Theses on the American Revolution

In 1946 the Socialist Workers Party issued an important document, the "Theses on the American Revolution." This document projected a revolutionary course for the party, and it was the ideas contained in this document -- the concept that all tactics, all strategy must be related to the goal of creating the Leninist party that will lead the American Revolution -- which kept the party going over the difficult years that lay ahead. By 1952 an important section of the central party cadres had succumbed to the pressures of isolation and prosperity and had lost this revolutionary perspective. Comrade Cannon put forward this document once again and insisted quite correctly that despite its inaccurate evaluation of the economic perspectives of American capitalism its essentials were still correct and should be the central policy of our party. He called for the re-education of the party cadres around the principles embodied in the "Theses."

The way in which this question arose in 1952-53 is quite instructive for the problems which our party faces today. The Cochranites claimed that the decisions of the Pabloite-dominated Third World Congress brought the "Theses" into question and in fact superseded them. Thus, they saw in the world view of Pabloism the theoretical basis for jettisoning a revolutionary perspective in this country.

At first the party majority attempted to answer this attack on the very fundamentals of the program of our party by affirming support for both the "Theses" and the Third World Congress decisions. Thus, they seemed to hold that the Third World Congress decisions held for the rest of the world while the "Theses" held for the U.S. This was an untenable position politically, for the "Theses" themselves theoretically destroy any concept of "American exceptionalism," making it clear that the laws of world capitalist development hold sway here too. Thus, if the "Theses" apply to the U.S. they must also hold for other advanced capitalist countries, and the same holds for the Third World Congress decisions. This theoretical bind was finally resolved when the party majority decided to carry through a political struggle against Pabloism on a world scale in order to maintain its domestic revolutionary perspective.

Today again we face a situation where a world revolutionary perspective is being challenged -- this time by the party majority itself. It is our strong conviction that the party cannot maintain a revolutionary perspective in this country while at the same time slighting a world revolutionary perspective. This contradiction between a domestic and an international perspective will in time be resolved. For the sake of the world revolutionary movement, it must be resolved by projecting the revolutionary orientation of the "Theses" on an international scale rather than by putting the "Theses" on the shelf and allowing an accommodationist spirit to penetrate our work in this country as well.

So far the party maintains its revolutionary perspective for this country. However, there is much confusion in the party as to exactly where we are going and at times it seems as if the party is drifting from campaign to campaign not fully in command of its own political course. We must at all times realize that we seek to become the vanguard of the American working class. This means that all our work must be related to the central task of developing roots in the trade union movement and in the Negro movement. This is not simply a matter of winning recruits here or there; rather it is the development of the cadre itself as leaders of the working class in its struggle against the capitalist class and against its own false leaders.

Some in the party attempt to counterpose hollow "party building" to this essential task of building the party by developing its roots in the class. These people tended to view our regroupment or Cuba defense work as a substitute for rather than as an auxiliary to our central tasks. We do not claim that these tendencies to drift from a revolutionary perspective in this country have become dominant in the party. But we do feel strongly that complacency about our party and its perspectives would be very harmful at this time.

Where We Stand

In sum, we believe that the failure of the SWP leadership to apply and develop the theory and method of Marxism has resulted in a dangerous drift from a revolutionary world perspective. The adoption in practice of the empiricist and objectivist approach of the Pabloites, the minimization of the critical importance of the creation of a new Marxist proletarian leadership in all countries, the consistent underplaying of the counter-revolutionary role and potential of Stalinism, the powerful tendencies toward accommodation to non-proletarian leaderships particularly in the colonial revolution -- these pose, if not countered, a serious threat to the future development of the SWP itself.

What do we counterpose to this drift?

(1) We look to the working class and only the working class as the revolutionary force in modern society.

(2) We consider the creation of revolutionary Marxist parties, that is, Trotskyist parties, as essential to the victory of socialism in every country of the world.

(3) We call for the reviving of the traditional Trotskyist emphasis on workers democracy as an essential part of our program and propaganda.

(4) We hold that Stalinism is counter-revolutionary in essence, that it is the deadly enemy of revolution, that it still remains the major threat within the working-class camp to the success of the world revolution.

(5) For these reasons we call for full support to the general line of the International Resolution of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

(6) We call for a political struggle against Pabloism internationally and Pabloite ideas and methodology within our own ranks, recognizing in Pabloism a centrist disease which counsels liquidationism to our world cadres.

(7) We favor the reunification of the Fourth International on the political basis of a reaffirmation of the fundamentals of Trotskyism and the application of these fundamentals to the current world situation. We call for support to any step which furthers the international discussion process, for this brings us closer to our goal of a healthy, strengthened international movement capable of expanding into a powerful world force.

(8) We call for a return to true internationalism, in the spirit of which our party was built. We must fully participate in the discussion process now going on within our world movement; we must give full support to the International Committee and its struggle to rebuild our scattered world forces. We must realize that we can build an effective party in the United States only by playing an important political role in the development of our world movement.

(9) We must continue to educate the entire membership in the spirit of the fundamental principles laid down in the "Theses on the American Revolution." We hold that those fundamentals are as valid today as they were in 1946, and they were in 1952. We hold that those fundamentals are internationalist to the core.

(10) Finally, we regard the SWP with the YSA, in the political sense, as the American section of our world party. In our party are to be found the most principled and developed Marxists in our country and the embodiment of the rich experiences of our 30 year battle for Leninism and Trotskyism. In presenting our views to the party on these critical issues we are acting in the most fundamental interests of the party and the world revolutionary movement. This document, taken with the IC International Resolution, expresses the essentials of the political outlook to which our party must return.

We approach our party in the spirit of the "Theses on the American Revolution" which concludes as follows:

"The revolutionary vanguard party, destined to lead this tumultuous revolutionary movement in the U.S., does not have to be created. It already exists, and its name is the SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY. It is the sole legitimate heir and continuator of pioneer American Communism and the revolutionary movements of the American workers from which it sprang. Its nucleus has already taken shape in three decades of unremitting work and struggle against the stream. Its program has been hammered out in ideological battles and successfully defended against every kind of revisionist assault upon it. The fundamental core of a professional leadership has been assembled and trained in the irreconcilable spirit of the combat party of the revolution.

"The task of the SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY consists simply in this: To remain true to its program and banner; to render it more precise with each new development and apply it correctly in the class struggle; and to expand and grow with the growth of the revolutionary mass movement, always aspiring to lead it to victory in the struggle for political power."

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- * Differences in sociological evaluation aside, I want to indicate support for the general thrust of this statement and of its political conclusions.