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April 18, 1970

United Secretariat
Fourth International

Dear Comrades,

We have read with interest the contributions to the internal discussion in the International Marxist Group preparatory to their March 25-27 conference.

The discussion, insofar as it could be judged from a distance on the basis of the documents, was an excellent one, in our opinion, both in the freedom with which differences were debated and in the way in which the issues tended to be brought out.

We think these documents should be made more readily available to the world Trotskyist movement. The discussion involved subjects of considerable importance to various other sections and to our movement as a whole. These included antiwar work, attitude toward the Labour Party, orientation toward the youth, methods of building a cadre organization, role of the press, the problem of certain internationally based opponent groupings, and so on.

It would be best if the entire discussion could be reproduced in a number of issues of the International Information Bulletin. Since it might not be practical to put out all the items because of the work and expense involved, perhaps at least the key documents could be presented.

We therefore put forward for your consideration the suggestion that the majority and the minority of the IMG select the most important documents for publication in two or three or so issues of the International Information Bulletin.

Naturally, we are prepared to get these issues out as a fraternal courtesy so that it means no extra work or expense for either you or the British comrades.

Fraternally,
Political Committee
Socialist Workers Party
s/Jack Barnes
Organization Secretary

873 Broadway
2nd floor south
New York, N.Y. 10003

April 22, 1970

FOR NC INFORMATION

Dear Comrades,

Attached are several documents submitted by members of the International Marxist Group (IMG), the British section of the Fourth International, in the internal discussion preceding the IMG conference held March 25-27.

We are sending these to you to call your attention to the formation of a minority tendency in the IMG.

Enclosed is the minority's pre-conference platform ["Statement of the Political Position of the Tendency formed around the General Line of pre-conference discussion documents No.'s 5,7 and 10 for the National conference of the IMG, 1970"], the presentation of the position of the minority to the London branch ["On the differences with the Political Committee resolutions - a report to the London Branch on March 14, 1970 by Susan Williams"], and the minority's criticism of the P.C. majority document on press & publications ["Where the Political Committee journals perspective goes wrong, by P. Price"].

Also enclosed is the letter from the IMG P.C. to the membership on the Red Mole ["Black Dwarf/Red Mole"], and the P.C. majority's resolution on press & publications ["A New Orientation for Our Journals"].

The Political Committee of the SWP has asked the United Secretariat to publish in an International Information Bulletin the central documents of this discussion (see enclosed letter).

Thus we hope to have these available soon, in addition to the documents now presented. They include the "Political Resolution" and "Youth Resolution" by the majority and documents on youth work, antiwar work, and political perspectives presented by the minority.

We wanted to make the enclosed documents available for your information before publication of the rest of the material. We feel this is especially important since the Red Mole is being publicly sold in the U.S.

National Committee members may want to follow the evolution of the Red Mole. It can be ordered from:

The Red Mole, 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1, England.
The cost is: 3 issues for \$1 (air), or 6 months for \$3.60 (\$6.00 air).

This material is for the information of National Committee members only, and is not for general membership distribution.

Comradely,
Jack Barnes
Jack Barnes
Organization Secretary

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Political Committee
Socialist Workers Party
s/Jack Barnes
Organization Secretary

Statement of the Political position of the Tendency formed around the General Line of pre-conference discussion documents No.'s 5, 7 and 10 for the National conference of the IMG, 1970.

The political resolution submitted by the Political Committee "From a Propaganda Group to a League for Revolutionary Action" stresses the big possibilities for the building of our movement in the next immediate period and lists a number of goals and projects that the movement should aim to achieve. The spirit of the resolutions calls for a bold push forward to take advantage of the increasingly favourable position before us. With this spirit and this outward thrust there can be no disagreement. It is based on real possibilities.

But the building of the Trotskyist movement requires more than the listing of inspiring targets. It requires a clear political orientation on the broad class struggle and a clear perspective on building the IMG.

The Political resolution as well as the other documents submitted by the Political Committee, on youth work and journals, in our opinion fails to do this. Two organisational projections substitute for a political orientation and a political line is developed which undermines our ability to move forward boldly to build the Trotskyist movement - a line which presents a course around centrist formations and a centrist press.

The following excerpts from the documents and the editorial "Where to Begin" in issue No. 1 of the Red Mole illustrate what we mean:

A) From the Political Resolution

(16)...What then is the central focus which will enable us to intervene in all these fields and yet not just dissipate our efforts? This focus, I would suggest, is the concept of our need to go from a propaganda group to a league for revolutionary action. The means to express this focus should be twofold: a) The rapid creation of the youth organisation; and b) the building of the large circulation weekly newspaper. (But with the rider that there should be a continuous campaign to recruit people to the IMG and to build new branches.)

(17)...In the main our interventions in mass struggles will be mediated through the youth organisation, which will go directly to those engaged in struggle...

(18)...There is huge scope for such a paper (the weekly) providing it is well written technically good and organised properly. This makes some form of collaboration with other forces essential until we have grown (and recruited these forces).

B) From the Political Committee resolution appendix

...We must never pose things in terms of competition with other tendencies as a basic motivation. We must stress time and time again that we are not THE revolutionary party and all our members especially the new ones must be trained in this spirit... We must stress that we have not got the monopoly of political wisdom or revolutionary spirit...

...With the launching of the political weekly...the International can more and more move towards becoming an analytical journal...

...In general it can be said that the extreme fragmentation of the left will not be reversed until an authoritative and dynamic formation appears on the scene...

C) From the Political Committee Resolution on Youth Work

...Conversely the youth organisation must not act simply as a recruitment and training office for the adult organisation appealing to young people in general but fundamentally as a political organisation...the youth work will construct supply depots, base camps, training centres and conveyor belts, a whole supporting network for the strategic battles ahead inside the trade unions and the bureaucratic parties.

...The task of the IMG will be to provide the ideological leadership through a theoretical journal, and political leadership through the training it gives to members of the organisation who are also members of the IMG and in this way we must win the most advanced militants in the organisation to the Fourth...

D) From the Red Mole editorial "Where to Begin"

...We will not be a sectarian paper and will leave the task of theoretical debates and abstract polemics to the different journals of the revolutionary groupings in this country...

...the long term aim should be...a revolutionary youth organisation taking its own political initiatives and training people to accept the ideal of being a life long revolutionary - a Bolshevik...through youth as a whole lies the way into the working class for revolutionaries...

...our message to comrades...it is quite simple. It is to build red circles...

We believe this is where to begin - to attempt to construct one of the fragments that will one day join together to form the revolutionary party to make the revolution in Britain.

The picture before us then, is a youth organisation (never described as Trotskyist) which will lead all our struggles. This organisation will not be imbued with the spirit that Trotskyism and Trotskyist cadre are key to the success of the socialist revolution - an organisation building spirit - but with the spirit that we are not too much different from other political tendencies. This spirit is to be expressed through a broad "political weekly" produced "in collaboration with other forces" - the key instrument of our intervention into the youth arena.

Where this goes is not a matter for conjecture. It is spelled out concretely. Building the IMG is a "rider", an afterthought. The IMG's paper International is to be scrapped. In its place a six times yearly theoretical journal. All this is designed to produce an "authoritative and dynamic formation" which is apparently a youth organisation which will lay the basis for "the strategic battles ahead inside the trade unions and the bureaucratic parties."

The IMG is relegated to the backroom to provide "ideological" and "theoretical" leadership through "theoretical debates and abstract polemics." The "long term aim" of our work in the youth is not to bring them to working class politics and the proletarian party but to a "revolutionary youth organisation" which will provide a way for revolutionaries "into the working class." The "message" to the radicalising youth is not to join a Trotskyist youth organisation and help win youth in struggle to the building of the proletarian vanguard party - the adult leadership organisation of the socialist revolution, existing in its infancy in the IMG - but to build "red circles", "fragments" of some future abstract revolutionary party.

The line of the political committee political resolution, its resolution on youth and on journals becomes concrete in the Red Mole perspective. We are forced to ask. Where in this perspective is the IMG, the British section of the Fourth International? Where is Trotskyism concretised in the perspective of building the proletarian party? Is the IMG to become a semi-secret behind the scene force giving theoretical lessons to a selected list of high level revolutionaries? Is it to be a hidden power behind some broad "red circles"? Are the red circles some kind of youth organisation - possibly the public face of a Trotskyist youth organisation hidden in the background? If red circles are "fragments" of some future revolutionary party then what is the IMG - another "fragment" or part of a "fragment"?

Rather than orient the radicalising youth by means of a Trotskyist youth organisation to the fundamental task of building a proletarian party - the British section of the Fourth International, the IMG, this line blurs this essential aspect of Trotskyism behind a screen of red circles and the Red Mole. In this way it is hoped we will rapidly increase our numbers, artificially

leap over the general propagandistic limits of our work and become an "authoritative and dynamic formation." The resolution's formal and false separation of propaganda and action expresses this basic weakness of the resolution.

It reflects an opportunistic adaptation to the radicalising youth. Rather than posing the youth with the fundamental question of the Leninist party, by openly striving to lead them with open Trotskyist organisations and an openly Trotskyist press leading them to working class politics and a working class organisation, the line of the PC pushes this to the background to more easily meet youth's elementary radicalism and elementary Trotskyism.

But short cut politics have a logic of their own. Adaptation to the youth means adaptation to its weaknesses not its strengths. It requires an ultra left and sectarian political line - ultra left and sectarian in that it rejects a sensitive orientation to the Labour Party and projects bypassing the task of constructing an alternative Trotskyist working class leadership with a youth organisation.

If this perspective is adopted it poses the gradual liquidation of the IMG into the youth radicalisation - into centrist circles around the Red Mole - a centrist paper by virtue of the simple fact that other forces on the editorial board, by their presence determine the political line of the paper - not the IMG. The most concrete expression of the direction of this line is the proposal to liquidate the IMG paper International into a theoretical journal.

In our opinion this is not the way forward for Trotskyism in Britain. It denies the possibilities that exist today to build a Trotskyist party. In Britain where we have many political opponents, clearly defined and in sharp competition, it is absolutely essential that the IMG put forward its political position on all issues in the class struggle clearly and unambiguously. It is essential that we have our Rouge and that our movement is oriented around a paper of our organisation, with our politics - a paper which gives our views on all the issues in the unfolding class struggle, a paper which sensitively argues against the ideas of our opponents, which reports on the activities of our movement and in its total impact builds the Trotskyist movement.

This paper must speak to workers, to the class as a whole to those forces like the students now entering the class struggle. It must be a socialist and proletarian paper projecting the necessity to build an adult vanguard party. This ABC of the socialist and working class movement is in the finest tradition of the Russian revolutionists.

To respond to the youth radicalisation, to build a Trotskyist youth organisation, to win these youth to the IMG requires this paper now - not at some unspecified time in the future. Anything less is a retreat from the task of moving boldly, openly and confidently to win the newly radicalising forces to revolutionary socialism - Trotskyism.

In our opinion documents 5, 7, and 10 express the correct direction for our movement in the next period. They are respectively "The case for an Independent Revolutionary Socialist Youth Organisation in Britain," "Rebuilding the anti-Vietnam War Movement - an IMG Priority," and "An Alternative View on Key Aspects of the Political Resolution." The general line of these documents taken together gives the movement a political orientation on the biggest issues of the class struggle and clearly outlines the thrust of our work in the next period. In doing so they give us the framework we need to take advantage of the big openings before us to build the Trotskyist movement and to take a big step towards the construction of a mass vanguard party.

In Summary these documents outline the following position:

A) The IMG, the British Section of the Fourth International is the nucleus of the mass proletarian vanguard party. As part of the Fourth International, embodied in its theory, programme and cadre are the lessons of over a century of class struggle and the traditions of the Bolshevik movement anchored in the October Revolution. In this sense, while the British Labour Party - the mass party of the working class, represents the present of the working class - that is its general level of political consciousness, the IMG represents its future.

B) There has never been a greater opportunity to build the Trotskyist movement in this country, that is to build the IMG and eliminate all those forces who fraudulently claim to be building Trotskyism. Three decisions must be taken if we are to rise to these opportunities:

1) We must orient to the youth by building a Trotskyist youth organisation, student oriented, in political solidarity with the IMG and geared to lead the developing struggles of radicalising youth.

2) We must return to our orientation of actively defending the front line of the class struggle on a world wide scale - the Vietnamese revolution. We must take the leadership of the struggle to build a mass action oriented single issue movement to defend that revolution.

3) Our work in all fields must be tied together in building the IMG. This requires an IMG political newspaper, a revolutionary socialist paper in the Leninist Tradition.

4) Because our thrust in the next period will be to the radicalising youth it is even more important that our political line - our political orientation - on the broad class struggle is precise and rests on an accurate assessment of the level of political consciousness of the British working class.

This means recognising that the British Labour Party, the mass party of the workers, reflects the general level of political consciousness of the working class.

It means openly calling for a defeat of the ruling class party, the Tories and the victory of the Labour Party in the next elections. It means sensitively and skillfully tying this position with the necessity to struggle against the reformist Labour Party leadership and with our full programme expressed through our transitional programme as a means of winning youth to the commitment of building a new revolutionary socialist working class leadership through the IMG.

March 15, 1970

ON THE DIFFERENCES WITH THE P.C. POLITICAL RESOLUTIONS:

A report to the London branch by Susan Williams on March 14th, 1970

We prepare for our first national conference of the '70's in a period of increasing crisis for world imperialism. The Vietnam war remains the central issue in world politics and is a key part of American imperialism's offensive against the world revolution. Because of its international repercussions the war is the focus on a world scale of the counterrevolutionary power of U.S. imperialism and the rising power of the world socialist revolution. The international antiwar opposition and the sharpening of social tensions in America due to the war are important factors in limiting the US capitalist class's ability to continue the war as it would like. The consequences of the Vietnam war have shown the basic relationship of class forces on a world scale is less and less favourable to the imperialists.

Economists throughout the world are in agreement that a generalised recession now faces the imperialist economies. We can expect in this next period a sharp rise in the tempo of class struggle like in Italy for example. However the attacks which will be made against the living standards of the masses come after a period of rising standards and an upsurge in combativity of increasing sections of the class in the advanced capitalist countries. At the same time U.S. imperialism's counter-revolutionary assault in Vietnam continues to be blocked.

News of opposition currents in the Soviet Union involving many thousands of persons, the big opposition movement and demonstrations of the Czechoslovaks are reflections of developing struggles against the bureaucracies in the workers' states.

Throughout the world we see a continuing youth radicalisation -- which is anti-imperialist, anti-social-democratic, anti-Stalinist, sympathetic to and open to be influenced by Trotskyist ideas.

In Britain the ruling class is in crisis. British capitalism's place in world imperialism has steadily declined since the beginning of the century. As it struggles to get a greater share of the world markets, British capitalism will be driven to a showdown with the working class. Any government which seeks now to solve its main problems within the framework of the capitalist society is forced more and more into direct conflict with the working class as a whole.

I am confident that we are all agreed that the situation for us in Britain right now is probably the best that has yet confronted

British Trotskyists. There are real opportunities for us to make big gains in the next period. Greater opportunities for our ideas to be sympathetically heard by bigger layers of people. Situations increasingly more open to us to move in and give leadership, particularly on the universities. We want to get the most we can from these opportunities. We want to recruit many new cadres to the IMG, we want to improve our organisation -- our centre -- we want more fulltimers -- professional revolutionaries, we want our own newspaper -- in all we want to move out in a bold way to make full use of all these opportunities. This is the task that faces us -- how to function and take advantage of opportunities -- to make the greatest possible gains for the building of the revolutionary mass party in Britain -- to win the radicalising youth to Trotskyism and to the Fourth International -- for us in Britain that means to the IMG -- the British section of the Fourth International.

What does a small propaganda group need to achieve this task?

- 1) We need a clear, correct political orientation which gives our ideas on the broad aspect of the class struggle and guides us to intervene in these struggles and increase the strength of our cadres. A political line in itself is not sufficient -- it has to be implemented -- it has to be transmitted to the broadest layers of people who move into actions.
- 2) We need a paper -- an IMG paper -- to speak to sections of the class as they move into struggle. This is a key question in the building of the movement. Leninism teaches us that we cannot separate the organisation from its paper.
- 3) We need a core of revolutionaries trained and educated to put our ideas into action, to intervene directly in struggles, giving leadership and propagating our ideas.

The purpose of the political resolution is to set the general political orientation and guidelines of the IMG for the next period. The effectiveness of the work of the IMG in this period will be directly related to the clarity and correctness of the orientation and strategy of the resolution. This underlines the seriousness of the discussion. In my opinion the PC resolution fails to pose clearly the political orientation of the IMG in the next period and moreover, in a number of key areas makes serious errors, which if not corrected will have disastrous consequences for our movement. Instead of getting the maximum from the opportunities facing us and making big gains for the IMG, the line of the PC resolution if adopted, would result in the liquidation of the IMG. That's the direction of the PC resolution. It leaves out the question of the working class, it does not recognise the IMG as the nuclei of the revolutionary mass party, it changes International into a theoretical journal which will come out every two months thus leaving us without a paper to

intervene in the broad day-to-day struggles of the class.

My document "An Alternative View on Key Aspects of the Political Resolution" is not presented in a bid for the leadership. It is not a challenge for the leadership, though it is of course a challenge to the leadership. It is presented for the purpose of posing some alternative positions on some key questions for the building of a mass revolutionary party in Britain. To say to comrades, think very carefully where some of the ideas presented in the PC resolution will take us. Let's make corrections instead of going in a direction which will achieve the opposite of what we all desire. That's to make use of all the opportunities facing us, and make real progress towards the building of the mass revolutionary party in Britain.

The key question for us in the building of this party is an understanding of the workers organisations, the trade unions and their political expression, which right now is the Labour Party, and for a correct orientation to them. It is wrong to confuse an orientation with a field or area of work, as the PC resolution does in para 16 on page 8 of the PC resolution. We have to have an orientation, but an orientation does not have to be an area of work. It may be but again it may not be. Right now, the Labour Party is not an area of work for us, and I am certainly not advocating it should be, but this could very quickly change -- even in a matter of months. That would depend on what is happening in the class. Important upheavals and struggle by big or major sections of the class cannot but be reflected in the Labour Party, the organisation through which the class gives political expression. We would like that party to be the revolutionary party (that's why we are all here today because we understand the necessity for such a party) but that is not yet the reality. In spite of the rotten, right wing, reformist leadership of the Labour Party and the anti-working class actions of the Wilson government, the class as a whole has not rid itself of its illusions in social democracy and opted for the revolutionary party. The editorial in the Times today shows through a recent poll that the gap between the Tories and Labour is narrowing in favour of the Labour Party. The current issue of the Economist indicates the possibilities that the Labour government will be re-elected. We have to say that the Labour Party reflects the level of consciousness of the class -- this will not be static, it will reflect the ebbs and flows of the class struggle. During the 1960's the Labour Party has been through a passive period. The right wing was able for quite a time to hold the workers back through wage restraint etc. and in the absence of a left wing in the party to lead a struggle. That can very quickly change -- in a period where capitalism is unable to expand its economy and buy off the workers with concessions. Already we can see a ferment in the class. If we do not understand the nature of the Labour party, that its roots are in the class, that it was consciously formed by the class after a hundred years of bitter experiences which taught the workers that economic struggles were not in themselves sufficient and that they needed a party

to safeguard any economic gains made through their organised strength, the trade unions, then we do not understand that the revolution is going to be made by the working class and not by rebel students, however revolutionary their aspirations may be.

A correct and sensitive orientation to the Labour Party does not demand that we have to be active members in the party at all times. It means that as long as the workers identify with it, regard it as their party, we must have a sensitive orientation to it, otherwise we will become isolated from the masses. The problem we are faced with as a small propaganda group, striving to build the vanguard party is how to make the best use of our limited resources. Where can our cadres make the best gains for the party -- in an area where there is passivity or where forces are in motion? Of course we all agree on the latter -- that is why we all agree on the need to turn towards the radicalising youth, in particular the student milieu, -- because that is where we can make the best gains right now. It is not because we have any illusions about the historic role of the working class, but nor does a turn to the youth mean that we have to dump our orientation to the Labour Party and that is what I think is the PC's position as expressed in the resolution. If we do not correct this we will be turning our backs on the working class and isolate ourselves from the class.

Lenin recognised the importance of the formation of the British Labour Party as the first step of the mass working class organisations towards a socialist and worker based party -- a transitional step in the building of the Leninist party. The Labour Party remains the most important factor in British working class politics today. Historically the creation of the Labour Party has been a monumental achievement of the British working class. At the same time it remains the biggest single block in the struggle for fundamental social change. Because of the pressures of capitalism, social democracy, reformist illusions of large sections of the class, and the lack of a mass revolutionary Marxist party the tendency to opportunism and adaptation to the labour bureaucracy has always been a danger. This same situation has consistently bred opportunism's counterpart, ultra-leftism. This arises through seeing only one face of the Labour Party -- the right wing face of social democracy. It leads to a false position that the British Labour Party is not fundamentally different from the bourgeois parties and for the revolutionary left to proceed as if the Labour Party counted for nothing to the working class. This is a particular problem to us right now when a youth radicalisation has taken place outside the experiences of the class. This leads to an ultra-left sectarian position on the Labour Party. This has always been a problem for the left in Britain since the formation of the Communist Party and Lenin found it necessary to devote a lot of time to this question (see for example Lenin's Left-Wing Communism). The history of the left wing in Britain

is strewn with numerous organisations which have tried to ignore the Labour Party, to bypass it, to act as if the struggle had advanced beyond it, and have ended up totally ineffective, having no influence on the course of the class struggle or by disappearing from the scene altogether.

All the more reason then that we should understand this and recognise the necessity to educate those moving towards a revolutionary socialist position, that a correct understanding of the trade unions and the Labour Party and the ability to put this understanding into practice, regardless of the particular conditions at any particular time within these organisations, is a prerequisite for the successful construction of revolutionary cadres able to build a mass revolutionary party in Britain. Any other course is sectarian. We could become a small party but unless we have a correct orientation to the Labour Party we can break our backs and will not be able to build the mass revolutionary party.

In my view the positions put forward in the PC appendix, page 7 -- Immediate Political Problems -- reveal a sectarian attitude that if not corrected is going to prevent us building the revolutionary party. I will take them point by point.

1) "Defeat for Labour in the coming election would represent a marginal defeat for the working class in an historical and international sense..." What does this mean -- a 'marginal defeat?' -- its ambiguity leaves the door wide open to saying that we are for a Labour defeat -- a Tory victory, a position that is held by comrade Camillo. At the same time as comrade Camillo holds this position he is able to support this formulation of the PC document. It takes us in the direction of seeing the labour fakers as the main enemy instead of the capitalist class, and has elements of third period Stalinism. (The first sentence of the PC document on youth states in fact that the "enemy is Social Democracy and Stalinism.") We have to be very clear and say that a defeat for Labour would be a defeat for the class. We are for a victory for the Labour Party and we should say so unequivocally not whisper it around. This is the political leadership we must give to all those young people who are getting the vote for the first time and to any demoralised sector of the class who see abstention as a way around facing up to the problem of the Labour Party.

2) If workers defeat the Labour Party we have to ask, is this a left defeat? If so why wouldn't they vote for our candidate? If they defeat the Labour Party in the absence of an alternative then we have to say that it is a right defeat. It would show that the workers were moving out of the political arena and retreating to the economic struggles. We have to ask ourselves why do workers still support the Labour Party. I think it is because they understand the magnitude of the tasks before them.

A worker experiences the power of capitalism everyday, with the bosses or their agents breathing down their necks every single day of their life, and this has a conservatising effect on them. Workers' conservatism is based on a knowledge gained from their own experiences and not because they are stupid. "...the rapid building of a revolutionary leadership" is something we all desire, but how will it be built other than through conflict with all other tendencies and currents around the question of the Labour Party and other issues on which the class is in action.

3) "The activities of the vanguard in general and ourselves in particular will have very little (and certainly not a decisive) effect on the result of the election." We don't intervene in bourgeois elections to win. We make use of the opportunities to put forward and explain a working class programme -- a revolutionary socialist programme. Why are we for Labour to power? -- because we want to identify ourselves with the aspirations of the class -- if we don't come out and support them by unconditionally calling for a victory for the Labour Party, we will isolate ourselves from the class. What about the radicals and militants who want only to attack the Labour Party? That is our job to educate them on this question and not adapt ourselves to the pressures from those who within or without the movement do not understand the workers organisations. Our job is to teach them to be class politicians. We cannot substitute wishing for the facts, and comrades must understand the Labour Party in order to make the revolution in Britain. There are no short cuts.

4) "...using the heightened political interest in the period of the election to spread revolutionary ideas..." We are agreed on this concept. How are we going to put this into practice? We say we are for a programme that will meet the needs of the workers -- for a revolutionary socialist programme for Labour. We have to counter dissatisfaction that may be expressed about the Labour Party by posing the need for such a programme and what has to be done to get it. It means taking on the bureaucracies in the trade unions and the Labour Party. We would also say to those who are dissatisfied 'join us comrade, because the Labour Party cannot carry through such a programme, and make the revolution, so come and join us and help build the party that will, the mass revolutionary party.' The Labour Party will only be destroyed in the process of struggle and not by attempting to bypass it.

5) Anyone who has read Left-Wing Communism knows that it was never Lenin's idea that revolutionaries put candidates forward in bourgeois elections for the purpose of winning. The Labour Party is not going to be removed from the scene through bourgeois elections. To run candidates or not to run candidates is not a principle -- just an opportunity of getting our ideas of a working class programme to more people than we might otherwise reach. Could there be any disagreement between us that if we put comrade Camillo as our candidate against someone like

Enoch Powell that he would not make a powerful appeal to and win the support of large numbers of people, particularly the more militant immigrant workers. At the same time the ideas of the IMG would be popularised to thousands and possibly millions of workers. The PC resolution's position is that "...the putting up of candidates would be.....an extreme waste of time. To spend the election period working night and day to get a few hundred votes would be unproductive and demoralising." In my opinion this position is incorrect and leads directly to the ultra-left position of non-participation in bourgeois elections.

6) This paragraph again suggests that it does not matter too much who gets in at the next election. During the election campaign we try to explain the revolutionary programme for Labour, at the same time we work for the historical defeat of the Labour Party -- can we do this if we say it does not matter who gets in? The PC resolution states "Certainly we are not going to work for a Labour victory." I would agree but at the same time add that we must be for a Labour victory.

7) What do we mean by "counter-rallies at election meetings." Does this mean breaking up election meetings and preventing the right wing from speaking? I am opposed to any such concept. We should attend the Labour Party election meetings and challenge the candidates on the Labour government's complicity in the Vietnam war. We should say to them 'stop smearing the Labour Party by using its strength to back up American imperialism's attempt to smash the Vietnamese revolution. Use the strength of the working class to demand of Nixon that he end the war by getting the American troops out now. The British workers will not be used to hold down the revolutionary forces in Vietnam or anywhere else.'

8) This paragraph suggests again that we are misunderstanding what reformism is. Can we say that the Labour bureaucracy are conscious agents of the capitalist class. Are they the main enemy? I think that we have to say that because they lack confidence in the working class they see only the conservatism of the class. This was made clear to me at the time of Bevan's capitulation on the H bomb. Jennie Lee said that Bevan was convinced that he did not have the majority of the class with him and that it was important that every militant in the Labour Party should make their position clear to him. It is true that the Labour bureaucracy are the the Labour lieutenants of the capitalist class and through them bourgeois values, norms and ideology are transmitted into the working class. However they can no more be wished away either by name-calling or ignoring them, anymore than the Soviet bureaucracy can.

I believe these positions of the PC are wrong, they don't allow us to come to grips with the organised working class.

A sensitive orientation to the Labour Party is essential if we are to build the revolutionary party and break the class from the ideology of Social Democracy.

Now I want to take up the question of what we are. The PC document 8a Appendix says on page 5 "We must stress time and time again that we are not THE revolutionary party..." Of course we don't say we are the revolutionary party, but we certainly say that we are the nucleus of it. If we do not have this concept how can we develop pride in our organisation and make the sacrifices demanded of us as is pointed out on the last page of the document. If we are not the nucleus of the mass revolutionary party, then who is? What are we doing in the IMG -- shouldn't we be elsewhere? It is true to say that we are a party in ideology -- nobody else has our programme -- if they have why don't we fuse with them? We have to understand that all other tendencies are alien and have to be consciously destroyed by us -- Social Democracy, reformism, Stalinism, and all distorted forms of Trotskyism. That is why we have to have a correct assessment of the SLL. Pride in our movement can only come through an understanding of this -- through defending our Bolshevik heritage. Healy not only says the SLL is Trotskyist but that it is the British section of the Fourth International. That is why it is necessary to answer every major attack he makes on us. Of course we aren't going to write the kind of smear articles that he is so expert at and which appear regularly in the Workers Press.

The PC document states that the SLL is not a competitor for us in the fields in which we are working. I don't believe that the SLL does not pose a problem for us in our task of winning the radicalising youth to Trotskyism. It may be true to say that the SLL doesn't see the student milieu as an important field of activity right now, but that doesn't mean that it cannot quickly change its orientation. I'm sure it will as soon as there is evidence that we are making recruits from and having greater influence in the student arena. Healy is far from stupid, and can be most flexible -- in fact we can learn a lot from him in this respect. What about all the new forces that will be moving towards us in the next period, will they not need some explanation as to what the SLL is and why they should join us if they want to help build the revolutionary party. The very fact that the SLL exists, with a membership several times larger than ours, with a daily paper, a youth organisation with its own paper, presents us with a problem. It is wrong to say that the SLL is not an obstacle for us right now. As long as the SLL represents the main stream of Trotskyism in this country it is a block to our building the revolutionary party -- we have to wage an irreconcilable struggle against Healy and the SLL.

The PC document reveals that we are not going to have a paper in which to take up and answer Healy's attacks upon us nor to deal with the issues confronting the working class. There is a

lack of clarity in this document but the journals document clearly shows that we intend to try to build the revolutionary party without a paper. It is a basic principle of Leninism to have a paper and it is key to the building of the revolutionary party. Throughout the world, however small the Trotskyist organisations might be it is the norm to establish a tendency paper. The plan of the PC is to liquidate our paper International and to replace it with a theoretical journal which will come out six times a year. We cannot build a strong, viable section of the Fourth International on this basis. We need a paper that deals with the ongoing struggles of the working class, strikes, rent struggles, women's struggles, apprentices' struggles and students' struggles, etc. Red Mole must become our voice now not in the future. Right now it isn't a Trotskyist paper -- it is a centrist paper -- it will collaborate with other forces who are hostile to some of our basic concepts. The theoretical journal cannot comment on strikes, struggles and political problems facing the class. It has a different function to perform. It cannot be seen as a substitute for a tendency paper. We need a paper like Rouge, Militant, Labour Challenge, Bandiera Rossa, etc. that can popularise our ideas and act as an organiser and recruiter for the group.

I submit that there is no basic political orientation in the PC document and is generally liquidationist of what we have built. There is no appreciation for a clear unequivocal and sensitive orientation to the Labour Party and thus leaves out the working class in our reckonings in the building of the revolutionary party. We fail to come out clearly that the IMG is the nucleus of the revolutionary party and our press is to be liquidated. Some organisational proposals are presented for a substitute for a political orientation. For these reasons I have submitted the document "An Alternative View on Key Aspects of the Political Resolution."

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WHERE THE POLITICAL COMMITTEE JOURNALS PERSPECTIVE GOES WRONG

by P. Price

The purpose of this document is to sum up the discussion on what kind of paper our organisation needs. What I propose to do is examine the Political Committee document on journals which shows clearly the proposed direction for the movement. Four key paragraphs express the line of the Political Committee:

"We come out of the end of the experience (with the Dwarf) with a press, premises, a group of comrades capable of producing a first class newspaper and the real perspective of making a breakthrough for the Fourth International in Britain after a long and very difficult period. Without doubt if we had let this opportunity slip by we would have condemned ourselves to a future as a small propaganda group with little prospect of getting the leadership of the Vanguard Youth."

The precise operation we wish to carry out is to win for the new paper a sizable part if not the whole of the young people who were supporters of the Dwarf, to aid them in their struggle, to educate them politically and through transitional organisations to win them to the projected movement and to the IMG itself. It is this task which determines the initial nature of the paper. It will be very much in the tradition of the Dwarf, imaginative, non-sectarian, committed to the struggle of youth, particularly the universities. For this reason too it is not at this stage being presented as a directly IMG paper and we will work with non-IMG elements in bringing it out."

"We are then entering a transitional period when we will be trying to, through the paper, transform the consciousness of a whole layer of youth, and fuse them with our organisation thereby transforming the IMG itself. It is impossible to set a time scale for this process, but when it is accomplished, the role of the paper and its relationship to the IMG will have undergone a qualitative change, it will become directly the paper of the new league we are trying to build."

* * * * *

The Political Committee thus makes it absolutely clear that the thrust of our work in the next period will be around the Red Mole and Red Circles -- these transitional organisations. The IMG paper International is to become a 6-times-a-year, theoretical journal. Underlining the fact that Red Mole is not to be an IMG paper, the PC documents make it clear by stating that future editions of International (not the larger circulation Red Mole) "should carry all the F.I. statements, provide a public face for the IMG during the Mole's transitional period and generally be a sort of English language Quatrieme International."

What is the meaning of this proposal?

The nature of the paper to be used by our movement is made quite clear in these paragraphs. It will be a paper produced in collaboration with non-Trotskyist tendencies, it will be "non-sectarian." That is, the paper will not carry the point of view of any one organization -- it will be a centrist paper around which our movement builds red circles -- organisations called euphemistically 'transitional organisations' -- in reality, centrist organisations. The Mole will not make itself "sectarian" by carrying political statements of the F.I., nor will it in any other way identify itself openly with the organised Trotskyist movement in Britain.

Out of this "precise operation" around which the entire movement is oriented in the next period, it is hoped that the IMG will be able to "transform" itself into a League for Revolutionary Action.

The question is: is this perspective meaningful in our present situation? Is it correct to orient the movement around a paper which cannot present the point of view of our organization --- since it must be "non-sectarian," with the hope that at some time in the future, for which "it is impossible to set a time scale," we can fuse the youth gathered around this broad paper with the IMG transforming it into a larger League for Revolutionary Action?

In my opinion, the answer is No! The Political Committee obviously thinks that with a press (acquired with resources which do not reflect the financial strength of our movement, but the Not Unlimited resources of a generous comrade) and by adapting to youth's lack of political experience and youth's initial prejudice against Leninist organisation, we can somehow find a shortcut for the rapid growth of the IMG, which by-passes the process of accumulation and training of cadres.

This projection is conservative and expresses a lack of confidence in the ability of our movement to join the radicalising youth in struggle and win them directly to Trotskyism. We are in a period when Trotskyist organisations are expanding all over the world. Why does the Political Committee then want to hide Trotskyism behind "non-sectarian" red circles and a "non-sectarian" non-IMG paper?

On the contrary, we need a paper which expresses the ideas of our movement, which presents our program and our organisation to the youth. Trotskyism is attractive to radicalising youth. Their rebellion tends to take them to Trotskyism, in this sense the radicalizing youth are pro-Trotskyist. Is this not one of the reasons the "non-sectarian" Black Dwarf immediately after the split with our comrades, identified itself openly with some of the broad positions of the Fourth International?

Why can we not go directly to the youth in struggle with our ideas clearly expressed through our own press? The IMG, being a section of the Fourth International, expresses the world Trotskyist position in Britain. Trotskyist politics are not sectarian. They represent the historical experience of the world working class as a whole. We have a program, coming out of the history of the class struggle, which can lead the working class and its allies to a mass struggle for state power. This is our transitional program -- our full program -- which has its most concrete meaning in the building of the Trotskyist movement, not any other movement. We need a paper, then, that speaks to students and workers, and all those engaged in the struggle, and which, in its total impact, gives them this message.

Comrades should remember the struggle we had to carry in the Vietnam movement against the positions of political opponents in order to win the Vietnam movement to our positions. We had to argue against Peace News, the Stalinists, the Healyites, etc. Will not this same kind of battle take place within the youth arena and in the working class movement as a whole? Of course it will. To explain our ideas seriously on the day-to-day issues before those in struggle, we need our own paper -- not a centrist paper which can only give our line at the risk of losing its broad cover and the P C's entire perspective of a period of transitional organisations.

What should the IMG political newspaper look like?

Will this paper be like Healy's Workers Press? No. Workers Press is the paper of a sect. A sect can only justify itself and its sectarian politics by carrying factional and slanderous attacks against its opponents in an attempt to avoid the political questions before the working class movement. The paper of a sect deals in ultimatums, declarations of its correctness and purity, and cannot sensitively develop a political line and intervene in the ongoing struggles.

Is it a question of putting on the front page that the paper is the organ of the IMG, and ending every article with a call to join the IMG? No, of course not. Common sense simply tells you that a paper with that kind of tone cannot win anybody to a particular position or organisation.

But it is a question of a paper which can be sold to both workers and students, which comments and gives direction on all aspects of the national and international class struggle, which carries the editorial line of our organization, which sensitively reports on the activities of our movement, which can circulate widely the declarations of our world organization, which can deal effectively with the positions of our opponents -- all of them (including tendencies like New Left Review and figures like Robin Blackburn, who comrades are trying to get on the Mole editorial board, and is now being attacked publicly in our New Zealand press for trying to fuse Maoism and Trotskyism) -- and

which, in its total effect, tells readers that the IMG has the answers and that activists should join it, if they want to contribute to bringing about the British socialist revolution. Rouge (France) The Militant, (USA) Labour Challenge (Canada), are the kind of papers I am talking about. Without a paper like these, we cannot bring youth to Trotskyism and our organisation.

For example, picture in your mind the following conversation between a comrade who is selling Red Mole and a young student at a university occupation:

Question (student): Who puts out this paper?

Answer (IMGer): It is produced by members of the IMG, New Left Review, and some other people.

Q. Yes, but what organisation is behind it?

A. No organisation. It's a non-sectarian paper.

Q. Well, do you belong to an organisation?

A. Yes, the IMG.

Q. That's interesting. What's your position on Warwick, Vietnam and the general election? Have you got a paper that tells me?

A. We don't really have a paper. We use Red Mole. But we have a theoretical journal. The next issue will be out in a few weeks with articles on Marxist theory and statements by the Fourth International. Buy the Red Mole. It has articles on Warwick, Vietnam and the general elections.

Q. But I want to know what your organisation says, not the Red Mole. I've seen the Workers Press and Militant. What does your group say?

A. Our line is in the Red Mole. You see, the NLR people and others don't really control the paper. We just don't want to say it yet. We are carrying out an operation. When we get larger, we will turn the Red Mole into our paper. What you should do is come along to a Red Circle meeting and start to work with other Red Mole supporters.

The Red Mole perspective of the PC puts Trotskyism and the IMG into an infrequently produced theoretical journal and places us in the position above. With the political competition that we have, hiding our politics and organisation from the youth with a "transitional" paper and "transitional" organisations will not turn their receptivity to Trotskyist ideas into solid commitment and understanding of the Fourth International.

What the direction on journals should be

Turning a centrist paper which our movement had control of into our own paper could be a reasonable proposition in a particular set of circumstances. It would be a thought-out and planned development of a paper for the IMG from the beginning.

But I want to emphasize that this is not the course outlined by the PC. We have created a centrist paper and the PC is projecting a course around this paper with centrist organisations in a period when such organisations will be blocks to winning people to Trotskyism. Of course setting up Red Circles is not a question of principle. But these circles are not viewed as educational forums where you come to hear an interesting speaker but as "transitional" organisations. Transitional to what? To our yet to be launched youth organisation? To the IMG? For what reasons do we need such organisations?

Do we not have a transitional program which can lead people in struggle to our movement? The youth organisation we build, if it is open to the youth and not hidden behind Red Circles, will be able to lead big sections of youth, especially its student sector, in struggle around a program of democratic and transitional demands, in other words around our full program. Is it not reasonable to expect that such an organisation will be able to recruit large numbers of youth to it? Isn't this the meaning of the struggles in the universities against political files? And isn't it reasonable to think that if these youth collaborate with the IMG and are able to read its press regularly -- a press which gives direction on the class struggle as a whole and gives them an orientation to the workers' struggles -- that the best of them will be won to being cadres of the IMG and the Fourth International?

Isn't this why we are optimistic today? What then is the perspective of the Political Committee when it poses the indirect building of our movement through "transitional" organisations and papers (centrist in character), but an expression of timidity, conservatism and lack of confidence in our ability to intervene in the struggle with our program and win the youth? What is it but an adaptation to some of the prejudices and misconceptions of youth about Leninism and Trotskyism? What is it but an attempt to take a short cut around the key problem of cadre building in the building of the IMG?

For these reasons, I think this perspective should be rejected. We have about 6 comrades now working on the Mole. Think what this would mean for our movement if the energies and talents of these comrades were turned to producing an adequate press for our movement.

To sum up:

The "transitional" period projected by the PC for our journals and our organisations is not what we need. We need: --to go to the youth directly in struggle with our transitional program -- the program of Trotskyism. We can do this through a youth organisation, open to the youth and in political solidarity with the IMG.

--while the youth organisation should have a paper of its own oriented more to the struggle of youth -- the building of our

movement in the next period requires an IMG paper -- a political newspaper which speaks for our movement, deals with the class struggle as a whole -- orients workers and students to building the Trotskyist movement and a revolutionary socialist working class leadership. There will be no lack of space in these publications to deal with the theory of the working class movement.

This is the perspective we must have now. Whether Red Mole should change its character and become the IMG paper, whether International should become the IMG political newspaper, or whether Red Mole should retain its youth orientation and become the paper of our youth organisation are practical questions which would have to be decided on the basis of an overall political line -- I suggest on the perspective I have outlined. The main point is to recognize that Red Mole in its present form along with the PC perspective will not take us forward.

What will take us forward is confidence in our ideas, and a bold initiative in intervening in the struggles of youth with our program expressed through a Trotskyist press -- a press in the Leninist tradition. Now...Not later.

March 22, 1970

LETTER TO MEMBERS/URGENT

BLACK DWARF/RED MOLE

As comrades will know the Black Dwarf has now become the Red Mole and the latter is completely under our control. It is regrettable that it was not possible to inform comrades of this step in advance, but it was a question of security and it was important that nothing was put down on paper.

BACKGROUND

Ever since the publication of the article criticising the ANC the Proprietor of the newspaper (Clive Goodwin) and the group around him which includes A Barnett (NLR) have been waging an anti IMG campaign. The main political difference was the difference between their concept of a newspaper and ours. They preferred the Dwarf to be a tailist, passive reflection of the struggles taking place -- a commentator. We wanted the journal to initiate actions, to be involved in them -- an organiser. The struggle between these two concepts resulted in a sustained anti-IMG hysteria on the Editorial Board.

TIMING

The IMG Dwarf Caucus held an emergency meeting and after a long discussion lasting several hours came to certain conclusions. Virtually all the members of the PC were contacted and their approval sought before we carried out our plan. The reasons for speed were the following:

- 1) It became clear to us that the newspaper could not continue to function in the existing atmosphere which was more of a bear garden than an Editorial Board. What was in question at the meeting where we split was the IMG's Editorship of the journal. The measures which the opposition were proposing would have paralysed both the Dwarf and our work on the new premises.
- 2) It was obvious that the Proprietor would use financial pressure on the Board to have some of our fulltimers removed and also that he would not pay the costs of printing and composing which would mean a loss to the press which we own.
- 3) The conjuncture we are at organisationally and the general conjuncture of the student movement was a further factor in

our decision.

It should be added that the Political Committee has now approved our decisions and has also confirmed its support for the setting up of the Red Mole.

The PC will be preparing a detailed document on Journals for the National Conference, but in the meantime it is extremely important that comrades make it a priority to sell as many copies as possible of the first Red Mole. A special effort should be made to really push the paper hard. Where possible street selling should be organised.

Camillo
6 March 1970

The essential points of this letter were approved by the Political Committee on March 6th. The PC also adopted unanimously a resolution, the text of which appears overleaf.

Political Committee resolution March 6th 1970.

The PC endorses the action of the comrades of the former "Black Dwarf" caucus in splitting from the paper last Friday February 27th, 1970.

The PC endorses the launching of the new paper, and the general perspective of working with other forces in bringing it out.

The PC endorses the perspective of working through "Red Circles" to hegemonise the paper's supporters, for the politics and organisation of the IMG and the FI, and calls on all branches and members to take immediate steps to implement this perspective.

The PC affirms that the tactics carried out, although showing unsatisfactory features in that the PC was not able to discuss and endorse them first, nevertheless were in line with the general strategy for this work as agreed by the two previous NC meetings.

Now that our relationship to the new paper is clearer, the work of our comrades in the Red Mole caucus will come much more directly under the control of the PC since there will be fewer complicating factors (i.e. operations of political opponents).

The above points constitute a provisional policy determined by the new situation. The whole question will be decided by the National Conference which has the final authority to continue or change it.

A NEW ORIENTATION FOR OUR JOURNALS

Submitted by the Political Committee, IMG

March 19, 1970

The IMG has produced, participated in and been connected with more journals and publications than any other revolutionary organisation in Britain, possibly in the world. Someday the history of all this experience will be written, but the author of this document, not having six months to spare, wishes merely to point to one general conclusion drawn from this experience. This conclusion is that we have never attempted to impose a rigid plan or set of criteria on this work, the result has been that although we have made a number of false starts, and wrong estimates, nevertheless the flexibility with which we have approached this field has allowed us to take advantage of a number of opportunities, and at the same time break easily with projects which could have compromised us politically (i.e. the 'Voice' abominations). The time has come, however, to project a much more clearcut perspective for this field, this is both necessitated and made possible by our increased size and influence, and consequent greater ability to play an independent role, and cooperate with other forces on our own terms.

This document is in basic agreement with the P C document and appendix "From a Propaganda Group to a League for Revolutionary Action" and should be seen as supplementing them.

The Little Dark Stranger

We got involved in the Black Dwarf in the best traditions of the IMG -- by accident. The paper was started by a group of lefty intellectuals and trendys; as editor they eventually chose the current target of abuse by the Daily Mail -- Tariq Ali, who was already a member of IMG. This gave us a strategic position in the paper, however, for some time we did not realise the importance of this and the opportunities which we had. In fact we were rather skeptical about the future of the paper. It soon became clear however that The Dwarf had caught on. It established itself as one of the most popular papers on the left and the only one with a revolutionary socialist line to break fresh ground in circulation and support. The reasons for this are not hard to discern. The launching of the paper coincided with the May-June events in France, the flowering of VSC and the first stirrings of the student upsurge in Britain, a whole new layer was coming into revolutionary politics and the Black Dwarf with its imaginative journalistic style its unrestrained anti-capitalism and lack of sectarianism, spoke to them and became identified with their strivings.

However, a process of political differentiation within the group of people bringing the paper out was inevitable. It is important to establish the fact that from shortly after its launching there was a constant process of political struggle on the editorial board. The first issue of the paper was not

distributed because of the opposition of the majority of the editorial board to the political line which it carried. Then came a split with a small group who had been seduced by the delights of Healyism. They were unimportant since they did not wish to influence or control the paper. More insidious however, was the influence of a tacit alliance between I.S. and other centrist elements. Lacking imagination or political clarity they turned to I.S.'s panacea -- the factory gate. The workerist/centrist orientation of the paper became more pronounced with Tariq's long trip to Pakistan and the ascension of a non-political political to the editorship. Tariq's return precipitated another political struggle on the board which ended with a couple of resignations, Tariq back in the saddle, and a much more serious attitude to intervention in the paper on our part. We succeeded in recruiting one or two of the staff and in getting other comrades onto the staff, until we had the complete staff in membership of the IMG and thus also an important block on the editorial board. We further consolidated our position when one of the comrades we had recruited laid plans for establishing a printshop and premises. We succeeded in turning the paper much more towards the new layers of revolutionary youth.

However, despite the improved position, a number of contradictions remained. These stemmed basically from the relationship between the paper and its readership. The Dwarf had been taken up by a new layer of young revolutionaries, it had helped to politically educate them, but it had not been able to offer them an organisation or any perspective beyond reading and selling the paper. A large number have joined I.S. but there still remains a whole milieu who are looking for an organised expression for their revolutionary aspirations. We can expect that if we do not resolve this contradiction by drawing them towards the IMG it will be resolved by other tendencies or spontaneously developing currents.

This contradiction was expressed in very concrete ways in problems for the organisation of distribution, and collection of money from sales. The actual paid circulation of the Dwarf was a very low proportion of its total circulation, and a large part of this was represented by sales of IMG members. So of course the paper was in debt, in fact it would have folded altogether if one of our comrades had not been in a position to lend it a lot of money. The simple reason for these problems was the fact that the paper did not have an organisation behind it to give it a stable selling force.

It was in this context that the N.C. decided to take a much more serious attitude and consistent attitude to the Dwarf to attempt to draw some of its base towards us through the Dwarf circles, to increase our commitment to selling it and have the long-term strategy of making it directly our paper or taking over its milieu with another paper. No fixed timetable was adopted for this and a great deal of initiative was left in the hands of the comrades directly involved -- the Black Dwarf caucus.

The inevitable result of our setting out on this course was the precipitation of a new political crisis on the editorial board, particularly when we made it plain that we were interested in the legal ownership position. The new crisis was brought to a head by the publication of an article which made severe criticisms of the African National Congress. Despite the fact that it had been pointed out on the editorial board that it was an extremely controversial article, none of the non-IMG people read it before approving it for publication. When the storm broke over their heads they immediately raised a hue and cry against our comrades, and the relationships deteriorated severely. There was a temporary cooling-off when we agreed to Anthony Barnett of the NLR becoming joint editor along with Tariq. We agreed to do this because we understood that this would be a nominal arrangement which would not cramp our style. However, it became more and more clear that we were heading for a major blow-up. The others took up a very suspicious attitude towards us, culminating in their reluctance to have the main article in the Lenin centenary edition written by Ernest Mandel and their pressing for Barnett to become a joint editor in more than name thus facing us with a 'dual-power' situation in the editorship.

It was evident to the comrades on the Black Dwarf caucus that they were in for an extended recriminatory political struggle with the petite-bourgeois elements who opposed them and there was no prospect of getting ownership of the paper since the ownership of the name was held by a particularly hostile individual. So they decided to split from the Dwarf and found a new paper. The timing of the decision was determined by the favourable situation which existed for a short period. The Dwarf had moved out of its offices prior to moving to Pentonville Road and was preparing to be printed on Prinkipo press, thus the opposition was in a weak position materially and psychologically and we were in a strong position. If we had allowed them to become established in Pentonville Road it would have been more difficult to dislodge them later, and the prospect of them running up debts on an already indebted paper (but this time to our comrade's press) was not an attractive one. It might have been worth it if we had any real prospect of taking the paper over, but this was clearly impossible.

The tactics employed by our comrades have come in for some understandable criticism on two scores, one that the split came as a surprise to most of our comrades, who heard of it for the first time from the bourgeois press and the other that the decision to split and launch the new paper was not discussed in or endorsed by the PC prior to its being put into operation.

On the first score: it is regrettable that our comrades should have been excluded from knowledge of our strategy, but the extreme delicacy of the operation we were involved in in the suspicion of us politically by hostile elements on the Dwarf

made tight security a necessity. Thus we had to restrict a lot of information to the NC. This is one of the necessary features of democratic centralism and we can only ask comrades to bear with it and understand the reason for it.

On the second score: It is perfectly true that the whole matter should have been decided by the PC first. We have to take the fact that it was not, very seriously indeed. However this does not mean that it was a wrong decision or that it was possible for it to be taken in the correct way. Comrades should understand the basic problem of the PC. It meets once a week, has an overwhelming amount of business to discuss and is heavily dependent on the National Secretary preparing its work efficiently. What we really need is a core of professional revolutionaries who can deal with the day-to-day problems of the group, relieving the PC to guide the political work of the group. Instead the PC is bogged down in routine matters, and never devotes enough time to thinking about the long-term problems facing the IMG. It really should have seen the opportunity with which this conjuncture presented us and laid plans for it some weeks before the event but it couldn't. In addition the absence of the National Secretary due to illness caused a breakdown in the already unsatisfactory work of the PC.

So it was in this context of the Paralysis of the PC that the comrades in the Black Dwarf caucus took their decision. Comrades who say that they should not have done so without the PC's approval are saying that they should have adapted to the conservatising effects of our weakness of leadership. In fact of course they consulted a majority of the PC before going ahead. The responsibility for the negative aspects of the operation does not lie with the comrades of the Black Dwarf caucus, who have acted in a disciplined and responsible way in a very trying situation, but with the whole of the IMG which has not yet developed an adequate leadership.

The PC has subsequently fully endorsed the actions of the comrades and asserted that their actions were completely in line with the strategy that the two previous NC meetings had outlined and has called on the group as a whole to support the Red Mole.

Of course any comrades who are dissatisfied can try to change this line at the National Conference.

If we make a general assessment of the Black Dwarf experience we must say that it was very successful, the most successful project that we have carried out in fact, apart from VSC. We succeeded in getting F.I. [Fourth International] material to a larger audience than it would otherwise have had and helped to establish some of our comrades on the wider left. We have recruited a number of people, some of them top line cadres, it has given us a wide network of contacts for our comrades in various parts of Britain and has been particularly useful for isolated comrades.

We come out of the end of the experience with a press, premises, a group of comrades capable of producing a first class newspaper and the real prospect of making a breakthrough for the Fourth International in Britain after a long and very difficult period. Without doubt, if we had let this opportunity slip by we would have condemned ourselves to a future as a small propaganda group with little prospect of getting the leadership of the Vanguard youth.

The Mole Breaks Through

The principal issue on which we split from the Black Dwarf was over the role which a revolutionary paper should play. We insisted that it had to become an organiser, the others were satisfied with a commentator role. The main task which the new paper the Red Mole will take up is the development of an effective revolutionary agitational paper.

The precise operation we wish to carry out is to win for the new paper a sizable part if not the whole of the young people who were supporters of the Dwarf to aid them in their struggle, to educate them politically and through transitional organisations to win them to the projected youth movement and the IMG itself. It is this task which determines the initial nature of the paper. It will be very much in the tradition of the Dwarf: imaginative, non-sectarian, committed to the struggle of youth particularly in the Universities. For this reason too it is not at this stage being presented as a directly IMG paper and we will work with non-IMG elements in bringing it out.

This does not mean that it is simply a repeat of the Black Dwarf experience. The whole orientation of the paper will be toward drawing people around us through Red Circles and the youth Fractions. Our cooperation with others will help us present the paper as broadly based and overcome the suspicion of political groups which the sectarian groups have engendered. But this cooperation will be very much on our own terms and we are in a much stronger position than we were when we went into the Dwarf.

We are then entering a transitional period when we will be trying to, through the paper, transform the consciousness of a whole layer of youth, and fuse them with our organisation thereby transforming the IMG itself. It is impossible to set a time scale for this process, but when it is accomplished, the role of the paper and its relationship to the IMG will have undergone a qualitative change, it will become directly the paper of the new league we are trying to build.

In this transitional period, however, we must prepare for some big changes in our political practice, brought about by a new relationship to the new paper. We were getting more and more involved in selling the Dwarf but this had been very much supplementary to our general work, and has been very uneven in

development, (for instance the Scottish comrades used the Dwarf very successfully, but almost no London comrades sold it apart from those who worked on it). We must consciously turn the group to selling the Red Mole on demonstrations, meetings, street sales, etc. It must become our major task in the field of journals with other publications playing a secondary and supplementary role.

In some areas we had used the technique of the Black Dwarf circle with some success and in others we had barely begun to think about the opportunity this afforded us. Now we must see the creation of Red Circles as an important field of work.

Precisely how these can be related to our existing youth work and where they should be set up is really another discussion and we will have to develop a body of experience before we can give precise answers to some of the problems they pose.

International

If we are going to make the Mole our main commitment in the field of journals this naturally raises the question of what to do with International. There is no getting around the fact that International was never satisfactory. It was launched at exactly the same time as Black Dwarf but in contrast to the latter it never achieved a very high circulation. To understand the reasons for this it is necessary to examine the conditions of its birth.

We created International after it became obvious that the old Week had become untenable. We faced up to the fact that we did not have the capacity to bring out a weekly publication and that it did not have any future. We were unwilling to try to bring out a monthly agitational journal like the RSL ('Engineers will strike', three weeks after the strike was called off), but we could not sustain a purely theoretical one either, so we compromised. Early editions could almost have been called 'the Monthly Week,' and despite our gradual orientation toward more analytical and theoretical material the magazine has been consistently inconsistent. Circulation has been quite unsatisfactory, and the magazine has been difficult to sell on demos, at meetings, etc., which has been rather demoralising for the comrades, and has led to a resistance to selling by many. We have found however, that where we have been able to establish the IMG as a serious force with something important to say, interest in the magazine has risen. In other words instead of International creating interest in the IMG the reverse has happened.

These problems stem very much from its hybrid nature. We will not make a success out of it until it is given a precise role. Obviously from the perspective outlined above for the Mole this must be to turn it into a genuine theoretical magazine. We

now have the resources in the form of a press to improve it technically and a number of comrades capable of producing first class theoretical work. If we can establish International as a magazine which carries useful material we will resolve a lot of our problems. In order to do this effectively we should change it to a bi-monthly, with a new larger format and completely redesigned. The obvious time to do this is the May edition, when the magazine will celebrate its second birthday. This issue should be carefully planned and we should promote it as a new departure, a step forward, etc.

Future editions should carry all the F.I. statements, provide a public face for the IMG, during the Mole's transitional period and generally be a sort of English language Quatrième International.

Bridge Journals

We are involved in a number of publications for specific spheres of work. (Vietnam, Socialist Woman, etc.). To some extent these have developed due to the inadequacies of International and to some extent due to the needs of work. They are in general excellent. Socialist Woman in particular has enormous potential. They do tend to be produced, however, without much central direction, and are not keyed enough to our general orientation.

The incoming NC should instruct the PC to set up an editorial commission to keep an eye on the whole range of journals and introduce an element of rationalisation and division of labour among them. This should consist of PC members along with comrades who have some expertise in the field. Such a body could also contribute to the quality of this work.

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