

TROTSKYISM VERSUS
REVISIONISM

A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY

VOLUME ONE

*The fight against Pabloism
in the
Fourth International*

NEW PARK PUBLICATIONS

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edited by C. Slaughter

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Note on sources

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

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

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

Document 1 was first published in Britain in *Workers Press*, August 29, 1973.

Document 2 is taken from *Fourth International*, Vol. 7, No.3, Spring 1972, pp. 107-121

Documents 3 to 17 and 19 to 24 (including the first English translations of Documents 4 and 17) originally appeared in the Internal Discussion Bulletins of the Socialist Workers Party and the International Bulletins of the International Committee.

Document 15 (the 'Open Letter') was also published in pamphlet form in January 1955, and it is from this that the text is reproduced here.

Document 18 is from *The Militant*, December 21, 1953.

Foreword

FOUNDED in 1938 in conditions of a succession of catastrophic defeats for the international working class, the Fourth International could not escape a long period of extreme difficulties, isolation, and even physical destruction for a part of the time. The consolidation of the Stalinist bureaucracy in the Third (Communist) International and the Soviet Union, battenning on the defeats inflicted by fascism, brought into being a machine of repression and liquidation against the Fourth International. These very defeats were in large part the consequence of the political betrayals of this same bureaucracy, which, after 1933, had become the principal counter-revolutionary force on a world scale. The essential continuity of Marxism, the only basis for building the revolutionary leadership for the future, could be assured only by breaking from the Third International and founding the Fourth International. This was Trotsky's greatest historic contribution, considered by himself as superior in significance to his role in the October Revolution and the leadership of the Red Army.

Today, the conditions of isolation of the Trotskyist movement and defeat of the international working class are replaced by a situation radically transformed. The Trotskyist forces, steeled and educated through the long years of struggle, now confront the task of actually placing revolutionary parties at the head of working-class masses who have not experienced defeat. They must defeat the reformists and Stalinists in political battle and be able to provide the policy, strategy, tactics and political resources, human and material, to lead the struggle for working-class power.

It is the political organizations forming the International Committee of the Fourth International which are consciously undertaking this

responsibility. To do this, there is necessary a trained leadership force which starts in all its political work from the nature of the economic and political crisis entered into by imperialism. The International Committee (IC) would not exist today but for a prolonged struggle for correct revolutionary conceptions of our epoch and of the stage reached in the historical crisis of capitalist economy. Especially since the August 1971 measures of President Nixon on behalf of the American ruling class, the stage has been set for the outbreak of revolutionary struggles, and the great need in every country is for a Marxist Party, based on the tendency of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky, which can carry revolutionary policies into the workers' movement and in this way lay the basis for a clear understanding of the development of the crisis.

The Marxist method, of consciously engaging theory in a constant conflict with practice, has been under continuous fire ever since the foundation of the Trotskyist movement. Long before the Fourth International was set up, Trotsky fought many battles, inside the Russian Left Opposition as well as internationally, against the impressionistic and empirical method which simply sees this or that series of events as confirmation or refutation of set ideas or 'theories'. Within the Fourth International, the first great battle took place in 1939-1940 against the petty-bourgeois opposition of Burnham and Schachtman. This struggle revolved around all the basic political questions, from the class nature of the USSR to the revolutionary party and democratic centralism. Trotsky went to great pains to show that the divisions on these questions flowed inexorably from the failure of the petty-bourgeois opposition ever to break from idealism and pragmatism and to adopt the revolutionary objective standpoint of dialectical materialism.

Characteristically, the forces of revisionism in the Fourth International have always resisted the struggle to expose the philosophical roots of their political positions and have condemned the introduction of these fundamental questions as a diversion from the 'concrete questions' of the hour. Just as this was the attitude of Burnham and Schachtman, so it has been the attitude of the revisionists in the period since the international split in the Trotskyist movement in 1953. In that year, the International Committee was formed in order to break from the method and politics of Michel Pablo, then secretary of the Fourth International, and his followers. Their political line amounted to the liquidation of the Trotskyist movement. Its essence was capitu-

lation, under pressure of the imperialists through the petty bourgeoisie and bureaucracy, to bourgeois ideology and the abandonment of the revolutionary, dialectical materialist standpoint of the working class. Its immediate form was surrender to the Stalinist bureaucracy. Its concrete organizational expression was administrative intervention to destroy the political life of the national sections of the Fourth International and prevent the training of a cadre in the theory and practice of Marxism.

The Socialist Workers Party (SWP) in the United States split from the Pabloites in 1953 only to carry out the most unprincipled 'reunification' with them ten years later. In view of the fact that the SWP leadership has begun to republish the documents relating to the split of 1951-53 it is vital and essential that a critical and retrospective analysis be made of this period. We say this because many people new to the movement may be tempted to draw the conclusion that the SWP represented an anti-revisionist and Marxist standpoint in the discussion and that their present renegacy is some sort of aberration not connected with the 'orthodoxy' of the fifties.

A study of the documents of this period is important too in showing how the ICFI elaborated its perspective and developed it through the struggle not only against the empiricist eclectic school of Mandel-Pablo but also against the pragmatism and mechanical determinism of the Cannon-Dobbs-Hansen tendency. Without a serious and critical study of this history no training of a new cadre of Marxists is possible.

From the inception of the struggle there were three tendencies present. First the leadership of the International Secretariat — Pablo, Frank, Mandel and Maitan — who rejected the dialectical method of Trotsky and succumbed to their superficial impressions of the growth of Stalinism and Social Democracy and the relative stabilization of European capitalism following the betrayal of the European revolution, the establishment of Bretton Woods and the huge flow of capital into Europe from the US under the Marshall plan. This group reflected the pessimism and skepticism of the European middle class which was thrown into confusion by the war and post-war developments. Instead of analysing the causes of the post-war liquidation of the revolutionary upsurge and making a sober estimate of the prospects for European economy these idealists rationalized the betrayals of bureaucracy by rejecting the revolutionary role of the working class and substituting for the revolutionary perspective of Trotsky a panorama of black despair consisting of atomic war and 'centuries of

deformed workers states.' The rejection of the conflict of opposites in society — the basis of every Marxist perspective — is nowhere more succinctly illustrated than in the deathless words of Pablo quoted by Bleibtreu-Favre in Chapter Two: 'For our movement objective social reality consists essentially of the capitalist regime and the Stalinist world.' (p. 54).

In theory and practice Pablo and his group rejected the revolutionary role of the working class and abandoned any struggle for the political independence of the working class from the bureaucratic agencies of monopoly capital.

A perspective which substituted the Stalinist bureaucracy for the working class and left no scope for the independent intervention of the working class was antithetical to the principles, method and traditions of the Fourth International and was therefore bound to cause a deep and irreparable split, which it did in 1953 when the discussion around the draft documents for the Fourth World Congress began. This split did not merely occur because of differences over interpretations of resolutions or because of factional intrigues in some sections. The split itself was a direct reflection of the class struggle and the action of the working class in a series of countries culminating in the historic defeat of French Imperialism in Dien Bien Phu and the abortive June uprising of the East German workers. These struggles of the working class sharpened the struggle inside the Fourth International intensely and brought it to the point of split. The Stalinist bureaucracy, far from being a revolutionary and progressive force, revealed all its counter-revolutionary potentialities to the full. In this sense Pabloism was crushingly refuted and Pablo's reactionary idealist method was completely exposed: but only in this sense. The objective events while they determined and conditioned the split could not and did not automatically resolve the conscious assimilation of the dialectic of the split — and its far reaching implications so far as party building was concerned. On the contrary, the coalition of groups opposing Pablo was not politically and doctrinally homogeneous. They were united by a common desire to prevent the bureaucratic strangulation of the Fourth International by the creation of a Byzantine cult of infallibility around Pablo and — most importantly — to prevent the liquidation of the Fourth International into a Stalinist milieu.

Behind this conditional and transitory unity there remained a dispartateness of method which revealed itself not only after the split, but what is more significant, before it. It is important to remember that

the split with Pablo did not remove the cause of this opposition of philosophical method but intensified it. The truth of this statement is clearly seen today.

Pablo's principal opponents were the British section led by Comrade Healy, the SWP led by Cannon and the French PCI (OCI) led by Lambert and Bleibtreu. The other groups such as the Argentinians, Chileans, Swiss, Chinese and Canadians played a secondary role.

From the start the British section viewed the struggle as the organic expression of conflicting class interests within the Fourth International and saw that this struggle could not in any way be separated from the concrete problems and tasks of constructing national sections. There was not a trace of idealism in this attitude, which was totally opposed to treating the opposition administratively, as a conspiracy, or to any propagandistic view of the factional struggle as a point-scoring debate. By approaching it in this way the British leadership were able to transform the factional struggles and the split with the Lawrence group into the basis for a more cohesive, politically stable and broader based organization.

The attitude of the leadership of the British section towards these questions of the building of leadership in the International is shown clearly, particularly in the letters of Healy to Cannon of May 27th and July 21st, 1953 (Chapter Four):

Pablo suffers badly from isolation in Paris. That French movement is a 'killer.' It really is impossible to hold an international centre together when you have no national section to help it. Real international leaders can arise no other way except through a basic experience and training in building and leading a national section. Pablo has not yet got this and as a result has grown impatient. This has reflected itself most sharply on organizational questions. On several occasions we have clashed very sharply on how to allocate the financial budget. He tries to cover ground which is absolutely impossible from our slender material base.

Building a party, as you know, is a very real thing, and so also is building an international. There is a limited amount of human beings and resources at our disposal and you can only utilize these in a certain way. Some things you can do; others, no matter how important, you cannot. The essence of leadership is to know what you can and what you cannot. A correct political line forms the backbone of all of our work, but it is not enough and sometimes unless one understands its practical application in the circumstances surrounding the movement at one's disposal, then it can be a simple matter to abandon it and slip into the camp of opportunism and adventurism. (pp. 112-3).

The second letter includes the following passage:

You will, I know, excuse all these details. In the normal course of events, this would not be necessary, but what we are grappling with here is two very different methods in building an international. From experience, we have learned that the strength of a national section lies in the maturity of its cadre. Maturity flows from the collective way in which a cadre works. This, as you know, does not arise from the brilliance of this or that individual in a particular field. It arises from the historical selection of devoted people who supplement each other's talents by learning to work as a team. Like the development of the class struggle itself the development of those who comprise the cadre is an uneven one. You find people who have many weaknesses in some directions, playing a powerful positive role inside the cadre. This is, in fact, not only the great strength of the cadre, but also its weakness. A responsible, mature leader has these things fixed in his mind at all times.

Another factor which plays a role, is the receptiveness of the cadre towards changes in the political situation. Some people have quite a flair for this, and make useful contributions in assisting the cadre forward. Yet, it is possible to find on occasions, in comrades who make turns easily, a certain feverishness which can flow from a basic instability rooted in class questions. An experienced cadre checks from time to time these manifestations, and enables the comrade or comrades concerned, to go forward toward a new, more advanced, stage of development. On the other hand, a cadre will *always* contain such people because they are an essential reflection of the development of the class itself. (p. 143).

The whole of this second letter is an essential text on the relation between theory and practice, which is identical with the question of building leadership, training revolutionary cadres. It represents an attempt not to axe Pablo, but to prevent a premature split and draw out of the struggle the maximum political advantage to help train a cadre. From this struggle for the essentials of dialectical materialism came the proposal of the IC sections in Europe, on the initiative of the British section, to reopen the discussion with the Pabloites *after* the split (see Volume Two).

The SWP leaders however (and the documents confirm this) resisted attempts to deepen the discussion and looked on the faction struggle in the Fourth International as a regrettable necessity and the Cochran-Clarke faction as a 'conspirac' instigated by Pablo' rather than as a necessary product of the stagnation and crisis within the SWP. The letter from Sam Gordon (Tom) to James P. Cannon brings out clearly the idealist motivation of Cannon and his stubborn refusal

to take a *class* approach to the struggle: 'If you conceive of the whole thing as a plot hatched by evil people for unclear motives, then I must say you are putting it on rather thick.' Elsewhere in the same letter Gordon appeals to Cannon: 'You can interpret that as duplicity, as a conspiracy, or what you will, but it is evidently politically motivated and that must be borne in mind as the key to an understanding of the struggle.' (S. Gordon to J. P. Cannon June 22, 1953 — p. 126).

And again, referring to the prospect of a renewed outbreak of factional warfare 'instigated by Paris', Gordon advises Cannon: 'For the formalism and one-sidedness of their politics is merely reflected in the super-centralization and lack of realism of their organizational procedures.' (*Ibid*)

Cannon's idealism in relation to the organizational question however was but the reverse side of his idealist and subjective brand of politics which, despite all the attempts of the SWP, are clearly exposed in these documents.

In retrospect it is clear that Cannon and the majority of the SWP leadership were unable to fight Pablo politically because they shared the same positivist method which though they differed in tactical questions, such as the attitude to Stalinism, nevertheless constrained Cannon to accept, without cavil, the entire perspective of Pablo on the inevitability of a Third World War. In the document on International Perspectives (p. 46) submitted by the PC of the SWP in June 1951 the SWP leadership unequivocally accepted the line of Pablo on the war but backed away when it came to accepting the implications of this line in relation to Stalinism. Pablo's basic premise was the power and homogeneity of US imperialism which would enable it to declare war against the USSR without having to overthrow bourgeois democracy and smash the working class at home. Pablo's thesis on war-revolution was aimed expressly against the revolutionary capacity of the US working class. After the split at the 14th Plenum of the IEC Pablo declared that nothing could happen in the US until 7 million Americans had died in an atomic war!

Cannon and the SWP leaders who formally based themselves on the belief that the US proletariat was all powerful paradoxically came round, to the same conclusion as Pablo in their contribution to the Third Congress: 'The growing strength of the anti-capitalist forces and the undermining of imperialism can just as readily hasten the outbreak of war as delay it. *In either event, the final decision rests with US imperialism.*' (p. 46 — emphasis added) Further on the authors

refer to Pablo's revisionist perspective, a source of considerable confusion and disorientation with approval: 'With the above propositions we are wholly in agreement.'

This agreement with Pablo was not accidental. In his letter to Sam Gordon June 4, 1953 Cannon explicitly defends the untenable theses of the Third World Congress in the following manner:

'I was surprised and disappointed at your impulsive action in regard to the Third World Congress documents. We accepted them *as they were written*. When they try to tell us now that we don't understand them, we do not reply by saying that we reject the resolutions. We say, rather, that we reject any special interpretation of them that is not clearly stated in the written language.' (p. 121 — emphasis in original).

Further on, in the same letter, Cannon emphasizes his agreement with Pablo:

'Our disposition here is not to withdraw our support for the written documents, but to watch alertly for the next stage of the evolution of the discussion on this question'.

To do this was to perpetuate the confusion on the line of the Fourth International decided in 1951. In the equivocal and pragmatist attitude of Cannon to the Third World Congress is contained not only the premise for the split of 1953 but the basis for the eventual reunification of 1963.

Pablo and Mandel could never have been able to impose their revisionist line on the Fourth International if it had not been for the unsolicited help from the SWP. Cannon's equivocations about 'unclear formulations' and allegations about the burning of SWP amendments to Third Congress resolutions do not in any way invalidate this fact. He was content to use the Third Congress Resolutions to endorse his 1946 American Theses, which represented a capitulation to backward trade union consciousness in the American working class. Any doubt on this score is irrevocably dispelled by Cannon's revealing letter to Dan Roberts written at the inception of the factional struggle in the States against the Cochran-Clarke tendency in March 1953: 'In reality the events analyzed in the Third Congress documents powerfully reinforce the American Theses, and give them more actuality . . . This is the time not to put the American Theses on the shelf but to take them down and read them, to recognize their *unity* with the documents of the Third Congress, and to make the general line as a whole, the axis of all our party work and education. My Los Angeles

lectures on 'America's Road to Socialism' ... have been conceived precisely in this spirit. I hope the example will be followed by others — by the whole party.' (*Speeches to the Party* — Pathfinder Press, 1973.) Regrettably Cannon's wish was fulfilled. The SWP subsequently degenerated into an unrecognizable caricature of itself. But that is another story.

In the meantime Cannon's pragmatic excursions into the field of theory were producing disastrous results in the practical work of the SWP and the Fourth International. In the US the Cochran-Clarke group pointed justifiably — if somewhat cynically — to the 1946 Theses as the source of 'false optimism' and 'disorientation' in the party and compounded the confusion already created by Cannon. More serious however was Cannon's two-faced and incredibly unprincipled intervention in the French party.

In France the faction struggle began immediately after the Third Congress when Pablo tried to solve the problems created by the sectarianism of the Lambert-Bleibtreu group by usurping the leadership and applying administrative measures. The crunch came in December 1951 when the Pabloite International Secretariat, in a document on Trade Union work, peremptorily demanded that the PCI (the Trotskyist party in France) Faction in the CGT dissolved itself and subordinate itself to the Stalinist bureaucrats. This was the death warrant for Trotskyism in France.

In February 1952 a member of the Lambert tendency — Daniel Renard — appealed to Cannon for help to prevent the complete liquidation of Trotskyism in France. The letter, which we republish, (p. 82 seq.) is self-explanatory. There was only one course open to Cannon — to denounce the IS and call for the suspension of the bureaucratic measures against the PCI. Such a policy would not only have alerted the whole Fourth International against Pablo's faction; it would also have helped to curb the syndicalism and sectarianism of the French majority.

Cannon's reply however was a pragmatic evasion of the principled issues of the conflict and an open endorsement of Pablo's organizational procedure: Cannon agreed with the revisionist line of the Third Congress and the measures adopted by the 10th Plenum of the IEC, and dismissed the danger of 'Pabloism' as a scare invented by the State-capitalists. Referring to a pro-Stalinist tendency he wrote: 'We do not see such a tendency in the international leadership of the Fourth International nor any sign nor symptom of it.' For the Pabloite

revisionists he had unstinted praise: 'It is the unanimous opinion of the leading people of the SWP that the authors of these documents have rendered a great service to the movement for which they deserve appreciation and comradely support, not distrust and denegration.' The reason for Cannon's warm appreciation of Pablo was clearly revealed in this letter. Apprehensive of a split Cannon advised the French majority to elaborate a programme jointly with its hangmen in the IS, 'to effectuate the imperatively-dictated entry into the Stalinist workers' movement and *eventually into a section of the Stalinist party itself.*' (pp 93-5; emphasis added).

The reply to Renard is the most trenchant indictment of the mythology recently created by the SWP that Cannon's leadership has always been the protagonist of principled politics and the best defenders of Marxism. What is abundantly clear is that the SWP leaders were only too eager to get an unprincipled compromise with Pablo based on a redefinition of Stalinism which would enable the SWP leaders to maintain a formal opposition to Stalinism in the US while allowing Pablo a free hand in Europe to liquidate the Trotskyist movement into a Stalinist milieu. 'Instead of attempting to provide a general redefinition of Stalinism', said the 'Contribution' to the Third Congress, 'it would be more advisable to recommend following their concrete evolution in each given case . . .' (p. 49 below).

Thus it was only when Pablo's politics produced organized factional work, by the Cochrane-Clarke group, against its elected leadership that the SWP took action against Pabloism. The 'Open Letter' of 1953 denounced these methods, indicated their political basis, and correctly called for an immediate break with Pabloism. But what was above all necessary was to clarify the movement in every country on the theoretical and political campaign to destroy Marxism which Pablo had undertaken and on the reasons for the SWP's failure to arrest this development much earlier. This would have given the whole movement greater insight into the nature of imperialism and Stalinism in the post-war period and the character of the theoretical struggle necessary to defeat them. Instead, the rejection of Pabloism was presented by the SWP merely as a stalwart defence of 'orthodox Trotskyism' against revisionism.

When the fundamental revision of Marxism by the Pabloites took other forms, the SWP leaders found themselves completely taken in. Because they themselves had not learned the lessons of the 1938-53 period which produced Pablo, they soon capitulated to the same

idealism and impressionism. They could not swallow Pablo's substitution of sections of the Stalinist bureaucracy for the revolutionary working class in 1953, but they easily digested the later Pabloite choice of the colonial petty bourgeoisie, the peasantry, and the students as such substitutes in the 1960s. These manifestations of the basic revisionism of Pablo happened to coincide with their own orientation towards the petty-bourgeois radical protest movement in the US and their resolute turn away from the working class. The SWP leaders *formally* accept Trotsky's perspective for an American Labour Party as the next great political step for the US working class. But they see themselves as this party, a reformist and centrist party, whereas the role of Marxists is to build a Trotskyist party on the independent foundation of Marxist theory and not simply on the level of working class consciousness.

Trotskyists throughout the world have the opportunity and the responsibility to learn from this split and the subsequent experience, from the standpoint of today's great revolutionary tasks. If it was essential in 1954 to study the great theoretical issues underlying the split it most certainly is today. But in these twenty years, a remarkable change has taken place. Not only have the forces of the IC in several countries undergone considerable development, but the SWP has reached a point where, for the worst possible reasons politically, it is forced to bring out into the open questions of our history and principles which it has itself prevented from being clarified for decades!

In 1963 the SWP ended its 10-year separation from the Pabloites and politically supported the spurious 'reunification' of that year.¹ The immediate grounds were that the SWP and the Pabloites had agreement on the nature of the Cuban revolution and its leadership. Cuba, according to them, was a workers' state, led by a political movement (July 26th Movement of Castro) which had been forced by pressure of events to successfully undertake the tasks of Marxist leadership. Castro was hailed as a 'natural Marxist'. Ben Bella of Algeria, we were told, would in all likelihood follow his path. The IC, and particularly the SLL, were vilified as sectarian opponents of the real revolution. So important was this agreement, said the Pabloites and the SWP, that the 'split' questions of 1953 were deliberately excluded from the discussion on reunification. In other words, an unprincipled unification was achieved, without a single one of the outstanding questions being clarified. The IC warned at the time that

¹ The Voorhis Act in the United States forbids actual membership of international political organizations.

these were not debating points but great historical factors which were pressing on our movement. If they were not consciously expressed and mastered they would wreak their own vengeance on the participants.

Within months of the 'unification' Pablo himself was gone from even the revisionist International.² But a thousand times more serious was the decision of the LSSP (Ceylon section of the Pabloites) in 1964 to join the bourgeois coalition government of Mrs. Bandaranaike in Ceylon (Sri Lanka). Here were the first fruits of the unprincipled 'unification'. For the first time a party claiming to represent the programme of the Fourth International had capitulated directly to the imperialists and their agents. An immediate split took place in the LSSP at the July 1964 Emergency Conference, with a small minority declaring itself the LSSP (Revolutionary). The majority accepted the bourgeois coalition and were expelled from the Pabloite International. But this left the greatest question of all untouched, passed over in silence: this great question was, the responsibility of the Pabloite leadership, including the SWP, for the actual betrayal in Ceylon. In the course of the 'unification' discussions their leaders prevented criticism of the course being taken by the LSSP, just as they blocked discussion of the basic questions (actually the same questions) underlying the 10-year split. The opportunists of the LSSP carried over their betrayal under the cover of these unprincipled agreements.³ The International Committee warned the LSSP (R) that the same degeneration would be repeated unless all these questions were now clarified in a struggle, and proceeded to lay the political basis for building an independent Trotskyist section of the IC in Ceylon.

The SWP itself was virtually politically liquidated into the petty-bourgeois milieu of the 'Fair Play for Cuba Committees' and that of the anti-war movement and the middle-class 'revolt' over student power, women's liberation, black nationalism, gay liberation. The depths were reached in 1964 with the unspeakable action of the SWP in sending a letter of condolences to the widow of the assassinated President John Kennedy. These, and not the principled cause of building a revolutionary party into the working class, are the politics behind the SWP's current bitter clash with the 'Unified Secretariat' in Paris. Hansen's criticisms of the Secretariat's support of guerilla

² Pablo has since announced that he no longer claims any connection with the Fourth International politically or organizationally.

³ See the documents 'Ceylon, the Great Betrayal' and 'Problems of the Fourth International'

strategy, the SWP's denunciation of the Pabloite opportunist characterization of the Vietnamese Communist Party: all this appears very 'orthodox' but is in point of fact no different fundamentally from the 'orthodoxy' of 1953. Along with the regular publication of the articles of Trotsky and the repetition of correct phrases and quotations goes an opportunist practice in the United States which remains separate from and untouched by this 'theory'.

The International Committee has fought above all to take the theoretical lessons of the split into the practice of building revolutionary parties. In the course of this struggle, the fundamental question which has come to the fore is that of the conscious defence and development of dialectical materialism as a theory of knowledge. Adherence to 'correct' programme and to 'orthodox' theoretical formulations, without a struggle to train cadres in the conscious method of winning new knowledge through practice, which comes into conflict with existing concepts, becomes a propangandistic and abstract resistance to the actual struggle for revolutionary parties to lead the working class to power. When the IC broke from the French Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI) in 1970, it was because of a division on this very question. Not surprisingly, the 'orthodox' Trotskyists of the SWP joined the OCI in attacking the alleged 'obsession' of the IC with dialectical materialism as the theory of knowledge of Marxism.⁴ Here we see the real face of the SWP in relation to its history. Novack, Hansen and all the SWP leaders turn their backs resolutely on the theoretical conquests of Trotsky in the 1939-40 struggle — the fight for dialectical materialism against pragmatism — but then want to appear as the protagonists of historical truth about the 1953 split 20 years after!

The documents in this volume are indispensable for an understanding of these vital struggles. Today the SWP finds itself locked in a bitter faction fight with those to whose bosom it returned in 1963. In a completely opportunist fashion, the SWP leaders resurrect the 1953 documents in order to 'prove' that they were always the defenders of 'orthodox Trotskyism' against the Pabloites. In point of fact, the documents show something very different. The arena in which Trotskyism has been fought for since 1953 is *not* the Pabloite Secretariat in Paris but is the actual struggle, led by the International Committee, to build revolutionary parties and to fight revisionism. It is the strength of the International Committee, particularly in the United

⁴ See 'In Defence of Trotskyism', IC 1972, reprinted 1973.

States itself, that compels the SWP leaders to re-open the question of 1953. They know that, by suppressing these issues in 1963, they condemned the SWP to an international alliance with those they now denounce, once again, as revisionists. The SWP's political representative in Britain, Sam Gordon (pseudonym 'Tom', and sometimes 'Joe'), as well as Cannon, from time to time wanted to draw immediate organisational conclusions from the recognition of the growing political opportunism of Pablo, but in no case did the British section allow itself to be rushed into any premature action. Methods were always sought which would permit the political development to emerge as clearly as possible. Cannon and the SWP leaders, the senior section in the International, had by their neglect of international leadership created the conditions for Pabloism in the post-war period. It was an entirely pragmatic, non-dialectical method to think that Pabloism could be defeated simply by making a 'clean break' when the problem was identified. In this situation, the British section leadership did everything in its power to prevent a premature and ill-considered shattering of the forces held together in the international movement during and since the war.

Cannon and the SWP leaders could see no further than the necessity for the organisational split to be carried through decisively once the political differences were defined. Again this formal and orthodox 'correctness' was in fact a separation of Marxist theory and revolutionary practice. It was expressed most clearly in Cannon's letter of April 24th, 1954 (Volume Two). Here Cannon insists that the Pabloites' own decisions of April 9th (to go ahead independently with their 'Fourth Congress') had 'closed the door' to any discussion about a common Congress, and had at the same time declared for Stalinism. Once again Cannon is able to say, so correctly from the formal standpoint: political differences on fundamentals, therefore complete organisational division. Every national section was supposed to jump into line because the SWP had made up its mind.

The real question was not to pronounce a verdict, as Cannon did, but to train leadership and develop Marxist theory in the process of struggle to do this. This could be done only through exhausting every aspect of the struggle, by positing the living experience of all the sections, in the changing world situation, on the theoretical struggle begun with Pablo. Instead, the fundamental objective reasons for Pablo's revisionism were left unanalysed; the opportunity to defeat the influence of pragmatism in the SWP was lost, giving rise to the

most craven liquidationism in that party within a very few years. As later volumes will show, the apparent decisiveness of Cannon in 1954 was in fact a refusal to enter into the real differences at the level of Marxist method. The consequence was that after the breakthrough of the Stalinist crisis only two years later, Cannon himself initiated the moves for an unprincipled 'unity' with the very revisionists he had denounced as having gone to the other side of the class barricades. But this time the forces of the SWP and the Pabloites were to be brought together on the basis of avoiding at all costs any probing of the questions of the 1953 split. Such is the manner in which those who reject the dialectic nonetheless are destined to provide a perfect illustration of its working. The same SWP leadership which in 1953 insisted on an end to discussion with the revisionists, combined with those revisionists in 1963 and 1964 to provide the political conditions for the greatest betrayal in the history of our movement: the entry of the leaders of the Ceylon section of the Pabloite 'International' into the bourgeois coalition government of Mrs Bandaranaike.

Undoubtedly, then, the period covered by the documents here published was a decisive turning-point in the history of the revolutionary movement. Here we find the political mechanics of the split which weakened the Fourth International on the eve of its greatest opportunities. We see in operation a propagandist 'orthodoxy' on the part of the SWP which was to prove the major obstacle in the struggle to build revolutionary parties. But above all we see in these documents the record of the long relentless struggle *against* this liquidationism. The forces of revisionism, reflecting the powerful pressure of the Stalinist bureaucracy and behind that of imperialism itself, threatened the very extinction of Trotskyism: but the continuity of the Fourth International was defended and definitively established in the International Committee and its sections. This is the inestimable theoretical, political and organisational contribution of those who built revolutionary sections of the Fourth International and on this basis fought for the development of Marxism in opposition to the revisionism of Pablo and of the SWP leaders who capitulated to that revisionism. Against this heritage, the current claim of the SWP leaders to be the defenders of 'orthodox' Trotskyism is exposed as completely bogus. The publication of these volumes will establish this beyond any doubt, and will form the essential basis for the training of thousands of revolutionary fighters, members of the Fourth International, which revisionism could not destroy.

Chapter One

The Fourth International and its history

The documents contained in this chapter provide the essential political context for the discussion of the historical questions of the 1953 split. For Marxists, the lessons of history are torn out of the past from the impulsion of the living struggle today. It is the revolutionary responsibilities of our own day which now make necessary and possible a true understanding of the past. The issues fought out in the struggles and splits of the past now emerge as the central questions for the whole working class in struggle: the over-riding need for independent revolutionary leadership, the irreconcilability of Marxism and counter-revolutionary Stalinism, the fight for dialectical materialism as the theory of knowledge of Marxism. As the revolutionary movement now fights in practice to take these questions into the working class, the real meaning of the past struggles is clarified. At the same time, those forces who joined the revisionists are thrown into deeper and deeper crisis, and forced to make a new reckoning, after so many years, with the theoretical questions their leaders chose deliberately to ignore.

Document 1 is the resolution of the International Committee (IC) of the Fourth International of August 1973, out of which the preparation of this present volume arose. Document 2 is the political perspectives resolution of the Fourth Conference of the IC (1972). The latter draws attention to the fact that Hansen and Peng pose as an 'orthodox Trotskyist' opposition in the Pabloite movement, and characterizes the opportunist nature of this 'opposition'.

DOCUMENT 1

Resolution of the International Committee instructing publication of the documents, August 24, 1973

For a discussion on the problems of the Fourth International

THE LEADERSHIP of the Socialist Workers' Party (USA) has chosen to open a public written discussion on the political questions underlying the split in the Fourth International which took place in 1953.

They have done this in the framework of the preparations of the Pabloite 'Unified Secretariat' for its long-postponed world conference, now due towards the end of 1973.

What is noteworthy is that the SWP leaders present themselves as the champions of the split from Pablo revisionism; the defenders of Trotskyist principle and programme against all capitulation to Stalinism.

In November 1953, the SWP published its 'Open Letter' to the world Trotskyist movement. This denounced Pablo and Pabloism; and in consequence the 'International Committee of the Fourth International' was formed, politically and organizationally independent of the Pabloite 'International Secretariat'. Ten years later, in 1963, the SWP went back to the Pabloites and dropped completely its association with the International Committee, and the 'Unified Secretariat' became the new name for the revisionist centre.

(Because of the reactionary Voorhis Act, the SWP could never actually affiliate to an international body).

In the period leading up to the 1963 'reunification', the SWP was characterized above all else by refusal to discuss the fundamental theoretical questions which had split the movement in 1953.

Now, ten years later, the sections of the 'Unified Secretariat' and their supporters, the SWP, are deeply divided on all political questions of strategy and tactics, yet none of them is able to return to the

basic principles of Trotskyism. The SWP finds itself in the minority internationally, and is now trying desperately to present itself as the defender of 'orthodox Trotskyism'.

Such is the enormous pressure of class forces as decisive revolutionary clashes loom up in all the major capitalist countries, that the revisionists are forced to return to the 'split' questions which they arrogantly swept aside as 'divisive' in 1963.

The first thing which must be said is that an enormous historical responsibility rests particularly on the SWP itself for having covered up these questions and disorientated all those militants who mistook Pabloite revisionism for Trotskyism.

The SWP leadership does not raise these questions again out of any concern for principle, but only because it has itself opportunistically degenerated even further in the last ten years. Its adaptation to the petty-bourgeois 'left' in the United States now makes it hostile to even the most tenuous and formal international connections.

Joseph Hansen and his collaborators in the SWP leadership are preparing, with the discussion they have belatedly initiated, to free themselves for their own narrow, national, opportunist adaptation. For this reason, their presentation of the historical questions is completely distorted, in order pragmatically to suit the immediate 'practical' purposes of the SWP.

The first articles published in this discussion* make it essential immediately to refute the lies of the SWP on this history. It is absolutely necessary that an international discussion be opened up, in the defence of Trotskyism against Stalinism and revisionism. But this can be done *only* on the basis of historical objectivity, with all the problems and all the documents brought into the open and faced up to honestly. This method is the absolute prerequisite of the theoretical re-arming of the Fourth International. It is the opposite of the method of the SWP.

Contrary to the claim of the SWP spokesman, it must be said, quite unequivocally, that Pabloite liquidationism, denounced correctly by James Cannon and the SWP in November 1953, had long been developing inside the Fourth International.

Throughout the post-war period to 1953 the SWP was the leading sympathizing section of the Fourth International and had the major political responsibility for the development of the movement. There

* *Education for Socialists* (SWP) June 1973.

can be no facing up to the real questions except on the basis of recognizing and analysing this refusal of theoretical and political responsibility and its disastrous consequences.

The political reality is that the SWP capitulated to the problems of permanent contact with the European sections. Good pragmatists, they pursued their work in the United States, and accepted Pablo as the European and international leader. Pablo pursued his own revisionist course, building up his administrative machine and relying confidently on the inability and unwillingness of the SWP to examine or criticize the revisionist concepts which he smuggled into the theory and perspectives of the movement.

To blame this development on the difficulties of obtaining passports or the misdeeds of the SWP's representatives in Europe is to reduce great historical questions to the level of petty, organizational details. The task facing revolutionists was to overcome these problems. The SWP politically turned against Pabloism in 1953 *only* when Pablo's methods threatened the internal regime of the SWP.

The 'Open Letter' of 1953 was absolutely necessary and correct. It opened up the possibility of really probing the depths of Pablo's revisionism and orienting the revolutionary movement, through that theoretical struggle, to the political tasks of the period opened up by the East German uprising and the French General Strike of 1953. The sections of the International Committee today still endorse completely the politics of the 'Open Letter', as they did in 1953.

The split precipitated by the 'Open Letter' (a split made necessary by Pablo's revisionism and its organizational consequences) caused considerable confusion in the world Trotskyist movement, and still does. At the time, the Fourth World Congress of the FI (1954) was pending. What was immediately and vitally necessary was political clarification of the questions underlying the split. This was necessary not at all to cover over the split, but to learn from its necessity. Today, the SWP tries to suggest that they did not really want a split. But their 'Open Letter' concludes as follows: '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 issues have broken through the manoeuvres and the fight is now a showdown'.

Next, the new SWP discussion material rewrites history to make the SWP the protagonist of political discussion for clarification of the split right from 1954, and to portray the Socialist Labour League in

particular as the obstacle to any discussion or any principled reunification. This is a lie, as the facts show.

In the spring of 1954 the International Committee sections in Europe unanimously proposed to the SWP that discussion be opened up with the Pabloites in order to struggle for the clarification of all those cadres shocked and surprised by the split. This would have meant a discussion of all the major political and theoretical questions facing the movement.

This proposal was made in the first place by Comrade G. Healy. When the IC accepted it and submitted it to the SWP, it was rejected by the SWP Political Committee and this decision conveyed to the IC in a letter of Farrell Dobbs, SWP national secretary.

The discussion could certainly have proceeded at that time, and was absolutely necessary. The reference to difficulty of travel and passports because of the aftermath of the McCarthy witch-hunt is nothing but an evasion, just as it was for the period before 1953. Year after year, the SWP allowed the split to continue without the theoretical clarification which would have resulted in great gains for the movement.

In essence, the SWP in this way showed its contempt for internationalism.

This was proved in 1957. After having rejected the IC's proposal for principled international discussion in 1954, the SWP, through Cannon, made its overtures in a letter to Leslie Goonewardene of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (Ceylon), *without the knowledge of the International Committee*.

It was only the insistence of the other IC members which compelled Cannon to abandon this attempt at an unprincipled compromise. In any case, the Pabloites rejected the proposal for discussion. The SWP leadership is well aware of this sequence of events, every detail of which was sharply brought home to Farrell Dobbs, SWP secretary, on the occasion of the IC's first International Conference in Britain in 1958.

In this way it became clear to the SWP at a very early stage that they could not treat the IC in the same way as they had handled their relationship with Pablo and the International Secretariat in the period 1945-1953. The IC sections, striving always to learn the basic theoretical lessons of revisionism and the split, established a method of political work which came into direct conflict with the narrow national requirements of the SWP.

It is certain that after Dobbs' 1958 trip to Europe, all the international work of the SWP was used for behind-the-scenes approaches to the Pabloites, while all the time professing solidarity with the IC. Cannon and the SWP tried to justify their 'unity' approaches with the claim that the Pabloites' reaction to the Hungarian Revolution (1956) brought them back to essential Trotskyist positions. In actual fact Pablo and Mandel advanced a programme which excluded the political revolution.

The reality was that the SWP was itself going rapidly back to Pabloite positions, and not the reverse. In January 1961, the SLL Central Committee addressed a letter to the National Committee of the SWP, drawing attention to the formulations in their publications which had a perspective of self-reform of the Stalinist bureaucracy. Above all, the SLL Central Committee analysed the complete abandonment by Pabloism of the building of independent revolutionary parties.

The letter called for the immediate setting up of an international internal discussion bulletin and the preparation of a Congress of IC sections as the prerequisite for any discussion on unity at that stage.

The SWP rejected this discussion, engaging instead in its independent relations with Ernest Mandel and Pierre Frank of the Pabloites, conducted through S.T. Peng. From this time they consistently avoided any principled discussion of the fundamental questions. And when the negotiations for unity came out into the open, they were explicitly accompanied by a commitment *not* to discuss the fundamental questions of the 1953 split.

When the International Committee, on the Socialist Labour League's proposal, then put forward the setting up of a 'parity committee' of the IC and the Pabloite Secretariat, the SWP accepted this, but simply used it as a cover for their own behind the scenes 'unity' negotiations with the Pabloites.

It is simply a lie to present the situation, as the SWP now does, as if the IC opposed unification of the world Trotskyist movement. Mandel functioned on the 'parity committee' for the Pabloites, and there was an agreed preparation of discussion documents and of procedure for their circulation in the sections. The SWP deliberately acted to avoid any circulation of these documents in their own ranks and sought only a way of effecting a premature 'unification' which *avoided* the discussion.

It was for this reason that the SWP, having reluctantly agreed to an

IC Conference before any proposal of a unification Conference, broke this agreement and prepared the 'reunification' Conference of 1963 without the IC majority. The SWP feared one thing above all: discussion of the fundamentals of revisionism as the real preparation for a principled unification.

Hansen also knows very well that on September 27, 1963, after the IC International Conference, the IC wrote to the Pabloite Secretariat saying that 'everything must be done to encourage the closest working relations under conditions whereby a principled unification of the movement could be achieved'. Among the proposals made to this end were:

1. That a world congress of the forces of the IC and the International Secretariat [Pabloites] should be convened during the autumn of 1964 . . .
4. ' . . . that this discussion must take place in all sections, not only in the leaderships, but in the ranks . . . '

The SWP, which now tries to put itself forward as the defender of principles, and to caricature us as opponents of unity, went along and encouraged the Pabloite Secretariat in *rejecting* these proposals.

Again, in 1970, when Comrade Healy, acting on a decision of the IC, approached the Unified Secretariat for discussion of all the outstanding questions in the world movement, the SWP, together with the Unified Secretariat, completely opposed this approach. They are politically consistent only in their permanent rejection of any principled discussion.

The real truth about the present attempt to raise once again the 1953 questions is very clear. The SWP went into the 1963 'reunification' with the rationalization that the old Pabloite liquidationism was gone, and it was possible to build the Trotskyist movement.

Instead, they are faced with the exact situation predicted in 1963 by the IC. The SWP, through its support of the 1963 'reunification', has played a foremost part in misdirecting a whole generation of the cadres of the SWP and the Pabloite sections. It is above all their rejection of political and theoretical discussion of the basic questions which has done this.

In point of fact, all the youth in the Unified Secretariat sections who tried to come to Trotskyism have been driven by the SWP into the arms of Pabloism. The SWP is as guilty as the whole Unified Secretariat for the 1964 betrayal in Ceylon and every other Pabloite capitulation to the bourgeoisie.

If the SWP now likes to come forward, spuriously as the defender of orthodox Trotskyism, against the anti-Marxist line of Mandel, Frank and Maitan, this is the grossest deception. It is the SWP itself, with its opposition to any fundamental discussion in the world movement, which has provided the political basis for the revisionist majority and all its betrayals. The SWP's criticism of Mandel and Frank is a criticism by a party which is moving rapidly to the right.

The International Committee resolves to charge its secretariat with the responsibility of preparing immediately the complete documentation of the relations between Pabloite revisionism, the SWP and the IC since the years immediately preceding the 1963 split, and publishing forthwith the edited documents for international discussion.

The IC, noting that the crisis in the 'Unified Secretariat' has driven the SWP, in its own distorted way, to open up the questions of 1953, challenges the SWP and the 'Unified Secretariat' to a full investigation and public discussion to establish the historical truth of this whole period.

DOCUMENT 2

Perspectives resolution of the International Committee fourth conference, 1972

I – Introduction: Our tasks in 1972, in relation to the founding of the Fourth International in 1938.

THE STRUGGLE to found the Fourth International in 1938 was undertaken in order to ensure the continuity of revolutionary leadership and of Marxist theory, from the first four Congresses of the Communist International, the work of Lenin and the Bolsheviks in the Russian Revolution, and the work of Marx and Engels. It had to be carried through in conditions created by a generation of great defeats for the international working class. This fight for the continuity of Marxism was a struggle against every form of adaptation to these defeats. It meant a fight to the death against the Stalinist bureaucracy which first ensured the defeats and then battered on their fruits. The opposition voiced by all those centrists who stood aside from the Fourth International of Trotsky was an adaptation to the bureaucracy, through the medium of which came an adaptation to imperialism. The founding conference of the Fourth International defined our epoch as one of capitalist decay, in which the historical crisis of humanity is concentrated and which must be resolved in the crisis of revolutionary leadership of the working class. Those who rejected, and still reject, the continuity in struggle of revolutionary Marxism with the Third International and the Russian Revolution, in fact reject the revolutionary role of the working class. Only the orientation to this class, whatever the temporary defeats, could provide the basis for the development of Marxist theory. Trotsky wrote: 'The laws of history are stronger than the bureaucratic apparatus'. The Fourth International, on this granite foundation, has continued to exist, and is being built today, only in constant struggle against all revisionism, which seeks to accept and adapt to the defeats of the inter-war years and the

dominance of the bureaucracy, treating these as unalterable historical facts.

These theoretical foundations have been under continuous attack since the birth of the Fourth International. In the years conditioned by defeats, and with the capitalist class able, through the collaboration of the Stalinists, to implement policies of relative class peace, the defence and development of Marxist theory could only be a slow and difficult task, the responsibility of a handful of comrades who were to a great extent isolated from any mass movement. Those conditions have now decisively changed. But we shall get a development of Marxism and the building of revolutionary parties only by starting from the gains of the long struggle for revolutionary continuity in the Fourth International. The profoundly revolutionary character of the contradictions underlying the surface phenomena of capitalist and bureaucratic 'containment' of the working class since 1944 could be grasped only through a conscious struggle for dialectical materialism, against all enemies. In place of dialectical materialism, revisionism in the Fourth International put subjective impressionism. For many years, they accepted the inevitability of bureaucratic control of the workers' movement. The working class was considered only as an unconscious 'pressure' creating centrist and even revolutionary developments within the bureaucracy. In the course of the years of struggle against Pablo, Germain, and later the SWP leadership, it was necessary above all to uncover, underneath the capitulation to bureaucratic and petty-bourgeois nationalist leaderships, the theoretical roots of revisionism. These were: the abandonment of the Marxist theory of knowledge, of the relation between consciousness and reality, between theory and practice; capitulation to the idealist philosophy of the bourgeoisie. The struggle against this ideological pressure from the class enemy is the only foundation for training the cadres of our revolutionary parties. At the same time, the revisionists find themselves undermined by the objective developments: capitalist world crisis and the explosion of the 'neo-capitalism' myth; revolutionary struggles in the advanced countries since 1968; political revolution in Eastern Europe; exposure in struggle of the petty-bourgeois leaderships, particularly in Cuba and Algeria.

The Fourth Conference of the International Committee now takes place under new conditions. The maturing of the imperialist crisis, signalled by Nixon's measures of August 15, 1971, marks the beginning of a new stage of the crisis of leadership. The conditions for the

development of Marxist theory by the revolutionary vanguard are now being transformed, as the masses in all countries are thrust into revolutionary struggles by the disruption of their conditions of life. The task of our Fourth Conference is to grasp the decisiveness of the change implied in these conditions, to politically equip all our sections with the basis for winning leadership of the working class. The greatest mistake today would be to ignore or underestimate the change, to carry on with the same perspectives and methods to which sections have become accustomed in the period since 1938. Such conservatism holds the gravest dangers of descent into centrism and opportunist adaptation. The objective conditions have now reached a stage where, on the firm basis of our long struggle for the continuity of Marxism, we can resolve the crisis of revolutionary leadership. Trotskyism has been forced to go through a long period of isolation, in which it was necessary to beat back every influence from the pressure of imperialism and Stalinism. The real history of Trotskyism, as the force to resolve the crisis of revolutionary working-class leadership, begins now.

II – The Capitalist Crisis

With the decisions of the American ruling class to remove the gold backing for the dollar, to impose import surcharges, to end the system of fixed parities, and to impose controls on wages, the basis has been removed for all the political relations through which the bourgeoisie has ruled since the Second World War. The post-war betrayals of international Stalinism had made possible the restoration of capitalist order in Europe, and thereby on a world scale. Despite the gigantic contradiction between the productive forces and the capitalist mode of production manifested in the Second World War, capitalism was able to survive, but only because of these betrayals. The Bretton Woods agreement of 1944, the new institutions like the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, and the inflationary Keynesian policies pursued in the advanced capitalist countries, were possible not because of some new-found strength of the capitalist system, but only because of the control of the working class's strength by the Stalinists, assisted by the reformists and the trade union bureaucracy. Now the intensified contradictions of capitalism have finally broken through these relations, which constituted essentially a retreat before the working class, and the class issues must inevitably be fought out.

The dollar crisis can only mean a succession of struggles for power by the working class of the capitalist countries.

In the years before the Second World War, the capitalists had used fascism to smash the working class of Germany, Japan, Italy and Spain. But fascism, once in power, had threatened the major capitalist powers, and they were compelled to prosecute a world war which, as always, brought revolutionary crises all over the world. There ensued a series of major defeats for capitalism, in Yugoslavia, in China, and in the loss of Eastern Europe. The establishment of deformed workers' states in these countries was subordinated to the Stalinist strategy of international class-collaboration, but it meant the loss of a vast portion of the world to capitalism. In Western Europe and the United States, the capitalists confronted a working class recovered from the depression of the 1930s. The history of capitalism since 1944 has been one of adaptation to the strength of this working class. Until 1971, the capitalists' guiding strategy has been to find ways of avoiding an all-out clash with the proletariat. Since the middle 1960s, the capitalist class has been forced to recognize the need to take back from the working class all its historical gains, but so far it has continued to try and do this above all through the reformist and Stalinist leaders. Nixon's August 1971 speech was the high point of the rapid developments since the gold crisis and the French struggles of 1968, a period in which the capitalists have been preparing to go on to the attack, as with the return of the right-wing Tory government in Britain.

But the war had also accelerated other changes in the relationships within the world capitalist system, changes which have been determining factors in the subsequent development of the class struggle.

The inter-war period had seen the emergence of American imperialism as the dominant economic power. The First World War, followed by the economic and financial collapse of the 1930s, had dealt especially severe blows to British capitalism. The United States, enjoying all the advantages of a late start in economic development, unencumbered with feudal survivals, together with a wealth of natural resources and a large internal market, took over the role which had been Britain's in the nineteenth century. The decline of Britain was, however, part of the general decline of Europe, a decline which was accelerated by the Second World War. For capitalism to survive after 1945, it had to depend upon America in the economic as well as the military and political spheres.

Given the decisive betrayals of the Stalinist bureaucracy, it was

largely on the basis of American aid that Western Europe was able to reconstruct its shattered economy after 1945. In the form of Lend Lease, then Marshall Aid, huge sums were directed into Europe by the US imperialists in a desperate attempt to control the social crisis which then threatened the whole of European capitalism after the war. This American state aid was followed and accompanied by large injections of private capital from American firms seeking the easy profits which a devastated Europe offered. This private and public capital has played a critical role in the European economy since the late 1940s, being closely connected with the tensions which have existed between Europe and America as well as with the subsequent development of monetary crises and now the chaos precipitated by Nixon's August measures.

This American capital was one of the main bases for expansion after 1945. It was closely associated with another: the series of technical changes which occurred in branches of industry both during and after the war. Stimulated by the needs of war, a series of new processes and even new industries appeared in this period: in electronics, engineering, synthetic fibres, computers, etc. These new, expanding sectors of the economy provided a profitable outlet for the large volume of capital which had previously either been tied up in the old declining, unprofitable industries of the 1930s, or had simply lain idle. The state, particularly in Britain, was to play an important role in effecting this transfer of capital. Under a Labour government, several backward industries, notably coal and rails, were nationalized, their owners heavily compensated, and state funds devoted to the restoration of these previously bankrupt industries so that they might provide cheap services and raw materials for the capitalist system. These changes were possible only because of the very depth of the crisis of the 1930s, a crisis which capitalism survived solely through the betrayals of Stalinism.

The so-called 'defence' industries were the centre for these technical and organizational changes. Expenditure on arms was to play an important role, along with a series of other changes, in the relative expansion which capitalism saw after the war. This was so particularly in the Korean War and the increased arms expenditure of the early 1950s. Through its state budgets, capitalism provided, often at very high rates of profit, a ready outlet for the commodities of the firms receiving defence contracts, and this tended to stimulate activity in related sectors of the economy.

These changes both in the overall structure of capitalism and in the relative weight between the capitalist economies were first reflected in the post-war monetary arrangements arrived at in the 1944 Bretton Woods Conference. It was at this Conference that the dominant role of American finance-capital and the dollar was formally recognized. For although sterling retained an important role in world monetary arrangements, it was a role which was now clearly acknowledged to be completely subordinated to that of the dollar. At Bretton Woods, it was agreed that all leading currencies should have their price fixed directly in terms of the dollar and that these prices should be fixed in fairly rigid limits which could only be altered through agreement with the leading capitalist countries and, in particular, with America. The basis of the system was the tying of the dollar to a fixed quantity of gold, at \$35 an ounce.

These arrangements did not represent merely the attempt to find new technical arrangements to overcome the contradictions of the old-style gold standard which had collapsed with the sterling devaluation of 1931. There was little new of a technical nature agreed at Bretton Woods, except that the dollar should replace the pound as the basic currency in international trade and finance. What was new was the recognition that another crash on the scale of the 1930s would endanger the whole capitalist system, and the decision by the capitalists to embark on a deliberately inflationary course which they hoped would bring sufficient social stability to appease and contain the militancy of the working class. Bretton Woods was an indication of the weakness and not the strength of capitalism, and, in particular, the growing loss of confidence which the capitalist class had in the very future of its own system. It has been in retreat before the working class, particularly the working class of Western Europe, since 1945 and must now pay a heavy price for this retreat.

The post-war settlement defined clearly a new stage in the relations between the major capitalist powers. While the politics of the capitalist world in the inter-war years developed in the framework of historical rivalry between Europe and America, there now began a period of definitive American dominance, though of course this did not mean that inter-imperialist rivalries disappeared. Revisionists took this dominance of the United States as a factor of capitalism's strength in its ability to survive and to deal with the working class. In reality, it prepared the eruption of capitalism's contradictions in even more violent and universal form, as has now become clear.

The capitalist class of the United States was compelled to take on its own shoulders the concentrated weight of the contradictions of world capitalism. Certainly America has a superiority in industrial technique, in scale of industrial organization, and in material and capital resources, which Europe will never equal under capitalism. But this unassailable lead is established at the time of decline of the capitalist system, so that the leader must take on all the insoluble symptoms of a world system in its death agony. US imperialism has been forced to take responsibility for attempting to suppress the revolution in South-East Asia, and has done so only at the cost of precipitating profound social and ideological crisis in the United States itself. The stimulus which the American capitalists were forced to give to Europe and Japan in the post-war years has, similarly, led inevitably to a situation where these capitalist powers have forced America into a full-scale trade war in order to correct an impossible imbalance of payments and loss of gold reserves.

It is clear that in the actual evolution of the crisis since the Second World War the late 1950s represent a decisive turning point. It was in this period that the American balance of payments deficit began to assume considerable proportions and arouse increasing fear about the stability and future of the dollar. The continual outflow of government and private capital in the 1950s, together with expenditure on arms in Europe and elsewhere, was by this time beginning to produce a situation where the claims against the dollar were rising at a rate which threatened the American gold holdings. In 1949 at the outbreak of the Korean war, America possessed roughly \$30 billion of gold in reserve. This has fallen to less than a third of that level, while foreign claims against the dollar — the cumulative result of the rapidly growing American deficit — amount to some four times the present gold figure. Yet the stability of post-war capitalism's international monetary management rests upon the guaranteed price of gold at \$35 per fine ounce, the figure first established in 1934, since which time domestic American prices have increased threefold. Throughout the period of the 1960s, American economic policy has been dominated by an attempt to deal with this payments crisis and at the same time bring the rate of price inflation under control.

The early 1960s saw some attempt to solve the emerging crisis at the expense of the colonial and semi-colonial countries. It was at this time, under Kennedy, that the American aid programme was drastically reduced and some attempt made to stem the flow of capital into the

'backward' countries. While these measures made little impact upon the foreign payments deficit, they had disastrous consequences for the economic and political stability of the colonial and semi-colonial countries. Under the impact of these changes many regimes which had earlier been able to balance between imperialism on the one hand and the Kremlin bureaucracy on the other, toppled — Algeria, Ghana, Indonesia and elsewhere — to be replaced with regimes more directly and immediately subservient to the interests of American imperialism. But it was clear that so unbalanced was imperialism at this stage of its decline that these measures alone were inadequate. Thus Kennedy, and later Johnson, had to extend their measures to cover Europe, and plans were announced again aiming at reducing the outflow of capital, limiting expenditure abroad on tourism, making some cuts in military commitments, tightening up the conditions for the granting of foreign aid.

Thus the stage was now set for the squeeze to be put on Europe. But it would be wrong to think that the American imperialists embarked upon this phase of their policy with any great confidence or with any firm unity amongst the capitalist class. They sensed, particularly in relation to the problems of British capitalism and sterling, that any major crisis in Europe, economic or financial, could under certain conditions reverberate throughout the capitalist system and threaten its entire stability. So while driven increasingly into this conflict with European capitalism, the Americans also desperately tried to limit its immediate consequences, especially in the financial sphere. From 1964 onwards, after the election of the Labour government in October, until the very end of 1967 they threw all their resources into a defence of sterling. Although Bretton Woods had established the supremacy of the dollar, it had been impossible completely to remove the importance of sterling as the major world reserve currency. British capitalism still retained enough of its nineteenth-century resources to make this impossible, and in any case, American imperialism would have been unable to sustain its world role without some assistance from the City of London. So for the Americans, the defence of sterling was an international question. And the depth of the crisis, even at this stage, is indicated by the fact that with the November 1967 sterling devaluation their rescue attempt proved a failure, despite the huge injections of capital made available to the Wilson government throughout the period.

The circumstances of the 1967 devaluation contain another important lesson in terms of the relation between the class struggle and the economic crisis. For it is clear that the real origin of this particular phase of the crisis is to be located in the period beginning in 1962. It was at this time — under Macmillan's Conservative government — that the British ruling class made its first, if indecisive, attempt to deal with its mounting economic problems. This was the period of the Selwyn Lloyd 'pay pause' and the deliberate creation, in the winter of 1962-1963, of considerable unemployment in an attempt to make the policy effective. In fact, the British Conservative government, meeting violent resistance from the working class, was forced to retreat in the period immediately prior to the 1964 election, they were once more forced into a policy of reflation and credit expansion, even though this produced a record £800 million balance of payment deficit and plunged sterling into a major crisis which the Labour government inherited on taking office.

In the same way, all attempts by the American ruling class from the late 1950s onwards have been frustrated by the powerful American working class, a working class which all the revisionist groups have tried to write off in the post-war period. Despite its low level of political development and the absence up to now of its own independent political party, the American working class, organized through its unions, has been the decisive factor preventing Kennedy, then Johnson and now Nixon, from making any impact on the level of inflation. The working class has been able to maintain and even advance its living standards throughout the 1960s despite continually rising prices. Not only has this undermined all anti-inflationary policies, it has increasingly called into question the competitiveness of sectors of American capital in world markets.

It is this strength of the working class, culminating in the automobile and steel contracts won in 1970-1971, which has finally driven Nixon and his advisers to precipitate the breakdown of the entire post-war capitalist order. The great pressure from the US working class had already necessitated a massive flow of capital from America to Europe, seeking higher profits, and this led to an impossible pressure on the US balance of payments. The steel wages settlement would have been a fatal blow to the competitiveness of US steel (already 20 per cent dearer than some imported steels) and of the many industries dependent on steel purchases. The August measures of Nixon were no 'technical adjustment', and they are not open for

negotiation. They are a life-and-death matter for US capitalism, and this struggle for survival will now dominate politics throughout the world. Brought to a head by the class struggle, focussing more and more on the US working class, this crisis will be resolved only after titanic class struggles, struggles for state power.

In France, the struggles of 1968 had already demonstrated that the working class retained all its strength and fighting capacity, despite decades of betrayals. The General Strike threatened the very foundations of capitalist power. In 1945 in France a weak and discredited bourgeoisie had confronted a strong, militant and armed working class, which was held back from state power only by the Stalinists. Within a few years, French imperialism was driven out of Vietnam and challenged in Algeria by a powerful national liberation struggle, but the Stalinists refused to mobilize the working class against these colonial wars, and did not take advantage of the crisis which they provoked for the French ruling class. In 1958 the reactionary forces in France combined with the revolt of the settlers to threaten military rule. With the open collaboration of the Stalinists and social-democrats, the bourgeoisie was able to call on de Gaulle, who established a Bonapartist form of dictatorship. Through a devaluation of the franc and other measures, with world capitalist economy still booming, French capitalism held down wages and was able to resume expansion in the early 1960s. But the miners' strike of 1963 showed that the working class was far from broken, despite its leaders. The Stalinists held back from any struggle under de Gaulle because his foreign policy suited the Soviet bureaucracy. But the 1968 General Strike, with the real threat of revolution, showed that a more definitive defeat of the working class than anything achieved under de Gaulle was necessary if the French bourgeoisie was to survive the coming crisis, heralded by the gold crisis of March-April 1968. This was true not only for France. Ever since the war, even in times of class 'peace', the workers of all the advanced countries continued to vote for the traditional working-class parties in a confused striving for power.

The chain of events opened up in 1967-1968 (sterling devaluation, gold crisis), which has now culminated in the August 15 measures of Nixon, brought capitalism face-to-face with its basic contradictions, but in a more threatening and acute form than ever before. This time the inevitable economic breakdown manifested itself first in the monetary system, would have to be tackled with a working class

strong and unbroken. Nothing fundamental was settled by the two-tier gold system imposed in 1968. In effect the open recognition of the collapse of the gold and dollar system was only delayed. The inflation of the post-war years left the dollar three times overvalued, and its devaluation was inevitable. Typically, the British Labour government was doomed after May 1968, caught in this great contradiction: on the one hand, the need to handle the crisis produced by inflation; on the other, to face a working class which had strengthened itself through the period of inflation to a point where the ability of the reformists and Stalinists to control it had been stretched to its limits.

Mandel and other revisionists, even at this advanced stage of the crisis, find rationalizations to keep the working class tied to its reformist and bureaucratic leadership. They forecast capitalism settling down to a 'slower cycle of growth', and argue that a crisis in the field of money (the dollar) is a mere reflection of 'real' economic developments. In point of fact the tying of the whole world's economy through the dollar to gold was the most acute expression of all of the contradictory nature of United States dominance, and it was no mere accident or 'appearance' that the world crisis developed in this sphere. Money is not just a means of exchange, a way of technically arranging the system, not just 'liquidity'. It is the universal equivalent, it is materialized abstract labour, reflecting in a developed capitalist economy the total socialization of labour. To the accumulation of money as capital, the whole system is subordinated. Money is 'the individual incarnation of social labour, the independent form of exchange-value, the universal commodity'. And, '... in a crisis, the antithesis between commodities and their value-form, money, becomes heightened into an absolute contradiction' (Marx). In the crisis of the dollar, a crisis in which there remains no stability of values, we find the most consummate expression of the basic contradictions of the whole epoch, between socialized production and private capital. Within the inflationary framework of dollar domination in the 1950s and 1960s, the basic strength of the working class remained unaltered. Inflationary policies became more and more necessary, and less and less possible. Far from capitalism having entered a new 'slower cycle of growth' (Mandel), it has in fact come to the point, with the collapse of the Bretton Woods agreement, where loss of confidence becomes predominant, and slump results. It is not a question of some sort of cyclical development on the higher plane of 'neo-capitalism', but of the most acute class struggle, as the

monopolists strive to wipe out surplus capitals and to destroy vast productive forces, including millions of productive workers.

Against the revisionists, it was necessary to reaffirm the characterization of our epoch. Capitalism as a mode of production is historically doomed because the further development of mankind's productive forces is barred by capitalist property relations. Revisionists reject this basic definition of the period in which we live: they characterize it as a period of 'neo-capitalism' which has been capable of producing a new industrial revolution. This question is fundamental. If neo-capitalism has succeeded imperialism then it was wrong to define imperialism as the last, highest stage of capitalism, the epoch of the proletarian revolution, which must lead to the construction of the new, necessary, socialist mode of production. Consequently, it would become a question of rejecting the revolutionary role of the working class. Revolutionism would become either a moral question or would have to be based on a sociological analysis showing what revolutionary forces are produced by neo-capitalism. Mandel's 'theory' is in fact an ideology, an inverted version of his real position, which is to justify the role of the new petty bourgeoisie, including the 'bureaucracy' of the working class in its pressure on the working class. This middle class certainly does have an important role in monopoly capitalism today, extending from business management to the state power, to the opportunist manipulation of the workers' movement, to the new forms of domination (including genocidal war as well as formal independence) over the oppressed nations, and to the imperialists' relations with the Stalinist bureaucracy.

Just as the revisionists' picture of the relation between their 'theory' and the petty-bourgeoisie is an inverted one, so their explanation of capitalism's 'development of the productive forces' is the opposite of the objective situation. It represents the bourgeoisie's own interests in relation to the productive forces: viz, that all developments in technique, science, in being used for the augmentation of profit, must be turned against the principal productive force, the working class, against the capacity of mankind to control its destiny through the co-ordination of all productive capacity in the battle with nature. Monopoly capitalism undergoes many different phases of development: sometimes, on the basis of wars and counter-revolution, a period of expanded reproduction takes place; at others, a period of contracted production, overall destruction of means of production and the wiping out of many capitalists, is necessary. Within world

imperialism there is uneven development, with different national capitalisms advancing to the detriment of others. In the competition between monopolies, in the conflict between nation-states, particularly in war, and in the reaction of the imperialists to the revolutionary gains made by the proletariat (the October Revolution, the third Chinese Revolution), there is a stimulus to technological and scientific innovation. But these developments are, in their origin, their life and their destiny, destructive of the productive forces, even though they express in contradictory form the potential satisfaction of human need under socialism. It is for the destruction of the working class, as the repository of human labour power, and for war, that these developments take place and which they serve.

Every development in technology and science therefore deepens the contradiction between the social relations of production under capitalism and further growth of the productive forces. International division of labour under a plan is a necessary condition of this further growth; the rivalry between the nation-state interests of finance capital and the monopolists therefore constantly prepares economic, political and military convulsions. Planned economy, with the abolition of private capitalist ownership, is an essential requirement of the growth of the productive forces; the primary necessity for the owners of capital, the finance capitalists and monopolists, on the other hand, is to harness technique only to the protection of their rate of profit. For these reasons, the technical and scientific elements in the productive forces are turned, in this revolutionary epoch, not against nature, as productive forces, but inwards, against society itself, to become forces of destruction of society and its productive forces. Far from capitalism having achieved a new lease of life, performed another 'industrial revolution', advanced the productive forces and become 'neo-capitalism', its continued existence has posed even more urgently the alternative 'socialism or barbarism'. August 1971 was a shattering verification of the Marxist struggle against revisionism; it created conditions where this alternative — socialism or barbarism — will be fought out.

III – The Relationship of Class Forces and the Tasks of Revolutionary Leadership

What political conclusions flowed in the recent period from our stress on the economic crisis? Inevitably these conclusions were the direct opposite of the political line of revisionism, which starts from

the apparent stabilization of capitalism and the control of the working class by its bureaucratic agents. Revisionism, in the course of the post-war period, arrived at the 'strategy' of structural reforms of the capitalist societies and self-liberalization of the Stalinist bureaucracy. In the Belgian General Strike of 1960-1961, Germain and the Pabloites advocated a coalition of the Socialist Party with the bourgeois Christian-Democrats on a 'structural reform' programme. It was the counterpart of this treachery to advise the Hungarian workers in 1956 to follow the Polish example and accept a 'realistic' centrist-Stalinist policy such as that of Gomulka, returning to the control of the Kremlin bureaucracy. The entry of the LSSP majority leadership into the coalition of Mrs. Bandaranaike in Ceylon in 1964 was part of the same abandonment of the revolutionary role of the working class and capitulation to imperialism, despite all the 'theories' about the 'epicentre of the revolution' being in the Third World. Algeria and Cuba were to prove that this talk of epicentre of revolution was only the 'left' face of petty-bourgeois opposition to the building of independent working-class leadership, abandonment of the building of independent revolutionary parties of the working class.

The economic problems of the United States, Japan and the European capitalist powers produce an acute political contradiction. All the techniques of adjustment through the use of social-democratic, Stalinist and trade unionist working-class leadership (collaboration of unions with the state, social-democratic and coalition governments, inflationary policies, etc.) have since 1967-1968 become for the capitalists not merely temporarily inappropriate but dangerous because they conflict with the need of capitalism to attack all the gains of the working class. Forced on by the economic crisis, the capitalist class, while utilizing to the last ounce the class collaborationist services of the Stalinist and social-democratic apparatuses, must actually drive towards an open clash with the working class: civil war and the preparation of corporatist forms of rule are on the agenda of history. The 'democratic' path is not a 'parliamentary, peaceful road to socialism', as the Stalinists claim, but a phase during which the elements of civil war are prepared. The institutions of this phase are not those of 'advanced democracy', but of an advanced stage of capitalist decay which has totally rotted capitalist democracy from within. Behind the face of 'advanced democracy' brutal suppression is planned. This contradiction is the dominant feature in the class struggle throughout Europe, and more and more in America.

But the Stalinist bureaucracy and its Communist Parties, together with the trade union apparatuses and the social-democrats and centrists of all types in the labour movement, are not spent forces. They are active and deadly agents of counter-revolution. Their betrayals are an essential instrument of the preparations of the imperialists. They play this role all the more consistently because the revolutionary wave of working-class struggle threatens their own very existence, and they act in full consciousness of their solidarity with the imperialists. Whatever the incidental phases of speech-making and demagogy by their leaderships, they will not in this period become the expression of leftward-moving forces, but on the contrary will be mobilized, together, or in rapid succession, or with a division of labour, to break up or head off the upsurge of the working class.

The undefeated proletariat is rapidly testing out, working through and exhausting the forms of struggle familiar within its established organizations. The role of the social democrats, centrists, Stalinists, and their revisionist apologists, is at all costs to restrict the working class to these forms, to perpetuate the fatal illusion that a quantitative build-up of pressure through these forms will achieve the workers' aims. Such a political line leaves intact the bureaucratic leadership (with perhaps a few 'left' modifications or infusions from the Stalinists, the centrists, and the revisionists themselves, as in the Belgian General Strike, the administration of Ben Bella, the British Pabloites' services to the 'left' trade union bureaucrats, etc.) In fact, of course, the 25 years since 1945, in which the bourgeoisie — and particularly US imperialism — have used to the utmost these compromise forms of control, have covered over the accumulation of contradictions which require an entirely opposite solution. The role of revolutionary leadership is to give direction to the mounting workers' struggles in such a way as to prepare for the real perspectives of capitalist development. The essence of this preparation has been to fight to give independent leadership in the struggle of the working class, to break the working class from reformist and Stalinist leadership of all kinds, to take advantage of the last period's upsurge in the class struggle, to differentiate before millions of workers the revolutionary leadership of Trotskyism from the capitulation of the revisionists.

There has been a new revolutionary wave in the struggle of the international working class, especially since 1968. This new wave, coming after a long period without major defeats, has provided the

basic changed conditions in which the Fourth International, founded necessarily in the period of catastrophic defeats of the 1930s and growing up under the heavy blows of fascism and Stalinism, will be built as the international revolutionary leadership. But this success will come only out of a theoretical and practical overcoming of all the contradictions of the development of the class struggle, of the crisis of working-class leadership and of the struggle against revisionism within the Fourth International. In the situation of preparation of struggles of revolutionary magnitude, there is inevitably the threat of counter-revolution on a massive and bloody scale. This threat is concealed behind the screen of reformism, Stalinism and revisionism, defending the mechanism of class compromise.

The workers' own experience brings them into actual conflict with the mechanisms of reformism and Stalinism but it cannot by itself break through them. On the contrary, the last 25 years encourage the illusions in trade union militancy and reform measures by mass reformist and Stalinist parties. *The working class is in danger, therefore, of being driven to the very brink of the struggle for power while still being reinforced in reformist illusions.* To smash through this contradiction, to prepare the conscious vanguard within the working class for this struggle for power, this is the essence of the fight against revisionism since the 1940s, of the construction of the parties of the Fourth International.

These were the elements of a qualitative change in the international relationship of class forces accumulated by the end of the 1960s. The revolutionary struggles of the French and Czechoslovak workers in 1968 were the first major battles to express the breaking up of the post-war political class relations. These struggles had already been anticipated by the turn of the situation in Greece. There, even a return from the post-civil war repressions to limited 'democracy' with the direct collaboration of the Stalinists in 1966 had proved impossible, and had ended in the imposition of military rule. Since the 1968 struggles, the continuous strike movements in Italy, paralleled by the resurgence of fascism, the 1970 martial-law measures in Canada, and the virtual civil war in Northern Ireland, together with the return of the right-wing Tory government in Britain, have all indicated very concretely the qualitatively new dimension of the class struggles inevitably prepared by the gathering economic crisis which has now struck.

In every one of these countries — and in all others, for the capitalist

economy is now more than ever before an inter-connected whole, in which the law of uneven development makes the situation more explosive, rather than providing sectors which will escape the main trends — this new dimension is the preparation of confrontations between the classes on the decisive question of state power. In industrial trade union struggles, workers will proceed as if the old forms of organization and consciousness, the old mistrustful coexistence with opportunist leaders, remain as effective as during the boom. Great dangers confront the workers' movement because this conservatism enters into the sharpest contradiction with the objective political developments at national and international level. The bourgeoisie, with its state power and its agents within the labour movement, prepares consciously to break the working class and to behead its revolutionary leadership. The ruling class senses, from the vantage-point of all its economic and political requirements, the need to impose entirely new forms of rule, and it proceeds very deliberately to act.

The decisive role of the Trotskyist movement has been and must be to develop political consciousness, Marxist theory, in order that the conscious preparation of the proletariat can defeat that of the class enemy. This can be done only on the basis of a correct appreciation of the economic crisis, and of the inevitable break-up of the reformist compromise.

If these were the rapidly maturing elements of the change in the world political situation, then the August 1971 measures of the US government, acting for the great monopolies and banks, made inevitable by the same basic economic developments, had the role of crystallizing these elements into that changed situation: a situation characterized by struggle for state power. In the class battles leading up to the conquest of power the working class, because of its political backwardness, will in some cases be able to march forward only after the shock produced by sectional or temporary defeats, in which reformist illusions must be shattered only by the actual new experiences in the class struggle. And only through the independent intervention by the revolutionary forces before, during and after such actions, can the necessary lessons be learned. The working class has demonstrated beyond any doubt that it is capable of fighting stubbornly and tenaciously, but there is no way of escaping the legacy of reformist and Stalinist leadership: it must be faced up to and combated through every experience of the working class in struggle. This

is what places such a heavy responsibility on the Trotskyist forces. The sections of the International Committee will have to consist of cadres trained in the basic theory and history of the Marxist movement, able at every stage, through upsurges of the class as well as through setbacks, to wage the struggle against Stalinism and reformism, at the same time boldly advancing the policy and programme on which the working class must fight to defeat the ruling class.

IV – Leadership and the Fight Against Revisionism

Whilst the rapidly deepening recession and collapse of the world monetary system drive the capitalist class to the right, the Fourth International has the responsibility of answering the ruling class in a way which concentrates everything on the central issue of resolving the crisis of leadership, defeating the Stalinists and the reformists, taking advantage of the insoluble crisis in their ranks. Such a task can only be accomplished by parties which start from the most profound analysis of the historic tendencies of the world capitalist crisis, and which have based themselves completely on the long struggle against revisionism in the Fourth International.

The political essence of this revisionism was liquidationism. During the post-war period and the boom of the 1950s and 1960s, this liquidationism led to wholesale treachery, in which the Pabloites in one country after another collaborated with reformists and Stalinists, in many cases directly against the Trotskyists of the International Committee. In Ceylon and Algeria they collaborated openly with the bourgeois governments, even entering the coalition of Mrs. Bandaranaike. In every case they worked with counter-revolutionary forces against the construction of independent revolutionary parties. The cadres who fell into this revisionist trap were told to adapt themselves to the supposedly inevitable appearance of left centrist trends within the bureaucratic apparatuses. In the period which has now opened up such liquidationism and capitulation to opportunism and centrism becomes even more deadly. The evolution of N.M. Perera and the LSSP in Ceylon is only a mild anticipation of this process. From 'united left front' they went to a bourgeois coalition government, and thence, via the 'peaceful road to socialism', to the brutal suppression and incarceration of thousands of worker and peasant youth. In the situation now entered into by the workers of the advanced capitalist countries, any capitulation to centrism, any com-

promise with theories that revolutionary parties can be developed naturally out of the radicalization of the working class, or through the regrouping of 'leftward-moving' forces, will be treachery, with fatal results. *Everything* now depends on the training, in practice and theory, of a cadre which understands that it is the independent leadership of the Fourth International alone which can provide the pole of attraction for all the best elements of the working class and the youth, who are driven towards revolutionary consciousness by the crisis, because of the decisive breaks in the old relations, but who cannot attain that consciousness except in a struggle between our own forces and the Stalinists and reformists. This must predominate over all tactical considerations in our work in the labour movement. It is only the assembling and educating in struggle of such revolutionary parties which can provide the real possibility for the working class to win to its side the best forces from the intellectuals and the middle classes and peasantry. Centrist waiting and spontaneism of any kind is a direct assistance to the ruling class and the Stalinist bureaucracy, facilitating their conscious day-to-day work of breaking up every manifestation of the growth of revolutionary consciousness.

In the United States, the inevitable concentration of the economic crisis on the dollar means that the American working class moves to the centre of the political stage. Insulated to a certain extent from the accumulating international contradictions in the recent period, so long as these were covered up by the incessant inflation of the dollar, the US working class is now exposed to the shock waves of all these contradictions at a new level. Yet this working class is equipped with only economic organizations and individualistic trade union consciousness adequate to the boom and the days of undisputed US world domination. Nowhere more sharply than here, therefore, is the question of revolutionary leadership posed.

The revisionists of the Socialist Workers' Party have played a treacherous role in obstructing the revolutionary preparation of a cadre in the United States. When the Socialist Workers' Party in 1963 broke relations with the International Committee and openly returned to Pabloism in the so-called United Secretariat, they evaded all principled questions of the continuity of the Marxist movement, and proceeded from the appearance of agreement on the immediate 'concrete' issue of the Cuban revolution. Far from being, as was claimed, a turn towards revolutionary developments, this was the very opposite. By accepting the theory of an epicentre of world

revolution in the colonial countries, the SWP was writing off the American working class.

By welcoming Castro's regime as a workers' state and Castro as a 'natural Marxist', the SWP waged a frontal attack on the very fundamentals of Marxist theory and on the building of independent revolutionary parties. The SWP's Cuba campaign was actually a turn to the liberals and the middle class through the 'Fair Play for Cuba Committee'. Their telegram of condolences to Mrs. Kennedy was the crude but true expression of this reactionary course.

Such an orientation could only produce a party and a youth movement, the Young Socialist Alliance, which was dominated by the politics of middle-class protest, suppression of the independent programme of the working class, and open hostility to Marxist theory. It was from this standpoint that the SWP, along with the whole United Secretariat, developed the 'analysis' of sectors of radicalization: of the youth, of the Negroes, of women, etc. They worked in these spheres, and in the anti-war and student movements, as conscious opponents of any turn to the working class, and they opposed all attempts to develop the independent line and organization of the working-class revolutionary leadership. In every case the independent demands of the working class were subordinated to the preservation of alliances with the middle class, and this was excused by references to the dangers of sectarianism and the need for a truly mass movement. The fight for the American Labour Party, the building of revolutionary fractions in the trade unions, the training of a force of young Marxist revolutionaries to carry this struggle into every sector of the labour movement — this was left to the Workers' League, in collaboration with the International Committee, which has been built through a consistent fight against the opportunism and anti-internationalism of the SWP.

The verbal opposition of Hansen and Peng in the recent period to the line of Germain-Maitan-Frank is not a departure from these revisionist politics, but a further development of them. According to Hansen, it is now necessary to turn away from the Germain-Maitan thesis of guerrilla struggles, particularly concentrated in the colonial countries. Hansen draws attention to the disorientation of the Latin American revolutionary forces by Castroism and guerrilla-ism, and calls for a return to the 'orthodox' Marxist positions on the urban struggle, on the central role of the proletariat, and on the revolutionary youth. Not only was Hansen the chief agent imposing these

disastrous theories on the revolutionary cadres in Latin America in 1961-1963, but his own party, the SWP, has also shown in its politics that Hansen's 'orthodoxy' is but a cover for consistent disorientation of the youth into the camp of petty-bourgeois radicalism.

Most important of all, Hansen himself proposes to 'correct' the course of the United Secretariat without any political and theoretical accounting. To do so would mean an objective analysis of Hansen's own role in 1963, the essence of which was to engineer an unprincipled unification without any theoretical or historical discussion. The SWP's original 1953 break with Pablo had remained at a purely empirical and national level, without going to the class roots and the theoretical essence of Pablo's tendency. Now the SWP has turned full circle after a tortuous 20-year-long empirical blundering. Hansen once again asserts 'orthodox' Trotskyism against the crudest Pabloism, having himself been the creator of the very situation in the world movement which he seeks to change. The development of the world Trotskyist movement can in no circumstances take place along the road of compromise or fusion with this anti-theory tendency, but only by the most implacable theoretical and political struggle against it. A generation of Trotskyists will be trained in the United States only through a determined struggle to turn to the working class and consciously develop dialectical materialism against pragmatism and against this disastrous leadership of the SWP. The building of the Workers' League, fighting on the programme of the International Committee, is therefore at the centre of the tasks of the IC. From this development will come the source, for the international movement, of a qualitative leap in Marxist consciousness, precisely because in the tasks of the American proletariat are concentrated in highest form the international contradictions.

Nixon's measures of August 15, 1971, denote the beginning of an entirely new stage in the class relations in the United States, not only in the long term but immediately. Industrial struggles, through Nixon's insistence on wage control, are brought into the centre of politics. The imperialists now restrict cheap imported goods, reduce the purchasing power of the dollar through devaluation, and step up an intensified exploitation for competition abroad. Inevitably this means direct attacks on the living standards of American workers. It means that the resistance to these attacks, beginning as trade union struggles, is immediately answered by the ruling class as sabotage of the national interest. The US imperialists are forced in the direction of

political reaction, and must strike blows against the working class of a type not experienced by a whole generation. This will be a rude shock to millions of workers with reformist illusions bred by the boom. These struggles will be the framework within which Marxists must develop in the United States, as in all the advanced capitalist countries.

The student, Negro, and anti-war movements of the late 1960s in the US, like the anti-Vietnam war protests and the 'student power' manifestations in Europe and Japan, were not, as the revisionists claimed, the first wave of a new type of revolutionary anti-authority movement springing out of the specific contradictions of 'neo-capitalism'. On the contrary, they were but the heat-lightning flashes anticipating the entry on to the scene of the working class all over the world.

The petty bourgeois and the student youth are moved by various separate expressions of the crisis, expressions in the ideological and political super-structure. But these elements can never produce the decisive class force for the socialist revolution. The proletariat will also from time to time reflect the developments in the super-structure, but great changes in the mass movement, the indispensable prerequisite for revolution, derive from the shocks produced by the contradictions in the very economic foundations of the capitalist order. The only correct orientation for the radicalized youth of the 1960s was a turn to prepare the resources and cadres for the great working-class struggles now placed on today's agenda by the economic crisis. This was the meaning of the IC's struggle for Marxist theory against impressionism, for the building of revolutionary parties against liquidation into middle-class protest movements, for the theory and programme of struggle against imperialism and bureaucracy, against the revisionist theories of a new stage of capitalism with new types of basic contradictions and new revolutionary elites. The training of cadres is not a formal task of education plus organizational experience, in preparation for deepening crises and intensified struggles. The revolutionary leadership must constantly struggle to integrate all the effects of the historical crisis, not only as they appear in the experience of the working class but also in the objective relations between all classes, and in the reflection of these relations in the consciousness of all classes.

Marxist theory must be developed through intervention in all these spheres, and in struggle *against* the existing level of consciousness in

the working class. The spontaneous consciousness of the effects of the crisis in the working class is an inadequate and conservative consciousness. Not only is it restricted by the objective limits of the workers' experience, but it is all the time subjected to the developments in bourgeois ideology and its agencies in the workers' movement. Only a conscious fight for dialectical materialism against this ideology at every point can be the basis for the training of cadres.

Revisionism in the Fourth International has always been directly opposed to this conception. Pabloism abandoned the revolutionary party and attributed a revolutionary role to sections of the Stalinist bureaucracy and the nationalist petty bourgeoisie. It is just as dangerous to proceed, as the OCI does, on the basis of elaborating a programme to 'correspond' to the aspirations of the working class. This mechanical and anti-Marxist approach to the question of consciousness actually leads to a capitulation to existing opportunist trends in the labour movement. It assumes that the experience imposed on the workers by capitalism will bring about a growing rejection of the Stalinists and reformists, leaving scope for a 'regroupment' around the revolutionary party. The politics arising from this false theory are called, wrongly, the working class united front.

The fruits of this revisionist approach have now been seen at the international level. The OCI's 'reconstruction' of the International amounts to a series of organizational blocs with centrists and opportunists in opposition to the Trotskyists of the IC majority. Essen was the open manifestation of this, to be followed by the OCI's declarations on the Bolivian revolution. The real construction of the FI must proceed by the assembling and training of the most advanced workers and youth into independent revolutionary parties, and not on such 'regroupments'.

Since 1944, the national-liberation struggles of the colonial peoples have occupied the front line of the direct struggle of the masses against imperialism. This colonial revolution, which the military oppression of the imperialist powers has failed to stop, has however remained isolated from the struggle of the proletariat in the metropolitan countries. In this, the counter-revolutionary role of Stalinism in all its teachings is most thoroughly exposed. Whether in its Soviet or Chinese forms Stalinism has claimed to give solidarity and support to the colonial peoples but has in fact played a decisive role in disciplining the workers of the advanced countries while the capitalists pursued compromise Keynesian policies. Vietnam, Cuba, Indonesia,

Korea, and the Latin American, African and Asian liberation struggles of the last 27 years — all have received verbal and even limited military support from Stalinism. But the essence has been that Stalinism has been the principal obstacle to the international mobilization of the only force, the working class, whose struggle can guarantee the completion of the process of permanent revolution and resolve the problems of the colonial masses. 'Peaceful co-existence' means in fact the maintenance of brutal military oppression and the eventual success in some cases of extreme right-wing accessions to state power which they use to suppress the masses. These are the tendencies expressed from Vietnam to Algeria, from Indonesia to Egypt, from West Africa to Cuba and Latin America.

The role of the revisionists was to serve as an accessory of counter-revolutionary Stalinism in these great struggles. Not only did Pabloites join the Ceylon coalition in 1964, and Pablo serve as Ben Bella's official adviser; they conducted the protests against the Vietnam war in such a way as to deliberately obscure the counter-revolutionary role of the Stalinist bureaucracy. Leninism was vulgarized and trampled on. The protest movement was justified, in the words of the Pabloites themselves, by an appeal to quotations from Lenin to the effect that the first duty of a revolutionist in an imperialist country is to support the liberation struggles of the colonial peoples. Behind this vile deception, alliances with liberals and Stalinists were placed higher than the independent interests of the working class and the building of the Fourth International. In the name of Lenin and Trotsky, the essence of their work, the building of independent proletarian parties, was rejected, and the colonial peoples were stabbed in the back yet again.

Inside the colonial and semi-colonial countries, revisionism again directly assisted the Stalinist bureaucracy and the nationalist agents of imperialism, by accepting petty bourgeois nationalist leaders as the revolutionary representatives of the masses. They completely rejected the essence of Lenin's position and the theory of Permanent Revolution: the construction of independent proletarian parties, leading the working class at the head of the oppressed peasantry, as the only force able to resolve the tasks of the democratic revolution and go beyond them to the workers' power, as part of the international proletarian revolution.

The prospects for the proletariat in the colonial revolution now undergo a transformation, as the working class of Europe, America and Japan is inevitably drawn into the battle for state power by th

precipitate development of the economic crisis. The struggles in the colonial countries, having raged since 1944, now come together with the revival of the revolutionary struggle in the metropolitan countries at an entirely new level. But this coming together of the struggles poses the most acute contradictions and dangers. Imperialism hastens to impose its crisis, so far as possible, on the colonial masses. It impels a brutal swing to the right in the Sudan, Egypt, and throughout the Middle East and it seeks the direct collaboration of the Chinese as well as the Moscow Stalinists to impose military dictatorship in India and Ceylon. The Stalinists' support of the junta in Peru and the right-wing coup in Bolivia are proof that the same class relationships have matured in Latin America. The end of the boom has meant a quick end to the middle-of-the-road role of sections of the nationalist bourgeoisie, and everything now depends on the independent role of the working class which can be exercised only under the leadership of parties of the Fourth International. The sections of the Fourth International in the colonial countries will therefore be faced with mobilizing the working class to repel the attacks of reaction, to lead every new mass struggle produced by the convulsions of the economic crisis, and to participate consciously in the building of the international revolutionary leadership. Above all it is necessary to orientate completely along the line of the independent revolutionary party against Stalinism and petty-bourgeois nationalism. These are the lessons of the whole post-war period and of the fight against Pabloite revisionism, confirming all the basic positions of Lenin, Trotsky and the Third International. If these lessons are not learned now, then the new period we have entered holds the gravest dangers.

Latin America, with the Cuban question at the centre, similarly manifested the decisive issues in the world class struggle and in the fight to build the Fourth International. In 1963, the 'reunification' of the Pabloite forces led by Frank, Mandel-Germain and Maitan with the Socialist Workers' Party, was effected primarily on the supposed establishment of a Cuban workers' state by a petty-bourgeois leadership under Castro, which had thereby become Marxist or Trotskyist through a process of natural evolution. Here was to be found the concrete historical expression of the long-advocated liquidation of the Fourth International in favour of spontaneous development from the 'new world reality'. The 'reunification' also held out the prospect of Algeria following in the footsteps of Cuba and becoming the first

workers' state in Africa, with Ben Bella 'another Castro'. The International Committee was condemned as sectarian and blind to the 'facts' of Cuba's supposed break with imperialism. *Dynamics of World Revolution Today*, published in June 1963 as the document of the 'reunification' said:

The emergence of mass revolutionary forces led by parties or tendencies which have developed outside the realm of Stalinist control (Cuba, Algeria) has introduced a most powerful disintegrating element into international Stalinism, favouring the development of a revolutionary left wing. (page 15)

From Cuba the conclusion was drawn that the revolution could succeed in colonial countries 'even with a blunt instrument' (page 5). Fidel Castro's purging of the Escalante group in Cuba was welcomed as a critique of bureaucracy in the tradition of Lenin and Trotsky! (page 35).

In drawing up the balance sheet of these political positions, it is above all necessary to emphasize the method of constructing the Fourth International that is at stake, and to draw the lessons today. The International Committee proposed then, as it proposes in a different context and a different form today, a discussion of all outstanding political questions which embraces all sections attached to both the International Committee and the Pabloite Secretariat (now the 'Unified Secretariat'). It is, of course, no accident that Ceylon, for example, is missing from the 1968 and 1969 documents of the Unified Secretariat's World Conference. In 1963, the Ceylon section was mentioned in *Dynamics of World Revolution Today* as the only mass party in the Fourth International — only one year before this party entered a bourgeois coalition! 'Unification' was effected in 1963 only on the basis of *suppressing* discussion of differences and excluding the International Committee from the discussion. Ben Bella was imprisoned by the Boumedienne regime, which imposed a more right-wing nationalist regime in Algeria. Algerian militants under the influence of the revisionists, especially Pablo himself, were blinded by the theory of 'blunted instruments' and became the victims of the right-wing coup, as against any supposed 'left' development. The FLN produced no revolutionary development and drove no Stalinist party in a 'revolutionary direction'.

In Cuba the Castro movement, already merged with the Cuban Stalinists, moved completely into the policy orbit of world Stalinism.

As foreseen by the analysis of the International Committee, the Castro government, through its control of the state offices and its alliance with counter-revolutionary Stalinism, entered upon the course which eventually will increase the dependence of Cuba on world imperialism and deprive the working class of many of the conquests won in the last ten years.

Castro began in 1966 his open assault on Trotskyism in Latin America; the 'Castroite' guerrilla strategy failed in one country after another. Loyal to the Stalinist bureaucracy which guaranteed prices for the sugar crop, Castro kept silent on France May-June 1968 and then supported the Warsaw Pact intervention in Czechoslovakia. Under pressure from the Soviet bureaucracy to restore good relations in Latin America, the Castro regime did not support the persecuted students of Mexico. Now, as the Stalinists welcome the Peruvian junta as a 'revolutionary' government, so does Castro abandon any pretence of fighting a Latin American revolution and seeks agreements with the so-called 'left' governments of these countries.

Undoubtedly the US investments of the past decade in Latin America have encouraged an upsurge of the workers' and peasants' movements. This rise of the *working class*, which gives the real hope to the historic struggle of the rural poor, continuing throughout the continent, requires Trotskyist leadership; requires proletarian revolutionary parties able to oppose the Stalinists' collaboration with imperialism. This upsurge of the working class, together with the inescapable problems of trying to build up an autonomous Cuban economy on the basis of sugar-culture, is the forcing-house behind Castro's inevitable acceptance of the Stalinist bureaucracy's pressure to move back to the American imperialist camp, via closer relations with Peru and then with the Organization of American States. The Castro government, far from being the leadership of a revolutionary party at the head of a workers' state, was on the contrary a Bonapartist caretaker for the Cuban bourgeoisie, holding the masses in check.

Just as the militants, particularly youth, coming forward in struggle in the advanced capitalist countries can go rapidly through the experience of exhausting the traditional leaderships and testing out centrist tendencies, so in Latin America the 'Castroite' appearance of an alternative to Stalinism has had to show its true nature. In both cases it is the depth of the world crisis which has forced this development. Revisionism's crisis naturally reflects directly this rapid exhaustion of the centrist and petty-bourgeois layers upon which it depends.

Castro now follows the Kremlin bureaucracy in hailing the regime of the military junta in Peru as 'revolutionary'. What the junta represents is a bonapartist dictatorship, directly subservient economically to US imperialism, but politically able temporarily to control sections of the masses through measures of so-called 'nationalization'. This will more and more be the pattern in Latin America. Brutal suppression of the peasant masses in their struggle for land accompanied by 'land reform' benefiting a better-off minority; a period of relative expansion and 'reform' in industry through new relations negotiated with the US monopolists; integration of the trade unions into the state machine; preparations for repression of all independent working-class organization; 'revolutionary' nationalist demagoguery of the bonapartist rulers, supported by the Stalinists. Castroism, aided by the revisionists, has become the apologist for this development, poisoning the development of all those militants it could influence among the workers, the youth and the poor peasantry.

The election of Allende in Chile holds the same dangers. His 'Marxism' represents the immediate needs of US imperialism: to lull the masses to sleep while the best conditions are created for the expansion of US investment. The Stalinists and Castroites, behind the deception of a unity against the most reactionary forces, support such regimes and use them to strike out against the building of independent revolutionary parties based on the strategy of the permanent revolution and the programme of the Fourth International.

The Pabloite revisionists inevitably enter an insoluble crisis in Latin America at this point. It is the very entry of the proletariat as the decisive force, now needing a leadership and strategy to lead the poor peasantry behind it and armed with the programme of Trotskyism, that makes necessary the changed political nature of those Latin American regimes. This, and not adaptation to the new regimes, provides the basis for the development in Marxism in Latin America, and already produces the determined elements who are fighting to build the Fourth International in Latin America around the International Committee.

The lessons of Bolivia, following on Ceylon, Algeria and Cuba, bring home with the greatest urgency the necessity of parties of the Fourth International fighting on the basis of the Permanent Revolution. Necessary above all else, after the accession to power of Torres, was to build a party which was proletarian and revolutionary in programme and composition, able to lead the masses on the question

of land reform. But the workers' organizations were subordinated to the centrist policy of conditional support for Torres. The way was left open for the right-wing militarists and fascists to win time and support in the countryside and effect a successful *coup d'état*. Support for Torres could only have this outcome. Caught in the illusion of a 'dual power' which could effect a gradual transition through struggle against reaction, the revolutionary vanguard was politically disarmed, and this meant the working class was disarmed. While the masses laboured under this illusion, the right wing prepared the counter-revolution. The resistance of the workers and students was soon overcome because there was no independent revolutionary preparation.

The regroupment of Trotskyist forces in South and Central America will take place only if the lessons of the Bolivian events, and the lessons of the Pabloite capitulation to Castroism, are learned. The only road is: the construction of independent proletarian parties as part of the building of the Fourth International.

In Asia, the people of Vietnam are now directly joined in struggle by the masses in Ceylon and in Bengal. But this new upsurge of the colonial masses coincides with the deepest crisis in the advanced countries. For this reason the Stalinist bureaucracy, in Peking as well as Moscow, turns more resolutely to the imperialists. When the bureaucracy supports reaction in Pakistan against Bangla Desh, and supports the Bandaranaike government in Ceylon, it is betraying the future interests of the Vietnamese revolution as well as building up for massive repressions in India and Ceylon. But this is a natural consequence of the Stalinist bureaucracy's policy since 1968. They betrayed the revolution in France and brutally suppressed the Czech workers, they helped break the Spanish miners' strike, they shot down the Polish workers in 1970. The fact that Mao's as well as Brezhnev's counter-revolutionary role is more and more expressed in these first stages of the economic crisis of capitalism can constitute a great advantage to the Trotskyist movement, provided we fight everywhere to train the independent leadership through the struggle against these betrayals.

V - The Tasks of Building Revolutionary Parties.

The Stalinist bureaucracy senses very well that the insoluble imperialist crisis means mass revolutionary struggles. These struggles, with power as their perspective, threaten every basic premise of

the bureaucracy's relations with imperialism, and open up to the workers of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union the prospect of a united international revolutionary struggle, for the social revolution against capitalism, and for their own political revolution against the bureaucracy. It is for this reason that the bureaucracy turns on the one hand to the imperialists and on the other to sharper repression at home.

It was always true that the bureaucratic-military means to which the bureaucracy restricted the defence of the USSR actually defeated their object, because they operated as part of an overall strategy which strangled the only real force able to defend the gains of October, i.e. the international working class. Thus today, the collaboration of world Stalinism with imperialism, far from making it more 'peaceful', actually opens the door to the growing right-wing and militaristic tendencies which always arise at times of capitalist crisis. The capitalists are driven by necessity in the direction of re-conquest of the USSR, Eastern Europe and China, and the Stalinist betrayals are calculated to divide and weaken the working class within each capitalist country which must fight for its own power if capitalist reaction is to be halted. As part of the international role of Stalinism, Stalinist parties will undoubtedly lead workers in some cases to defeats.

There will be no short cuts around these experiences as the working class goes through its preparation for the decisive struggle for power. The working class will test out its existing leaders and organizations, and the IC sections must find every way of breaking the masses in action from the Stalinists and reformists, posing always the question to all those who still command the allegiance of the working class: take the state power, break with the bourgeoisie.

However, the new crisis after August 15 will very soon have effects in which the time taken to pass through some of these experiences is greatly reduced. Sections of workers will be placed in situations where they will learn more in a few weeks than in a lifetime. But this does not mean a pleasant educational exercise under 'favourable' conditions. Rather, it involves profound shocks in the whole way of life and thinking of the working class. Only Marxists who struggle to develop their understanding of dialectical materialism, of the real development of consciousness, will be able to break from routine, from formal expectations and propaganda methods, and instead find new ways of extracting new knowledge from the objective changes, and from this

developing theory and programme for the next stage of the practical revolutionary struggle. It is in this sense that only parties trained in a conscious struggle to develop dialectical materialism against all enemies, all forms of idealism, will be equipped for the approaching struggles.

The crisis is fundamentally one of revolutionary leadership. Our task is by no means just to find adequate expression for the developing moods and demands of the masses as they are spontaneously driven into action. It is to give leadership *against* the centrist traps into which these spontaneous movements will fall. The initial struggle will shatter the existing relationships and conceptions, but left to itself the result will merely be a coexistence of militancy and 'left' thinking with the existing reformist and Stalinist leadership. The Trotskyists must conduct an all-round political and theoretical struggle against capitalist ideology in all its forms in order to break the ideological domination imposed by the bourgeoisie through reformism, Stalinism and revisionism. This means a conscious fight to start from the building of the independent revolutionary cadre in every country, at the same time studying with the greatest care the actual development of the working class, but in no case confusing the latter with its pale reflection in sectors of the apparatus.

In the course of development of the new phase of capitalist crisis, centrism will appear at every major turn. In appearance it corresponds to the level reached by sections of the working class just breaking from reformism. Given the independent intervention by Trotskyism against centrism, then we can expect the enormous tension created by the economic crisis to provide conditions in which the centrists will be very rapidly exposed for the opportunists they are. But here lies great danger: the capitalist class needs every new upsurge of the working class to be broken in its early stages, and it relies on the centrist leaders to carry out the necessary betrayal. To combat and defeat this centrism is not therefore a propaganda task, but a life-and-death matter for the working class. It can be dealt with only by a party whose cadres are trained on the whole body of Marxist theory.

What flows, therefore, from our theoretical analysis of the present economic and political situation, and from all the basic experience of our movement, is the paramount need to struggle on the basis of dialectical materialism for the independent development of our own revolutionary party in every country. This, the creation of a decisive pole of attraction for the best elements driven forward by the crisis,

and not some centrist adaptation to 'new forces', is the fundamental requirement of the working class and the youth. To go deeper and deeper into the masses, as the new stage of the crisis requires, is a task that cannot be undertaken except through the most decisive concentration on the development of Marxist theory.

The Third Conference of the International Committee in 1966 adopted a resolution based on the report of the Conference Commission on 'Rebuilding the Fourth International and the Tasks of the IC'. Asserting the continuity of the Fourth International since 1938 in struggle against Stalinism and against Pabloite liquidationism, this resolution emphasized above all else the building of independent revolutionary parties in every country. Such parties can only be built in opposition to all tendencies to syndicalism and spontaneity. In the epoch of wars and revolutions, and especially in the period since the early 1930s where the crisis of revolutionary leadership predominates, all such tendencies quickly fall prey to centrist treachery. The very fact that the imperialist crisis forces more and more millions of the masses into conflict demands precisely that a leadership is forged which can establish the political independence of the working class.

The proletariat will not abandon its traditional trade union and political organizations immediately to take the road of revolution. It will first act while still within the framework of these organizations, producing a crisis within them. The resolution of this crisis is a conscious task which can be undertaken only by parties of the Fourth International. The cadres of the Fourth International fight within the mass organizations of the working class to defend the trade unions from the capitalist state; they conduct a political struggle to remove the opportunist and Stalinist leaderships as the basis of the fight for proletarian democracy within the trade unions. All sectarianism, turning away from the mass organizations, must be resolutely opposed. It is essentially in this fight against the opportunist leadership, intervening on all the basic questions confronting the working class to win cadres and build the revolutionary party, that the struggle to unite the working class takes place. In this period of the crisis of revolutionary leadership, the struggle to build the independent centralized revolutionary leadership is a fundamental, principled issue. To the building of the party all tactical questions are subordinated in the direct sense that every aspect of work — in the unions, in the youth movement, in propaganda, etc. — is planned and controlled

from the party, with its perspectives worked out from the standpoint of building the party necessary to lead the working class to power.

The role of a daily party newspaper in this fight is indispensable. It is the organizer of the party, constantly struggling to create a political homogeneity of the work and consciousness of all members of the revolutionary party. It gives the party the necessary striking power in reacting to the sharp political turns characteristic of this revolutionary period. It takes to a new level the struggle of Trotskyism against Stalinism and all the agents of capitalism within the working class. It is the concrete realization of the perspective of resolving the crisis of leadership, enabling the fight for revolutionary consciousness to be conducted on the political, the economic and the theoretical fronts in a way which is enriched and unified by the daily necessity of intervention in the class struggle.

The Third Conference of the International Committee also decided to set up a youth commission working under its direction. This youth commission undertook the immediate tasks placed before it — organization of mass participation in the Liège demonstration against NATO and the Vietnam war in October 1966, and convening an international conference of revolutionary youth organizations (begun as the International Youth Assembly, summer 1967). There is no doubt that the radicalization of youth in the 1960s was, as always, the anticipation of a renewed revolutionary upsurge of working-class struggle. For this reason the orientation of the sections of the International Committee towards the youth was correct and of great importance. It has strengthened the cadre of the IC sections in preparation for the great class battles which began in 1968. This new revolutionary stage of the class struggle provides qualitatively new conditions for a mass Trotskyist youth movement. The youth can now march forward no longer comparatively isolated from the adult workers, but on the contrary, given strength and confidence by the actions of large sections of the working class.

The political development of the revolutionary youth is greatly facilitated by this relationship and the struggle against all forms of opportunism and adventurism in the youth can be carried through under very favourable conditions. Naturally the youth come into the struggle with no experience of the fundamental clash between imperialism and the proletariat. Their enthusiasm and energy, so essential to the building of the revolutionary party, have to be tempered and given greater force through the absorption of all the lessons

of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat. These lessons can only be learned in the school of Lenin and Trotsky, in the building of parties of the Fourth International. There is thus no separation whatsoever between the building of the revolutionary party and the building of the mass revolutionary youth organization and youth International. The International Committee thus has a primary responsibility for the development of an international youth organization which places itself clearly and openly under the banner of Trotskyism, of the Fourth International.

The history of the Fourth International, as of the Third International set up under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky, proves beyond any shadow of doubt that the laying down of a correct programme, even with the most impeccable historical forebears and preconditions, does not provide automatic sureties of the development of revolutionary leadership. Not complacency, but the most vigilant, combative and scrupulous attention to theoretical questions, checking on every perspective and every development, constantly turning the cadres of every section towards fundamental theoretical questions, will build the revolutionary party. This is the most decisive lesson of the history of the Fourth International and the struggle against the revisionists. Development will not come from any combination of adherence to programme with the enthusiasm of the youth and the influx of fresh forces from the struggle of the working class. It will come from the battle to develop and deepen Marxist theory against every pressure from bourgeois ideology. The deeper the crisis of imperialism, and consequently of its bureaucratic agencies in the labour movement, the more pressing the tasks posed before the revolutionary leadership, the sharper is the pressure of all forms of idealist thinking inside the revolutionary party. There is no road to the building of the revolutionary party, no road to workers' power, except this one. It is precisely the possibility, under today's conditions, of building the Fourth International into the world leadership at which Trotsky aimed, that poses the task of deepening dialectical materialism in the conflict against all forms of revisionism, of negating the whole period since 1938. The struggle against revisionism is the essence of preparation. It prepares the revolutionary party to fight for the leadership of the working class in overturning all the defeats and obstacles placed in its way by imperialism and the Stalinist bureaucracy.

The essential task before the Fourth Conference of the International Committee is the theoretical and political preparation of all its sections, and of all those now coming towards the International Committee, to establish in the immediate future parties which will successfully challenge the Stalinist and reformist leaderships and lead the struggle for workers' power.



Chapter Two

The Third World Congress

The Third World Congress of the Fourth International, held in 1951, was the last before the split. Pablo's liquidationism had already found expression in his article 'Where Are We Going?', published in February but not brought into the pre-congress discussion. The confusion in the Congress can be measured by the fact that it adopted contradictory resolutions on Eastern Europe and on Yugoslavia — the latter, drafted by Pablo, proclaiming that Tito's Communist Party had broken from Stalinism and led the Yugoslav workers to revolutionary victory.

The responsibility of the SWP leadership is clearly demonstrated in Document 3, written as a contribution to the World Congress. Its presentation was sabotaged by their representative, George Clarke, and the SWP leaders later cited this as an excuse for their failure to take up a struggle against Pablo (p. 160 below). Its contents, however, belie any claim to have made a principled fight against revisionism (see the Introduction to this volume).

Document 4 does represent an attempt to lay down an opposition to Pablo by leading members of the French section. They were however dissuaded from publishing it by Ernest Mandel (Germain), who also refused to submit to the Congress his own 'Ten Theses on Stalinism' expressing differences with Pablo. It was this unprincipled conduct which prepared the way for Pablo's axeing of the French majority some months later.

DOCUMENT 3

Contribution to the discussion on international perspectives by the Political Committee of the SWP, June 5, 1951

Contribution to the Discussion on International Perspectives

The main propositions in the 'Theses on International Perspectives' are as follows:

1. Since the Korean conflict, imperialism has plunged into accelerated military and political preparations for a new world war.
2. These preparations will inevitably encounter resistance from the masses suffering from the effects of militarization (lowered living and working standards, attacks on their rights, etc.).
3. The imperialist drive toward global war is taking place in an international situation which is unfavourable to capitalism and threatens to become still worse.
4. The growing strength of the anti-capitalist forces and the undermining of imperialism can just as readily hasten the outbreak of war as delay it. In either event, the final decision rests with US imperialism. The American imperialists may plunge into a general war precisely in order to keep the disadvantageous relationship of class forces from getting worse.
5. A Third World War unleashed under such conditions would from the start acquire the character of an international civil war, especially in Europe and Asia. It would be a war waged by the imperialist bloc against the USSR, the People's Democracies, China, the colonial revolutions and the revolutionary labour movement in the capitalist countries. It will be a war of capitalist counter-revolution for the restoration of private property, colonialism, and other forms of servitude against the international revolutionary movement in all its diverse forms.

6. Such a war would differ from the previous two world wars in important respects. First, it will not be a struggle for world domination between rival imperialist blocs but primarily a class war. Second, it would not come about as the culmination of a series of defeats of the proletariat and its political prostration. It would come rather as a result of serious setbacks to imperialism — not at a time when the workers and colonial peoples are crushed and weakest but when imperialism itself is being dealt hard blows. Consequently, the immediate effect of another world war will be not the blunting and suppression of the class struggle but its extreme sharpening to the point of social paroxysms.

7. This analysis of the world situation makes necessary the following orientation and holds out the following perspectives for the revolutionary movement:

a. The preparations and even the outbreak of world war are no occasion for despair or defeatism in the ranks of the vanguard. On the contrary, it must be viewed as opening up considerable revolutionary possibilities on the international arena, provided the vanguard pursues a correct line and takes full advantage of its opportunities.

b. Marxists cannot take a 'neutralist' or abstentionist attitude toward the contending forces in the impending war. They must be intransigently opposed to the imperialists and their agents and unambiguously align themselves with the antagonists of imperialism which have a different social nature, tendencies and aims. This *class* position which clearly differentiates between the contending camps should be made manifest in all political activity and the press.

c. In the movements, countries and forces headed by Moscow and the Stalinists or by the reformists, Marxists must clearly distinguish between social regimes, forces and movements of an anti-capitalist kind and their bureaucratic and opportunist leaderships.

d. Wherever the masses are acting against the capitalist regimes, the Marxists must participate, with their own programme by the side of the workers, peasants and colonial peoples in their struggles with the aim of deepening and widening the movements along revolutionary lines. Under certain conditions this may require entry into the Stalinist-controlled movements and even critical support to regimes under their auspices, as in China.

e. This necessarily involves at the same time a struggle against the Soviet bureaucracy and the exploitation of the world crisis of Stalinism for the building of a new revolutionary leadership. It

requires systematic efforts to get closer to the working masses in Europe and Asia now under the influence or domination of Stalinism.

f. In countries where Stalinism is weak and the reformists are the dominant force as in England and India today, it means work among the masses and within the parties now following the reformist leaders. In countries where both Stalinism and Social Democracy are weak, as in the United States, it means contending directly with the union bureaucracy and capitalist representatives for leadership of the workers.

With the above propositions we are wholly in agreement.

At the same time, in our opinion it is necessary to expand and strengthen the theses along the following lines:

8. The necessity to oppose the imperialist bloc and to defend the conquests of October against imperialism does not mean support to the diplomatic moves or military strategy of the Kremlin, as the Theses themselves indicate. The unfoldment of the class struggle and the lines of class interest in the course of war would not in all instances and all places necessarily coincide with the official governmental or military line-ups. The case of Yugoslavia illustrates such a condition today. Similar cases may arise in course of the war itself. In the period ahead Marxists confront a twofold problem: On the one side, that of defending the conquests of October against imperialism and on the other, of defending the revolutionary struggles and their conquests (as in Yugoslavia today) against the Kremlin.

9. The direct counter-revolutionary role which Moscow has played and continues to play will not fade into the background in the event of war. On the contrary, it will come to the fore whenever and wherever independent mass movements threaten to pass beyond the control of the Kremlin or the parties it dominates. Regardless of the effects upon the defence of the Soviet Union, the Stalinist bureaucracy will not countenance independent mass movements, and, least of all, oppositional ones. If the Kremlin feels that such independent movements jeopardize its interests it will not hesitate to repress them.

Unfolding revolutionary movements may in certain circumstances sweep the agents of the Kremlin along and they will seek to head them in order to control them. It is necessary to warn that the more such movements tend to sweep over their heads, the more openly will the Stalinist bureaucracy tend to collide with them and seek to crush them.

10. While the greatly aggravated and steadily worsening international situation considerably reduces the chances for a deal between the Kremlin and the imperialists, the possibility of such a deal still remains. The conservative Stalinist bureaucracy has far from rejected its perspective of living peacefully with imperialism, if only it is permitted to do so. To this end it is prepared, as it always has been, to sacrifice the interests of the workers everywhere. Such moves as Togliatti's bid to the Italian bourgeoisie demonstrate that the Kremlin has far from lost hope for a deal. While any such deal, if concluded, can only prove temporary and partial, it would nevertheless modify the international situation and our own perspectives in the period immediately ahead and therefore should not be completely left out of our analysis.

11. Instead of attempting to provide a general redefinition of Stalinist parties, it would be more advisable to recommend following their concrete evolution in each given case, in their specific relations with the Kremlin on the one side and with the mass movement in their own country, on the other. At the same time, it is imperative to reaffirm our previous characterization of Stalinism as a counter-revolutionary force. Stalinism remains what it has been — before, during and following the last war. It is a national reformist bureaucracy and an agency of imperialism in the world labour movement. What is new in the situation are not any changes in the nature and role of Stalinism but the new conditions in which these parties, including the Kremlin, now find themselves and as a result of which they have been plunged into crises.

The possibility and the probability that the mass movements in some countries may sweep over the heads of the Stalinist parties opens up two variants of development. If such parties go along with the masses and begin to follow a revolutionary road this will inescapably lead to their break with the Kremlin and to their independent evolution. Such parties can then no longer be considered as Stalinist, but will rather tend to be centrist in character, as has been the case with the Yugoslav CP. Those parties, however, which in conditions of mass upsurge remain totally tied to the Kremlin will unfold their counter-revolutionary role to the full.

The characterization of Stalinist parties as 'not exactly reformist' parties is both vague and misleading and should be eliminated.

12. The analysis of how the Stalinist parties may conduct themselves during wartime in capitalist countries, tends to be one-sided in

the theses. It is stated that in certain circumstances such parties may be compelled to outline a revolutionary orientation. This is not excluded. But the contrary is likewise not excluded. In certain circumstances the Stalinists could and would even in the midst of war work to strangle revolutions. This variant ought to be emphasized no less than the other. In addition it ought to be stressed that with the outbreak of war all these Stalinist parties will not escape from the conditions of crisis now convulsing them but rather will find this crisis intensified many fold.

13. In harmony with what has been said it is further necessary to emphasize that the tactical orientation does not imply any conciliation with Stalinism. On the contrary, these tactics are designed to enable us to merge with the living movement of the masses and to combat Stalinism all the more effectively.

14. While the immense revolutionary upheavals which the outbreak of global war would provoke in the imperialist sectors is correctly emphasized, it should be pointed out that such a war would likewise aggravate the latent conflicts and arouse independent mass movements against the Kremlin's dictatorship in the areas it dominates. This will very likely come about in the East European countries where the CP's have already had to be purged of their native leaderships and among the Soviet nationalities which have directly experienced the evils of Stalinist oppression. The task of the Marxists will be to link themselves with these anti-Stalinist movements of the people, give them a clear and consistent anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist expression, and guide them in a revolutionary socialist direction.

15. The perspective of 'deformed workers' states' as the line of historical development for an indefinite period ahead should not be recognized in the theses implicitly or explicitly. Backward countries, whether in Eastern Europe or in Asia, constitute only one of the main channels of revolutionary development. The extension of the proletarian revolution to one or more advanced countries would radically alter the entire world picture. This aspect ought to be put forward in the theses. The retardation of the socialist revolution and its resulting confinement to a backward European country was a historical condition that largely determined the course of world history since 1924. But today we are on the threshold of an entirely new situation. The unparalleled sweep of the colonial revolutions may seem to reinforce this previous trend. Its end result, however, will be to reverse it. For these colonial revolutions, now beginning to engulf the Near East as

well, are shaking asunder the entire imperialist world structure and thereby providing a tremendous spur to the socialist revolution in all the advanced countries, including the United States.

The outbreak of general war will not alter this trend but, on the contrary, greatly reinforce revolutionary developments in both the backward and the advanced countries. The sweep of the colonial revolutions should be directly connected in this sense with the perspectives in the advanced countries. At the same time, it should be noted that this interaction between the evolution of backward and advanced countries will aggravate in the extreme the unfolding crisis not only of imperialism but of Stalinism as well.

16. The central political feature of the world situation today is the crisis of the proletarian leadership. It is imperative to reaffirm this proposition of our Foundation Theses. Everything hinges on the resolution of this historic task. The objective conditions for its fulfillment are now ripe but the task will not be resolved automatically or mechanically or independently of our intervention and policies. The proposed tactical moves derive their fullest meaning and importance in connection with the solution of this problem.

DOCUMENT 4

Where is Pablo going? by Bleibtreu-Favre, June 1951

Introduction by La Verite

The document we are serializing appeared at the beginning of June 1951 under the title 'Where is Comrade Pablo Going?' Its publication has been postponed for several months at the request of a member of the International Secretariat — Comrade Germain, the author of 'Ten Theses' (see issues 300-304 of *La Verite*) — who warned the leadership of the Parti Communiste Internationaliste (PCI) against 'the trap Pablo has laid for destroying the French section.'

When the author of the 'Ten Theses' opposed their adoption by the PCI Central Committee, he left no room for doubt that he had renounced defending his ideas. He had capitulated, like Zinoviev and others had done before him, like Calas did recently before the French CP's Central Committee. Trotsky had learned from experience that the rarest and most necessary quality for a revolutionary leader is 'that little thing called character'!

The Trotskyist critique of the revisionist notions expressed by Pablo in 'Where Are We Going?' began with 'Where Is Comrade Pablo Going?' The reader can refer to the former document, which appeared in the February 1951 issue of the magazine *Quatrieme Internationale*. It is interesting to note that neither 'Where is Pablo Going?' nor any other political documents of the PCI were published in the international bulletins preparing for the World Congress.

'Where Are We Going?' was the ideological proclamation of Pabloism. To date, the split in France has been the main practical result. May it be the last!

Where is Comrade Pablo Going?

Clarity in a discussion arises from the presentation of opposing theses on the one hand and from polemics on the other; the two methods do not contradict each other but are instead complementary, in the strictest sense of the word.

To refrain from stating your theses, to stage a sort of guerilla warfare of partial amendments when principles are at stake or, even worse, to restrict yourself to polemicizing against the weak points of the contested thesis is the distinguishing characteristic of tendencies that have neither principles nor any consciousness of their duty to our World Party of the Revolution.

As for us, we think that the method that guided the international discussion on the problems posed by the people's democracies is the correct method; each thesis was fully presented by various comrades (we are speaking of the comrades of the majority who at the Second World Congress came out against the revisionist tendencies, which dissolved after having fought us with a series of indirect attacks [Haston is the prototype in this regard — F.B.]).

In particular, we believe that Germain's 'Ten Theses: What Should Be Modified and What Should Be Maintained in the Theses of the Second World Congress of the Fourth International on the Question of Stalinism?' — we emphasize that we mean the 'Ten Theses' and not their bizarre foreword — is a positive and extremely timely document in the discussion preparing for the World Congress. Its clarity fully exempts it from the obligation to engage in a polemic against the points of view expressed on several occasions by Pablo. This is the way a healthy discussion should start. But to remain healthy, it can't stop there. The points on which there is disagreement must be brought before the full light of day, which is something that only a polemic can accomplish.

The goal of this document, which is addressed to our entire International, especially to all our leading comrades in the International, is to tell them fraternally and frankly of the danger that a whole series of new positions represents for the program, the activities, and the very existence of our International. We say: be careful; the scratch may become infected, and then gangrene can set in.

We don't pretend to be infallible, we don't think our theses are exempt from a number of insufficiencies, we don't feel we have the

right to give lessons to any of our comrades; but we say to them — ‘Look out, our ship has lost its course; it’s urgent that we take our bearings and change our course.’

In his document ‘Where Are We Going?’ Comrade Pablo brings into full daylight the revisionist tendencies that were included in the International Secretariat’s draft thesis but were disguised in the Ninth Plenum’s [November 1950?] compromise resolution.

Beginning with its opening lines, the violent tone of this document is surprising, all the more so since we don’t know which members of the International Executive Committee and the International Secretariat were being taken to task . . . in January 1951. We will undoubtedly never know the names of the people in question, those ‘*people who despair of the fate of humanity,*’ nor those who have written that ‘*the thinking of the International seems out of joint,*’ nor those who ‘*cry bitter tears*’ (which Pablo wants to believe are genuine), nor those who ‘*tailor history to their own measure,*’ nor of those Trotskyist careerists who ‘*desire that the entire process of the transformation of capitalist society into socialism would be accomplished within the span of their brief lives so that they can be rewarded for their efforts on behalf of the Revolution.*’ [Emphasis added.]

I. The Theory of ‘Blocs’ and ‘Camps’ Makes Its Appearance in the International

‘*The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles,*’ one reads in that dustbin known as the *Communist Manifesto*.

But it’s necessary to keep abreast of the times and to admit without hesitation along with Pablo that:

‘*For our movement objective social reality consists essentially of the capitalist regime and the Stalinist world.*’ [International Information Bulletin, March 1951, ‘Where Are We Going?’ p.2. Emphasis added.]

Dry your tears and listen: the very *essence* of social reality is composed of the capitalist regime (!) and the Stalinist (!) world (?).

We thought that social reality consisted in the contradiction between the fundamental classes: the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Clearly an error, for from now on the *capitalist regime*, which encompasses precisely these two classes, becomes a totality that is counterposed . . . to the Stalinist world.

The term ‘world’ is quite obscure, you will say; but it offers some

significant conveniences and permits classifying states and social groups according to the supreme criterion: their Stalinist or non-Stalinist 'nature.'

Thus the state that arose from the Third Chinese Revolution (whose economy, let us recall, has retained a capitalist structure up to the present) is classified by Pablo as being in the *Stalinist world*. We will return to this question.

On the other hand, the Yugoslav workers state (where the economy is almost fully nationalized and planned) is expelled from the *Stalinist world*. And since it cannot remain outside the realm of objective social reality, it *drifts objectively, though imperceptibly, into the enemy camp* (along with its arms, bags and baggage, and dictatorship of the proletariat!).

In order to dispel any uncertainty as to his conception of contemporary history, Pablo continues:

'Furthermore, whether we like it or not, these two elements (the capitalist regime and the Stalinist world) essentially constitute objective social reality, for the overwhelming majority of the forces opposing capitalism are right now to be found under the leadership or influence of the Soviet bureaucracy.' ['Where Are We Going?', p.2. Emphasis added.]

Thus the sum total of Pablo's 'social' criterion seems to be the *political nature (Stalinist or non-Stalinist) of states and human groupings*.

He gives us no details about the tiny remaining minority that is neither under the leadership nor influence of the bureaucracy. Let's admit that it's the exception that proves the rule. What then is this tiny minority of forces that are anticapitalist but non-Stalinist?

We don't think it's intended to include the millions of workers in the USA, England, Canada, Germany, etc., who are neither influenced nor led by Stalinism. We must then conclude that the proletariat in the most advanced countries of the world do not constitute 'forces opposed to capitalism.' They have been labelled and pigeonholed under the category 'capitalist regime.'

It's more difficult to pin this label on the massive liberation movements in North Africa, Black Africa, Madagascar, India, Ceylon, and Indonesia, a movement that cannot possibly be considered as either a tiny minority or belonging to the Stalinist world.

Thus, like it or not, classes, states, and nations must rush pell-mell into one camp or the other (capitalist regime or Stalinist world). Moreover, Pablo adds, the international relationship of social forces

is, 'to express it in a schematic way, the relationship of forces between the two blocs.'¹ (p.5.)

What Pablo calls 'expressing it in a schematic way' in reality constitutes mixing and jumbling everything together, ending up with an incredible confusion. When analyzing situations it is impossible to abandon class lines even for an instant without ending up with such 'schematic concepts' and fruitless endeavors.

What? The international relationship of forces is the relationship of forces between the two blocs! Some progress.

Since contemporary social reality consists of the *two blocs*, the relationship of social forces is naturally . . . the relationship of forces between the two blocs! This logic is irrefragable, because it is a tautology.

We will be told that we have misinterpreted what Pablo is saying; he meant the *international relationship of forces between the classes* which, schematically, is the relationship between the blocs. But where is there any room here for the old-fashioned notion of classes? Where in Pablo's document is there any serious analysis of the situation of the international proletariat? If he had tried to give any, he certainly wouldn't have ended up with this astonishing notion of 'blocs,' nor would he have designated the international proletarian forces as the forces of this extraordinary 'Stalinist world.'

Furthermore, he explains what he means quite clearly when he talks about the respective roles of Stalin and the revolutionary proletariat within the very 'Stalinist world.'

According to him, '*the revolutionary spirit of the masses directed against imperialism acts as an ADDITIONAL FORCE, supplementing the material and technical forces raised against imperialism.*' (p.5 Emphasis added.)

In effect, he is making it quite clear that the revolutionary forces are the forces of the Stalinist world. But within this Stalinist world there

¹ 'Thus two camps have been formed in the world: on the one hand there is the imperialist and anti-democratic camp, whose basic goal is to establish American imperialism's domination over the world and to crush democracy; on the other hand there is the anti-imperialist and democratic camp, whose basic goal consists in undermining imperialism, strengthening democracy, and liquidating the remnants of fascism.

'The struggle between these two camps, between the imperialist and anti-imperialist camp, unfolds under conditions of a continued deepening of the overall crisis of capitalism, of a weakening of the forces of capitalism, and of the strengthening of the forces of socialism and democracy.' (Zhdanov Theses, 1947, given to the first meeting of the Cominform in 1947.)

are *major* forces: these are the *material* and *technical* forces — Soviet industry, the divisions of the Red Army; and there are *supplementary* forces, a sort of *National Guard* that is tacked on to these technical forces. The revolutionary spirit of 400 million Chinese workers, the Vietnamese, the Koreans, and all the working people in the 'Stalinist world' are the auxiliary forces of the socialist bastion led by Stalin.

Here you have the conclusion that necessarily emerges when the petty-bourgeois concept of a 'bloc' between states is substituted for a class analysis of world reality (an analysis of the contradiction between the international proletariat and the *international* imperialist bourgeoisie), that is, for the basic reality of the world we live in. Like it or not, on the basis of this concept the most one can do is provide more ammunition for Zhdanov, whose thesis rests on the following supreme postulate: the acid test for revolutionaries is their loyalty to the Soviet Union and to its leader Stalin. The petty-bourgeois concept of blocs necessarily leads to a choice between Stalin (with or without reservations) and Truman (with or without reservations).

The direction in which the choice is made depends solely on where the dominant pressure is coming from. In Central and Western Europe, the petty bourgeoisie tends to lean in a 'neutralist' direction, that is, to adapt to the Stalinist bureaucracy, which they see as having the prestige of power and of numerous 'victories' in Asia, in the buffer zone, etc. — and whose 'material and technical forces' are impressive by virtue of the fact that they are quite close at hand.

Marxists have been accustomed to starting out with the criterion of class. It was this *class* criterion that enabled Leon Trotsky and the Fourth International to take on the revisionists on the question of the USSR and to classify the degenerated workers state *in the camp of the international proletariat*. Today we are supposed to turn Marxism upside down, stand it on its Hegelian head, its legs waving toward the sky 'of life', of 'objective social reality, in its essence' (the worst of abstractions under the circumstances). And from this inconvenient position we are supposed to classify such-and-such section of a class, and such-and-such state, and such-and-such technical force in one or the other 'bloc', capitalist regime or Stalinist world.

II. The Beginning of a Revision on the Nature of the Bureaucracy

In Pablo's article we discover the notion of a Soviet bureaucracy that will survive after the world revolution and then wither away by

virtue of the development of productive forces. We read, in fact, that the Soviet bureaucracy will disappear in 'two (contradictory) ways': — 'by the counterblows of the anti-capitalist victories in the world and even in the USSR, stimulating resistance of the masses to the bureaucracy';

— 'by elimination *in the long run* of the objective causes for the bureaucracy, for all bureaucracy, in direct proportion as the capitalist regime suffers setbacks and an ever increasing and economically more important sector escapes from capitalism and organizes itself on the basis of a state-ized and planned economy, thereby stimulating the growth of the productive forces.' (p.5 Emphasis added.)

The second thesis, the idea that the bureaucracy will disappear through the development of the productive forces, contains as many errors as words:

(1) It establishes an amalgam between the Soviet bureaucracy and *bureaucratism* as it appeared in the USSR during Lenin's lifetime.

(2) It begins with the notion of a slow and gradual decline ('in direct proportion') and of a slow accumulation of sectors in which a planned economy is installed. This is in flagrant contradiction with the perspective of a war that will be the final struggle between the classes, of a war that will determine the fate of world capitalism and that excludes capitalism's being nibbled away *over a lengthy period*.

(3) Does Pablo — who believes, by the way, that a third world war is imminent — mean that in the very course of the war the development of the productive forces (which would be turned entirely toward the war effort at the expense of consumer goods for the masses) is capable of forcing a retreat in bourgeois norms of distribution? Or doesn't he take seriously the notion that the third world war will be a final struggle, that is, does his perspective admit the possibility that the outcome of this war might be a new situation of equilibrium between the fundamental classes, with fewer bourgeois states coexisting with more numerous workers states?

Actually, the principal fault with the second thesis is the fact that it even *exists*, because it is equivalent to conceding that the *Soviet bureaucracy* can survive after the victory of the world revolution over imperialism. It is in direct contradiction with the first thesis (the traditional Trotskyist thesis), which is juxtaposed in an eclectic manner to the second thesis (Pablo's thesis).

In the *draft* theses that Pablo presented to the Ninth Plenum of the IEC, whose relationship to his personal positions we have noted, the

sole explanation given for the Soviet bureaucracy's hostility to world revolution was the following vulgar economist explanation:

'It (the bureaucracy) cannot capitulate to imperialism without undermining its existence as such in the USSR; *on the other hand, it cannot base itself on the proletariat and the extension of the world revolution, which would remove, by organizing and developing the productive forces in the world, the objective reasons for its existence and above all(?) for the omnipotence of any bureaucracy!*'

The notion here is perfectly clear and is substituted for the Trotskyist notion of the bureaucracy's incompatibility, not with planning and the development of productive forces, but with the revolutionary action of the masses, whose 'first revolutionary victory in Europe,'² Trotsky said, 'will have the effect of an electric shock on the Soviet masses, awakening them, reviving the traditions of 1905 and 1917, weakening the position of the bureaucracy; it will have no less importance for the Fourth International than the victory of the October Revolution had for the Third International.'

The bureaucracy is not afraid of the development of productive forces. It is not holding back development in the USSR of its own will but rather through its incapacity. To the extent that its very character permits, it will try to increase development. Its slender results in relation to the great possibilities of planning both inside and outside the USSR don't stem from a fear of disappearing following a growth in income sufficient to eradicate social inequality.³ What the bureaucracy fears is not the growth of productive forces. What they fear is the awakening of the consciousness of the Soviet masses in contact with a revolution in another country.

The main danger in the explanation given by Pablo (even when juxtaposed with the discussion of another, correct explanation, the above one) is that it has the effect of masking the organically counter-revolutionary nature of the workers bureaucracy in the Soviet Union. This bureaucracy cannot be equated with the *bureaucratism* inherent in any society in which a scarcity in consumer goods exist. *This*

² So far as Europe is concerned, consider the bureaucracy's policy in France (1936), Spain (1936-39), Poland (Warsaw uprising), Greece (1944-45), its efforts to prevent and overturn the Yugoslav revolution, its policy in France and Italy in the face of the revolutionary upsurge following the second world war.

³ '...economic growth, while slowly bettering the situation of the toilers, promotes a swift formation of privileged strata,' Trotsky said in the fundamental document defining the USSR (*Revolution Betrayed*, point D in the definition of the USSR, New Park Publications, 1973, p.255.)

bureaucracy is the result of nearly thirty years of the degeneration of a workers state. Politically, it has totally expropriated the Soviet proletariat. Contrary to what Pablo states, wherever it has been able to act bureaucratically or to maintain its bureaucratic control over the masses, the Soviet bureaucracy had tried to develop the productive forces (in the USSR and in the annexed or satellite territories) in order to strengthen the base of its own privileges and increase their extent. On the other hand, its liquidationist attitude toward the revolution that began in France in 1936; the way it brutally crushed the conscious cadres of the Spanish revolution; its complicity with Hitler in order to allow him to crush the Warsaw uprising; its Yalta policy against the interests of the revolution in Greece, Italy, Yugoslavia, and France; its blockade and military pressure against the Yugoslav workers state in the hope of delivering it bound hand and foot to imperialism (contrary to the interests of defending the USSR itself) unequivocally express the *incompatibility between the Soviet bureaucracy and the development of the proletarian revolution. Such a revolution would represent an immediate and direct threat to the bureaucracy's existence*, and it would do so even more sharply if it were to take place in an economically less backward country.



Leaving the door open, however timidly, to the hypothesis that the Thermidorian bureaucracy of the USSR could survive a third world war is to revise the Trotskyist analysis of the bureaucracy. First, as we have seen it calls into question the bureaucracy's nature as a *parasitic* growth of the workers movement that lives off the advantage of the equilibrium between the fundamental classes. At the same time, this concept leaves the door open to the negation of its working-class nature.⁴

— Second, it overestimates the capacity of the USSR's technical means when confronted with those of imperialism.

— Third, it underestimates the breadth of the revolutionary movement in Asia and around the world.

⁴ The draft theses presented by Pablo to the Ninth Plenum of the International Secretariat (point 21, paragraph 3) spoke of the '*conditions of economic exploitation*' of the Soviet proletariat by the bureaucracy. The idea of class exploitation no longer appears in the text adopted by the International Executive Committee, but the notion of historically necessary social layer (a class!) turns up again in Pablo's document.

— Fourth, it accepts the notion that the Soviet bureaucracy can exist peacefully alongside a victorious revolution in the advanced countries.

— Above all, and here is where what Pablo really thinks comes in, it accepts the notion that the Soviet bureaucracy will not oppose the extension of the revolution but will even stimulate it.

In giving priority to 'technical and material forces' as opposed to the revolutionary struggle of the masses, however, Pablo does not go as far as the thesis of our comrades in Lyon.⁵ This apparent superiority expresses a total incomprehension of the predominant role of mass revolutionary struggle in the development and the outcome of a third world war.

The marked inferiority of the *technical means* at the disposal of the proletariat in the present world situation, a situation of 'blocs,' as Pablo puts it, becomes transformed into the proletariat's superiority *in direct proportion with its revolutionary mobilization, with an increase in its level of class consciousness and socialist consciousness, and with its revolutionary victories over imperialism.* The military relationship of forces is *politically* determined. The Thermidorian bureaucracy in the USSR will play an even more emphatic counter-revolutionary role when it sees an upsurge in the revolution take shape, and when it sees mass socialist consciousness threatening its own domination in the USSR.

In its enormous struggle to smash the coalition of the imperialist bourgeoisie and its vast material means, the revolution will liquidate the Thermidorian bureaucracy in the USSR along the way. Otherwise the Thermidorian bureaucracy will impede, sabotage, and use military force against the revolutionary movement of the masses, paving the way for the victory of imperialist barbarism and for its own disappearance *as a parasitic caste* in the degenerated workers state.

All the experiences since 1933 have shown the role of the Soviet

⁵'Once the war breaks out . . . the bureaucracy will no longer have any reason to oppose the development of mass revolutionary struggles in the imperialist camp. Quite the contrary the bureaucracy will have every interest in developing anything that will help undermine the military strength of the imperialist camp, including revolutionary movements of great scope. . . .' (Thesis of the Lyons cell.)

The thesis as a whole comes down to this: up to the present the bureaucracy has been opposed to the revolution out of fear of military intervention by the imperialists. In the third world war the bureaucracy will no longer have this preoccupation and will become the leadership of the world revolution. This is much more consistent than Pablo's thesis. The author of this resolution nevertheless was weak enough to renounce it in favour of Pablo's position.

bureaucracy with increasing clarity and simply express *its dual character – working-class and counter-revolutionary* – its fundamentally contradictory nature, and its impasse. This bureaucracy will not survive a third world war, a war between the classes, a war whose outcome can only be world revolution or, failing that, a victory for imperialism that would liquidate all the conquests of the working class in both the USSR and the rest of the world.

III. From 'Stalinist Ideology' to the New 'Bureaucratic Class'

Several times in the past the tendency to revise the Trotskyist concept of the Soviet bureaucracy has been expressed through the notion that Stalinism has its own ideology. Pablo seems to share this belief today when he speaks of the '*co-leadership of the international Stalinist movement*' (our emphasis) by China and the Kremlin.

'...China,' he writes, 'could not play the role of a mere satellite of the Kremlin but rather of a *partner* which henceforth imposes upon the Soviet bureaucracy a certain co-leadership of the *international Stalinist movement*. This co-leadership is, however, a disruptive element within Stalinism. ...' ('Where Are We Going?' p. 9. Emphasis added.)

What does this Russian-Chinese 'co-leadership' of the international Stalinist movement mean? Is there then a *Chinese* Stalinism alongside *Russian* Stalinism? What is the social base of this Chinese Stalinism? What then is its ideology? Is there really a Stalinist ideology?

We reply in the negative to all these questions.

The bureaucracy in the USSR has never even been capable of trying to define a new ideology, contrary to the way in which any historically necessary social formation, any class, operates. When you speak of the *Stalinism* of a Communist Party, you are not speaking of a theory, of an overall programme, of definite and lasting concepts, *but only* of its leadership's subordination to orders from the Kremlin bureaucracy. This is the Trotskyist conception. The 'Stalinism' of the international Stalinist movement is defined by this movement's subordination to the bureaucracy of the USSR.

'The Stalinist bureaucracy, however, not only has nothing in common with Marxism but is in general foreign to any doctrine or system whatsoever. Its 'ideology' is thoroughly permeated with police subjectivism, its practice is the empiricism of crude violence. In keeping

with its essential interests the caste of usurpers is hostile to any theory: it can give an account of its social role neither to itself nor to anyone else. Stalin revises Marx and Lenin not with the theoretician's pen but with the heel of the GPU.' (Leon Trotsky: *Stalinism and Bolshevism*, New Park Publications, 1974, p.15.)

Would it be possible to have a *Stalinist co-leadership*, a *dual subordination*, one part of which would be . . . the Chinese revolution in full ascendancy? Is a modified version of Stalinist ideology supposed to have survived the victory of the revolutionary masses in China or is it supposed to have arisen in the course of the revolution?

But, Pablo adds, this co-leadership is a disruptive element for Stalinism. This clarification introduces a new confusion.

We are compelled on the contrary to state that the disruptive element in the 'international Stalinist movement' as such is the Chinese *revolution* and that this celebrated *co-leadership*, far from being a disruptive element, *expresses an inherently temporary compromise between the counter-revolutionary bureaucracy of the USSR and its NEGATION, the Chinese revolution*. This compromise reflects the lag between consciousness and reality, and more particularly the slowness with which China has begun to accomplish the tasks of the permanent revolution. We will return to this question.

The notion of co-leadership betrays a vast incomprehension of the irreducible character of the contradiction between the Soviet bureaucracy and a revolution in motion. Pablo has spoken several times of the 'victories' or 'pseudo-victories' of Stalinism when designating the development of the revolution in China, Asia, or elsewhere.

For Comrade Pablo, the most important lesson of the Yugoslav and Chinese revolutions is that it is important not to confuse them with pure and simple victories (?) of the Soviet bureaucracy!

For us, the lesson is that the development of the revolution is a *defeat* and a death threat for the bureaucracy, which does not evaluate the 'revolution in all its forms' from the same perspective as Comrade Pablo.

When this comrade adds that 'the evolution of China *can prove different* from that of the Soviet bureaucracy,' we have reached the height of confusion. (p.12. Emphasis added.)

If someone can explain to us at what conjuncture, in what century, and on what planet *the evolution of China could have even proved comparable to that of the Soviet bureaucracy* - we'd like to hear about it.

This notion is only admissible if we accept beforehand Burnham's

thesis of the rapid formation (if not the pre-existence) of a *bureaucracy of the Soviet type* within the very course of a revolution.

In that case, this bureaucracy would not only have an ideology of international value, but we would have to accord it a *historically progressive* role. On the contrary, however, everything leads us to believe that the outcome of a revolution — even one that is isolated — will necessarily prove different and distinct from that of the USSR, even if this revolution must degenerate because of its isolation and weakness. Trotsky has clearly demonstrated, in opposition to the revisionists, that the degeneration of the USSR has a specific historical character.

The Centuries of Transition

Are we compelled to revise Trotsky's opinion on this point as well?

Are the norms of the dictatorship of the proletariat, of the withering away of the state, outmoded and consigned to the rubbish bin by 'life' and by experience? Is the Soviet workers state really a *degenerated-workers state* (a counter-revolutionary workers state, Trotsky said)⁶ or, on the contrary, is it the prototype of what the transition between capitalism and socialism will be like after the victory of the world revolution?

Although he doesn't pronounce himself clearly in favour of one position over the other, and although his statements on this point are

⁶ "Some voices cry out: "If we continue to recognize the USSR as a workers' state, we will have to establish a new category: the counter-revolutionary workers' state." This argument attempts to shock our imagination by opposing a good programmatic norm to a miserable, mean, even repugnant reality. But haven't we observed from day to day since 1923 how the Soviet state has played a more and more counter-revolutionary role on the international arena? Have we forgotten the experience of the Chinese Revolution, of the 1926 general strike in England and finally the very fresh experience of the Spanish Revolution? There are two completely counter-revolutionary workers' internationals. These critics have apparently forgotten this "category." The trade unions of France, Great Britain, the United States and other countries support completely the counter-revolutionary politics of the bourgeoisie. This does not prevent us from labelling them trade unions, from supporting their progressive steps and from defending them against the bourgeoisie. Why is it impossible to employ the same method with the counter-revolutionary workers' state? In the last analysis a workers' state is a trade union which has conquered power. The difference in attitude in these two cases is explainable by the simple fact that trade unions have a long history and we have been accustomed to consider them as realities and not simply as 'categories' in our programme. But, as regards the workers' state there is being evinced an inability to learn to approach it as a real historical fact which has not subordinated itself to our programme. (Leon Trotsky: 'Again and Once More Again on the Nature of the USSR,' in *In Defence of Marxism*, New Park Publications 1971, pp.30-31)

quite contradictory, Comrade Pablo does seem to lean toward the second response.

To those people-who-despair-of-the-fate-of-humanity, he replies that the transitional society between capitalism and socialism will last for several centuries (in oral discussion he has been more precise and has spoken of two or three centuries).⁷ '... this transformation will probably take an *entire historical period of several centuries* and will in the meantime be filled with forms and regimes transitional between capitalism and socialism and necessarily deviating from 'pure' forms and norms.' ('Where Are We Going?' p.13. Emphasis added.)

We are quite ready to engage in any struggle against purist utopians who subordinate reality to norms in order to reject reality. But we don't see any sense in such a struggle at present, since we are unaware of any expression of this 'purism' within the international majority that emerged from the Second World Congress.

What we do see, on the other hand, is that the degenerated bureaucracy of the USSR has become the new norm, that Pablo is constructing a new utopia based on it, that the transitional society ('several centuries...') takes on a character of the sort that the Soviet-type bureaucracy (which is confused with all manifestations of bureaucratism that are inherent wherever you have a low level of the development of productive forces and a low level of culture) becomes a historically necessary evil, that is, a class.

What we see is that the bureaucratic caste of the USSR, which we consider to be the specific product of twenty-five years of degeneration of the first workers state, is supposed to be only the prefiguration of the 'caste' called on to lead the world for two or three centuries. So the notion of a 'caste' has been sent packing, and what's really involved here is a *class* that was not foreseen by Marx, Engels, Lenin, or Trotsky.

As realists, we will have to revise Trotsky and his writings since the *New Course* because they are full of errors and misunderstandings on the historically progressive role of the bureaucracy. His explanation for the formation of the bureaucracy in the USSR is tainted from the

⁷ In 1651, three centuries ago, the bourgeoisie began to emerge in England.

In 1751, two centuries ago, it began to appear in France.

The two or three century transition period in which Pablo accords a necessary role to the bureaucracy would be longer than the period of bourgeois domination in the countries that developed the earliest, and three to six times longer than the worldwide domination of the capitalist bourgeoisie. It would therefore be difficult to find fault with applying the term class to the Soviet bureaucracy.

start by its old-fashioned, utopian, and outmoded norms that have been contradicted by reality.

His attachment to these norms led him to consider the evolution of the USSR as a particular, exceptional, and specific violation of the norm.

'In the bureaucratic degeneration of the Soviet state it is not the general laws of modern society from capitalism to socialism which finds expression but a special, exceptional, and temporary refraction of these laws under the conditions of a backward revolutionary country in a capitalist environment.' (Leon Trotsky: 'The USSR in War' in *In Defence of Marxism*, New Park Publications, 1971, p.8.)

What Trotsky calls degeneration is thus in reality the process that must begin after the victory of the world revolution and will last two or three centuries. And Trotsky put himself on the wrong side of the barricades when he wrote:

"The most honest or open-eyed of the 'friends' of the USSR console themselves with the thought that 'a certain' bureaucratic degeneration in the given conditions was historically inevitable. Even so! The resistance to this degeneration also has not fallen from the sky. A necessity has two ends: the reactionary and the progressive. History teaches us that persons and parties which drag at the opposite ends of a necessity turn out in the long run on opposite sides of the barricade." (Leon Trotsky: 'Socialism in One Country,' in *The Revolution Betrayed*, New Park Publications, 1973, pp.307-8.)

He didn't foresee that in the third world war the Soviet bureaucracy would be called on to carry out the function of gravedigger for world imperialism, to make an 'international' anti-capitalist revolution, or at least to co-operate with it. Neither Trotsky nor the Fourth International — a tragic historical misunderstanding — were aware of that up to this day.

Some Clarifications on an Incorrect Formulation

When we read in the Ninth Plenum resolution the following declaration on the defense of the Soviet Union: '*The defence of the USSR constitutes the strategic line of the Fourth International, and its tactical application remains, as in the past, subordinated to unimpeded development of the mass movement in opposition to any attempt on the part of the Soviet bureaucracy, the Russian army, and the Stalinist leaderships to throttle and crush it.*'

When we read this we are tempted to see no more than an incorrect formulation.

But we would be blind if we were to maintain this position after having studied the document in which the secretary of the International sets forth his perspective more fully, deriving it from the *division of the world into the capitalist regime and the Stalinist world*, a division considered as the essence of social reality in our epoch.

If we adopted this revisionist perspective it would seem to be necessary to go much further, to follow its logic to the end and to subordinate *tactical application* to the *strategic line*. It is precisely this principled attitude, this constant subordination of tactics to strategy, that distinguishes Marxism from opportunism of every stripe.

Pablo cannot remain there, straddling a fence. He must bring tactics into accord with not only strategy but also with a social analysis (his analysis) of the 'present' world.

If on the contrary we retain Marx, Lenin, and Trotsky's analysis of society and their methodology, if we refuse to abandon the solid ground on which the foundations of our International rest, if we refuse to abandon this in favour of the quicksand of revisionism, our Third World Congress will of necessity return to the Trotskyist definition of the defence of the Soviet Union.

For Trotsky, the defence of the USSR did not constitute a 'strategic line.' The strategic line of the Fourth International is the world revolution.

Defence of the USSR against imperialism, like the defence of any workers state, is one of the tasks of this strategy, *tasks that are entirely subordinated to the perspective of world revolution*, to the strategy of the revolutionary mobilization of the masses.

Defence of the USSR cannot take the place of the strategic line of the World Party of Revolution — any more than the defence of the Yugoslav workers state or any other workers state could.

Therein lies the difference between Trotskyism and the Titoist and Stalinist varieties of centrism.

No unclarity can be allowed to remain in this discussion. Incorrect formulations on such questions are genuine errors of doctrine. No document of the International can today allow itself the slightest imprecision in defining the defence of the USSR and the place of this defence in our strategy. *The defence of the USSR and of all the workers states constitutes a task of the Fourth International, a task that as such and in all its tactical applications must be entirely subordinated to the strategy of*

*the struggle for the world revolution, to the unimpeded development of the masses, etc.*⁸

Pablo Yields Ground to Martinet

This notion that the defense of the USSR (or of the 'Stalinist world') must be a *strategic line* has perhaps been most thoroughly developed by Gilles Martinet. Martinet is, in fact, the spokesman for the entire Stalinist intelligentsia in France. The Second World Congress correctly characterized his position as the Stalinist counterpart to Burnham's revisionism.

The pro-Stalinist manifestation (a product of the Stalinist pressure in France) of this revisionism has been given its fullest form by Bettelheim, Martinet, & Co. in *Revue Internationale*. When they themselves apply the concepts mentioned above to the present world situation, they arrive at the following conclusions:

'a) Owing to its lack of homogeneity and technical education, the working class will be obliged to pass through a stage of social differentiation and inequality after its conquest of power. Historic progress is assured by the privileged strata of the proletariat (the bureaucracy). It is the task of the state to defend these privileges.

'b) During the epoch of decaying imperialism, the proletariat ceases to grow numerically and ideologically and instead retreats, witnessing the decline of its strength and the decay of its social structure. The failure of the 'classic' proletarian revolutions of 1918-23 is final. The Leninist strategy of the proletarian revolution is a thing of the past. In view of this incapacity of the proletariat to fulfill its historic mission, humanity has no other road to progress except to try to 'participate' in the statification of the means of production by the Soviet bureaucracy on an ever larger scale, and to draw up a new minimum programme in order to attenuate the violent character of this process. . . .

⁸ In the Second World Congress theses there was already an unfortunate formulation, though it was appreciably different: "'Defend what remains of the conquests of October' is a ('a,' and not 'the') strategic line for the revolutionary party, and not alone a 'slogan.'" ['The USSR and Stalinism,' *Fourth International*, June 1948, p. 114] It would have been more correct to say: 'a strategic task' OR 'a strategic orientation,' formulations that are clearly opposed to the notion that the defense of the USSR is just a 'slogan.'

'The defence of the USSR coincides for us with the preparation of world revolution. Only those methods are permissible which do not conflict with the interests of the revolution. The defence of the USSR is related to the world socialist revolution as a tactical task is related to a strategic one. A tactic is subordinated to a strategic goal and in no case can be in contradiction to the latter.' (Leon Trotsky: 'The USSR in War,' in *In Defence of Marxism*, New Park Publications, 1971, p.21.)

'There is no room for [these revisionist tendencies] in the revolutionary movement. But some of their features appear at the bottom of mistaken conceptions on the Russian question which have found expression in our own ranks. What is important is first of all to lay bare the inner logic of this incipient revisionism and make its proponents aware of its dangerous consequences to the whole of Marxism.' [The USSR and Stalinism: Theses Adopted by the Second World Congress of the Fourth International, April 1948, in *Fourth International*, June 1948, p. 125.]

In 'Where Are We Going?' Pablo throws this analysis overboard, declaring:

'Our *fundamental* (!) difference with certain neo-apologists for Stalinism, of the Gilles Martinet stripe in France, does not involve the fact that there are objective causes at work imposing transitional forms of the society and of the power succeeding capitalism, which are quite far from the 'norms' outlined by the classics of Marxism prior to the Russian Revolution. Our difference is over the fact that these neo-Stalinists present Stalinist policy as the expression of a consistent, realistic Marxism which, consciously and in full awareness of the goal, is marching toward socialism while taking into account the requirements of the situation.' (p.8.)

Note first of all that contrary to the notion Pablo elaborated above, Martinet does not repudiate the Soviet bureaucracy; instead he considers it a necessary evil on which falls *de facto* the task of destroying imperialism, and which will be overturned historically by the development of productive forces. It is his servility when faced with an accomplished fact, his tendency to generalize on the basis of the degeneration of the first workers state in order to transform a specific historical fact into a general historical necessity, more than his evaluations of Stalin's 'Marxism' that make Martinet the most agile theoretician of the Thermidorian counter-revolution. The definition Trotsky gave in 'After Munich' applies to him without qualification:

'Only the overthrow of the Bonapartist Kremlin clique can make possible the regeneration of the military strength of the USSR. Only the liquidation of the ex-Comintern will clear the way for revolutionary internationalism. The struggle against war, imperialism, and fascism demands a ruthless struggle against Stalinism splotched with crimes. Whoever defends Stalinism directly or indirectly, whoever keeps silent about its betrayals or exaggerates its military strength is the worst enemy of the revolution, of socialism, and of the oppressed

peoples. The sooner the Kremlin gang is overthrown by the armed offensive of the workers, the greater will be the chances for a socialist regeneration of the USSR, the closer and broader will be the perspectives of the international revolution.' (*Writings of Leon Trotsky: 1938-9*, p.16.)

Such is the language we expected from the secretary of the International in regard to the wing of the petty bourgeoisie that has capitulated before Stalinism and its supposed 'victories.' In place of that we are supposed to accept an ambiguous definition (actually the absence of a definition) based on a stupid quarrel over Stalin's merits as a theoretician.

The Chinese Comrades' Error Corrected With Another Error

It would be useless to deny that the Chinese comrades' error weighs very heavily on the present discussion. Not only does it explain in part the orientation presented by Pablo, but Comrade Pablo also uses it openly as an argument in defence of his thesis and in the hope of overwhelming his adversaries.

We are not overwhelmed and for a whole series of reasons, among them the following:

(1) In April 1950 one of us, Comrade Bleibtreu, spoke before a public meeting of the 'Lenin Circle' on the problems of the Chinese revolution. Vietnamese, Chinese, French, and Sinhalese comrades attended the meeting. It concluded with an analysis of the Chinese revolution and the Chinese Communist Party, and with the necessity for Trotskyists to enter the Chinese Communist Party and form its consistent Marxist wing, a wing capable of resolving in both theory and practice the tasks of the permanent revolution.

This led, among other things, to his being vigorously contradicted by a member of the International Secretariat.

(2) The Central Committee of the PCI [Parti Communiste Internationaliste — Internationalist Communist Party] met December 2, 1950, and passed a resolution asking the International Secretariat to take a position on the Chinese events and on the errors of the Chinese comrades. To date we have had no response from the International Secretariat or the International Executive Committee. We hope that this document will see the light of day before the World Congress, because it would represent an essential element of clarification.

In the face of this persistent silence, we are compelled to take the initiative in a discussion that the international leadership should have begun.

What Was the Error in China?

According to Comrade Pablo, this error began 'following the victory of Mao Tse-tung.' ('Where Are We Going?' p. 17.) In our opinion, it predates this victory by quite a bit.

A revolution had been developing in China since 1946, a revolution in which the Trotskyists should have been an integral part. Abandoned by Stalin, whose advice aimed at forming a National Front government with Chiang Kai-shek they had rejected, and encircled by virtue of the fact that the Red Army had given up Manchuria to Chiang, the Chinese leaders had to confront the most powerful offensive the white troops ever launched against the Seventh Army. The only possibility that remained open to them (like the situation confronting the leaders of the Yugoslav Communist Party 1942-43) was the revolutionary mobilization of the masses. Rejecting their Stalinist course of the previous years, they adopted a limited programme of agrarian reform, which the masses greeted with immense enthusiasm. Mass peasant committees and resistance groups sprang up everywhere and organized themselves to defend and extend the agrarian reform and to crush Chiang, the representative of the landlords. The advances Mao's army made were above all the product of the massive levy of the revolutionary peasantry, and of the parallel collapse of Chiang's peasant army, which was contaminated by the revolution and the thirst for land. The Chinese CP itself underwent a change in its social composition. The literate sons of well-to-do peasants, who constituted the backbone of its cadres up to that time (and certain among whom tended to oppose the explosion of elementary violence set off by the turn their party had made), were submerged by an influx of new militants hardened on the forge of the revolution itself.

Thus:

(1) The birth of the Chinese revolution was the beginning of the end of the Chinese CP's 'Stalinism.'⁹

⁹ A 'Stalinism' that was never very deeply entrenched at any given moment in the history of this party. Apart from the documents published by the *Fourth International*, a reading of the works of Mao Tse-tung (each page of which contains a more or less veiled attack on Stalin) is quite helpful in this regard.

(2) The Chinese CP stopped subordinating itself to directives from the Kremlin and became dependent on the masses and on their actions.

(3) Its social composition was actually modified.

(4) The Chinese CP stopped being a Stalinist party and became a centrist party advancing along with the revolution. This doesn't mean that the Chinese CP became a revolutionary party *ipso facto*. It retained from its past a series of incorrect and bureaucratic concepts that came to be reflected in its actions:

— by the timid character of its agrarian reform;

— by its limiting itself to North China;

— by the Chinese CP's conscious effort to *keep the urban proletariat isolated from the revolution*.¹⁰

The dialectic of social reality has already partially withdrawn certain barriers, and there are reasons to hope that this course will continue.

In any event, it is absurd to speak of a Stalinist party in China, and still more absurd to foster belief in even the resemblance of a 'victory of Stalinism in China.'

The Korean war temporarily presented Stalin with both the means to slow down the Chinese revolution's progress toward the solution of the tasks of the permanent revolution and to re-establish partial control over the Chinese CP. This explains Stalin's policy of 'non-intervention' at the time when the victorious march of the Korean armies could, with a minimum of support, have driven the imperialists into the sea. This also explains the scantiness of his present aid and his fear of a solution, especially of a solution in favour of the Korean revolution.

But when all is said and done, the reality of class struggle will prove more powerful than the Kremlin apparatus and its maneuvers.

The error of the two Chinese groups is precisely to have failed to grasp the social reality. They have identified the revolution with Stalinism, which means identifying Stalinism with its *negation*.

The Chinese comrades turned their backs on the revolutionary

¹⁰ It is quite clear that the reasons for this stem from the difference between the proletariat's aspirations and forms of action, and those of the peasantry. The peasantry desires bourgeois-democratic reforms and mobilizes spontaneously in the form of partisan armies. The proletariat has *socialist* aspirations and its revolutionary mobilization creates proletarian organs of power, both of which lead to a direct contradiction with the Stalinist bureaucracy right from the start.

movement of the masses, fell back when confronted with its march forward, and finally ended up in Hong Kong.¹¹

Their greatest error was not their failure to understand Stalinism; it was a different and much more serious lack of comprehension.

They didn't recognize the very face of the revolution. They saw the advance of Mao's revolutionary armies as a step forward for Stalinism. They failed to understand that it is the action of classes that is fundamental, that it is social classes and not the apparatuses that make history, and that once it gets going, the action of masses is more powerful than the strongest apparatus.

In many respects Comrade Pablo revives the analytical errors of the Chinese comrades, even if he draws conclusions that are contrary, though just as disastrous.

He makes the same error on the nature of the Chinese revolution, which he considers as a victory — not a 'pure and simple victory' — but nevertheless a victory of Stalinism.

This error flows from the erroneous notion of the Stalinist world and is expressed in the notion of Russian-Chinese co-leadership of the international Stalinist movement.

He shares the same erroneous criteria concerning the 'Stalinist' nature of a Communist Party. The Stalinist nature of a CP is constituted by its direct and total dependence in respect to the interests and policy of the Kremlin. A refusal on the part of the Chinese CP to accept the legal existence of a Trotskyist tendency — either inside or outside its ranks — and even the repression against this tendency would in no way constitute a criterion that 'demonstrates its bureaucratic and Stalinist character' (Pablo), but solely its lack of understanding of the permanent revolution, a lack of understanding that is not specifically Stalinist. We have often been served up such absurdities to 'prove' the 'Stalinist' character of the Yugoslav CP, which petty-bourgeois idealists don't hesitate to define as *Stalinism without Stalin!*

He shares the same lack of understanding of the relationships between the masses, the CP, and the Kremlin bureaucracy: Pablo places an equals-sign between the dual nature of the CPs and the dual nature of the Soviet bureaucracy.

Generally, we would not deny that $2=2$. But combining two errors (for example, Comrade Pablo's error and the Chinese comrades'

¹¹ We request that the International Secretariat present its file of correspondence with the Chinese comrades to the World Congress, and in this way inform the congress of the directives that it had the right and the duty to give to the Chinese section.

error) is not the equivalent of combining two correct statements (for example, the thesis of our Central Committee and Comrade Germain's 'Ten Theses'). Thus it's not always true that $2=2$.

The dual nature of the Soviet bureaucracy is both the reflection and the product of contradictions in Soviet society. It is expressed through the Bonapartism of Stalinism when it is confronted with social forces inside the Soviet Union and on a world scale. The policy of the bureaucracy is not dual but rather forms an *integral whole* throughout all its variations; it's a policy of balancing between the basic classes.

The dual nature of the CP means something quite different and expresses a different contradiction because of the fact that a parasitic bureaucracy of the Soviet type doesn't exist internationally. The duality, the contradiction of a CP stems from the fact that it is a *workers party by virtue of its social base* (a necessary base for the Kremlin's balancing act) and a *Stalinist party by virtue of its politics and its leadership* (a leadership chosen from above on the basis of its total submission to the Kremlin's orders).

The thing that defines a *workers party as Stalinist* — as opposed to a revolutionary party or a social-democratic party (linked to the bourgeoisie) or any sort of a centrist party — is neither a Stalinist ideology (which doesn't exist), nor bureaucratic methods (which exist in all kinds of parties), but rather its total and mechanical subordination to the Kremlin.

When for one reason or another this subordination ceases to exist, that party ceases to be Stalinist and expresses interests that are different from those of the bureaucratic caste in the USSR. This is what happened (because of the revolutionary action on the part of the masses) in Yugoslavia well before the break in relations; the break only made it official. This is what has already happened in China, and will inevitably be reflected by a break in relations no matter what course the Chinese revolution takes.

A break in relations or a gradual differentiation within the Chinese CP, an eventuality that flows first from the correct evaluation of the nature of the CPs (an evaluation we gave in some detail at the Fourth Congress of our party in 1947) that was developed by the Second World Congress, and then from the lessons of the Yugoslav experience, would have the effect of greatly stimulating the revolutionary struggle in Asia, Europe, and Africa. It would also facilitate revolutionary victories in a series of countries, diminish considerably imperialism's capacity for resistance and counterattack, and increase

the level of consciousness and the combativity of workers in the advanced industrial countries. At the same time, it would modify in a favourable way the relationship of forces within the workers movement, making it more receptive to the revolutionary programme and thus infinitely more effective in the class struggle. The Chinese CP's declaration of its independence in regard to the Kremlin and its steps toward accomplishing the tasks of the permanent revolution both in China and internationally are events that will probably take place before imperialism can start a world war.

It is under this perspective — with the Chinese masses, with the Chinese CP, against Stalin — that the actions of our Chinese comrades must be corrected. In every country where a Stalinist party has an extensive working-class base, the International must work under this broader perspective of the independence of the workers movement and its communist vanguard with respect to the Kremlin's policy.

Concerning our Tasks

Never before has the Fourth International had such possibilities for implanting itself as the leadership in a mass revolutionary struggle. Nor has it ever (and this is a corollary of the revolutionary upsurge around the world) had such possibilities for gaining the ear of Communist workers organized in the Stalinist parties. Never in the past (and this is a function of the very development of the worldwide revolutionary upsurge) have we witnessed so profound a worldwide crisis of Stalinism.

Despite the fact that they consider these things as Stalin's 'victories,' as proof of 'his revolutionary effectiveness,' the most conscious Communist workers will not accept the notion advanced by their leaders that socialism will be installed by the Red Army. They are seeking the road of class action, of the emancipation of workers by the workers themselves. This concern of theirs actually touches upon a fundamental aspect of the proletarian revolution, an aspect that dominates the works of Marx and Lenin: that is, that the essence of a proletarian revolution is not this or that economic measure but rather the proletariat's gaining of consciousness, its molecular mobilization, the formation of its consciousness as an active and dominant class. This notion of Marx and Lenin has been strikingly confirmed by the example of the buffer zone on the one hand and, inversely, by the

Russian revolution¹² and partially by the revolution in Yugoslavia on the other. We are not talking about *a priori* norms but rather about the very essence of the proletarian revolution: the working class gaining a consciousness of itself and setting itself up as the ruling class, not only by taking power but also and *above all* by exercising the dictatorship of the proletariat and building socialism. And this latter task is not a mechanical phenomenon (the opposite of capitalist development) but requires the intervention of the proletariat as a conscious class.¹³ This is the ABC. The experience of the USSR confirms it 100 per cent (relative stagnation domestically and a counter-revolutionary policy abroad), as does the Yugoslav experience, the Chinese experience and, in a negative way, the experience in the buffer zone.

No serious Communist worker criticizes Stalin for being afraid of world war, for refusing to declare the war-revolution or the revolution-war. On the contrary, what the best of them criticize him for is for subordinating the class struggle in other countries to the *diplomatic and military needs of the USSR*, subordinating the *strategic line of the proletarian revolution* to one of its tasks, the defence of one of the workers states.

In France the crisis of Stalinism, which has just manifested itself in the split among the mine workers, is fuelled continually by the ample proof that the French CP is an inadequate instrument for making a revolution:

- the ineffectiveness of its policy of supporting national fronts, of building 'New Democracy' (the politics of Yalta);
- the ineffectiveness of its policy of [parliamentary] opposition, of its leadership in the important class struggles since 1947 (the Zhdanov line);
- the incapacity of Stalinism to contribute toward uniting the proletarian forces.

All the strikes up to the present have reinforced the impression held

¹² The Russian revolution unfolded in a way that was far removed from the 'pure norms'; Lenin thought it was even further removed than any future revolution in an advanced country would be.

¹³ 'The primary political criterion for us is not the transformation of property relations in this or another area, however important these may be in themselves, but rather the change in the consciousness and organization of the world proletariat, the raising of their capacity for defending former conquests and accomplishing new ones. From this one, and the only decisive standpoint, the politics of Moscow taken as a whole, completely retains its reactionary character and remains the chief obstacle on the road to world revolution.' (Leon Trotsky: 'The USSR in War,' in *In Defence of Marxism*, p.23.)

by Communist workers that the French CP is not leading the proletariat toward revolution, but toward neutralization of the French bourgeoisie and a period of waiting for the war and the Red Army's entry into it.

The Communist workers witnessed their struggle against the war in Vietnam — an undertaking the French CP had entered with a violence tainted with adventurism — subordinated to the campaign around the Stockholm appeal.

They witnessed their struggle against the *eighteen months* halted in mid-course and used as a springboard for the Sheffield-Warsaw appeal.

A great uneasiness spread among members of the French CP (and certainly among members of other CPs) in the fall of 1950, when the imperialist armies in Korea were within an inch of pulling out and a minimum of material support would have been sufficient to assure a success of immense scope for the entire Asian revolution. They saw that Stalin — *applying the same policy of non-intervention he had used against the ascendant phase of the Spanish revolution* — then allowed the imperialist armies to regain the offensive. This uneasiness was expressed so widely that the leadership of the French CP had to respond publicly — using Jeanette Vemersch as a mouthpiece — in the following way: Those who demand that the USSR *intervene* in Korea don't understand what a world war would be like. This response disarmed the burgeoning opposition, because no Communist worker wanted a world war. What they were demanding wasn't intervention but an end to the *de facto* embargo on arms that was strangling the Korean revolution.

It comes as no surprise that the Stalinist leaders are still inventive enough to pull the wool over the eyes of Communist workers. But what is surprising and inadmissible is that *La Verite*, through Comrade Pablo's¹⁴ articles, did nothing to take advantage of this crisis, although:

- it explained that it was difficult to make pronouncements about Stalin's intentions;
- it remained silent about the meaning of his non-intervention;
- it did not wage *a systematic and sustained campaign* to publicize

¹⁴ *The Militant*, the newspaper of the American Trotskyists, waged an excellent campaign around the revelations on this question. In France, where the basic cadres of the working class are organized in the CP, an extensive campaign should have been mounted around the theme: 'Airplanes for Korea.'

the demand the Communist workers were making on their leadership: *Airplanes and artillery for Korea,*

— worse yet, it adopted J. Vermersch's evaluation of the situation as its own (aiding Korea means a world war), simply adding that if Stalin were a real revolutionary he wouldn't be afraid of entering a world war (war-revolution, revolution-war).

Here we have a convincing application of the orientation Comrade Pablo refers to as 'Closer to the Communist workers.' It reminds us of the politics of the right-wing tendency that left our party. This tendency also fought for the slogan 'Closer to the Communist workers,' which meant *closer to Stalinist politics.*

In the present case, *La Verite* was closer to Stalinist politics (it played the role of the MacArthur of the 'Stalinist world') but quite far removed from the concerns of the Communist workers; it didn't help them find the correct response to their uneasiness.

By virtue of its methodology, perspectives, and application, this brand of politics is related to the most negative aspects of the history of our International. Through its impressionism and empiricism, its passive submission before accomplished facts and apparent 'power,' and through its abandonment of a class strategy, it revives all the errors of the right wing in the French party, of Haston,¹⁵ and of many other tendencies that followed a liquidationist course.

The Alarm Signal

We think that Comrade Pablo's orientation is neither clear nor definitively set. We are convinced that he will correct his errors without too great a difficulty. But this isn't the question. Comrade Pablo is also a leader of the International. This means that the positions he takes do not involve just him. His line has already been partially expressed in the Plenum resolution, which is a confused and contradictory document, the result of an unprincipled bloc between two lines, and the very model of an eclectic document.

But above all, a whole series of alarming signs have emerged as direct consequences of this theoretical hodgepodge.

On the one hand, a Stalinist tendency is rapidly developing in the International. Certainly Comrade Pablo can say, like the sorcerer's apprentice, that this isn't what he wanted. He can even apply a

¹⁵ A reading of Haston's amendment to the World Congress is instructive: it is a timid outline of 'Where Are We Going?'

vigorous 'self-criticism' across the shoulders of politically weak comrades who tried to be more consistent than those who inspired them. But the remedy only disguises the disease and doesn't heal it.

Similar destructive tendencies in the International have appeared on the editorial staff of our English comrades.

In France they cropped up among our comrades in Lyon, whose resolution we have cited.

They have appeared in our Central Committee, where Comrade Mestre stated her support for the Stalinist slogan of a struggle against German rearmament, manifestly subordinating the problem of the German and French proletariat's gaining consciousness and taking up revolutionary struggle to the military defence of the USSR, seen in Stalinist terms as the number-one priority, the strategic line.

On the other hand, tendencies toward rejecting the defence of the USSR have already appeared and will inevitably develop. Some comrades who are troubled by the present tendency toward revisionism on the nature of the bureaucracy and on the Trotskyist concept of the defence of the USSR will inevitably break away from both Trotskyism and the defence of the USSR. We must seriously consider the defection of Natalia Trotsky, whose radically false concepts on the question of the USSR didn't prevent the Second World Congress from placing her on its honorary presidium.

The orientation that has been outlined threatens to lead to the splintering of our International into a Stalinist tendency and a tendency that is defeatist toward the USSR.

We must react without delay and return to the Marxist method of analyzing society, return to the Leninist concept of the function of the working class, return to the Trotskyist analysis of the degeneration of the USSR and of the character of the bureaucracy, return to Trotsky's fundamental statement that the crisis of humanity is and remains the crisis of revolutionary leadership, return to the revolutionary working-class line, that of the construction and the victory of the Fourth International, the World Party of the Socialist Revolution.



Chapter Three

The struggle in the French section

The documents in this chapter bring out the opportunist and pragmatist attitude of the leadership of the SWP, the strongest section of the movement, towards the fight in the International. Two years before the split Pablo unquestionably set out to liquidate the French section into the Stalinist trade union organizations, and to expel the French majority for their resistance to this course.

Cannon's reply to Renard's account of the struggle (Document 5) nails the myth later propagated by the SWP, that it had taken a consistent stand against capitulation to Stalinism. Pablo's bureaucratic measures against the French majority were allowed to go unchallenged, and a heavy blow was dealt at the possibility of developing an opposition to revisionism within the European sections.

It was only after the faction fight had come to a head in the SWP itself that its leadership published the material from the French Trotskyists contained in Document 6.

DOCUMENT 5

Letters exchanged between Daniel Renard and James P. Cannon, February 16 and May 9, 1952

Dear Comrade Cannon,

I am taking the liberty of writing you today because I think that you are one of the most qualified comrades in the Trotskyist movement for evaluating the situation in our section and the dispute which currently places the French party in opposition to the International Secretariat.

I have read *In Defence of Marxism* and *The Struggle for the Proletarian Party*; the exertions, struggles and experiences through which the American Trotskyists, and you especially, have passed, give you the necessary background for telling me what you think of what we are doing here.

All the leaderships of the Trotskyist sections are now in possession of a document from the International Secretariat dated January 21, 1952, concerning the French section.

However, this document in its five pages of text does not give an exact version of what is taking place. It does not present a political view of the situation but strictly an administrative version of the dispute. From a reading of this document it could be concluded that the leading comrades of the French section are acting stubbornly and sulking at the decisions of the IS merely from whim.

The facts are really altogether different. Nobody in the International is unaware of the differences which have opposed the French majority to the IS up to the World Congress. These differences have been expressed in votes and in documents. The French majority has tried to clarify the nature of these differences, especially in the period of preparation of the Seventh Congress of the French Party.

But the differences which set the French Party in opposition to the IS were settled, if not solved, by the *Third World Congress*. And this

found its expression in a resolution of the French Commission of the World Congress, a resolution which the Central Committee of our section *unanimously* approved, insofar as it is the line for applying the policies adopted by the Third World Congress. To say, as the IS does, that the French majority has 'continued' in practice to wish to apply the line of the Seventh Congress of the PCI is inaccurate and refuted by the entire attitude and policy as applied by the French leadership from the World Congress up to now.

Let me begin by stressing that Pablo, in opposing any vote at the World Congress on the documents which our delegates presented there (especially the 10 theses drawn up by Comrade Germain and adopted by our Seventh Congress), and this upon the contention that the International had not discussed them, was by this token unable to have our positions condemned by the Congress.

The truth is that whatever the spheres of activity of our party, nothing has given rise to the slightest criticism by any of the leading bodies of the International regarding remissness in applying the line laid down by the last World Congress.

In 'youth' work a draft resolution was presented to the Political Bureau. It gave rise to a certain amount of criticism, especially on the part of minority comrades. A parity commission of PB members was elected. This commission submitted a new, revised youth document, which was finally adopted. It is some four months since this resolution has been applied. Its application has called forth no important criticism, neither in the ranks of the minority nor from the IS.

If we take trade union work, up to and including the last meeting of the National Contact Commission of 'Unité', this work has gone ahead on the basis of complete agreement between the majority of the French Party and the IS. A document on directives was submitted unanimously by a commission of which Comrade Frank was a member. It was subsequently called into question anew by a totally different document with which I will deal presently.

Finally, the last sphere but not the least: our central organ, *La Verité*, has never been questioned in any fundamental way, by anyone whatever, for not having applied the line of the Third World Congress. What is more, Comrade Pablo stated to a meeting of the Paris Region that *La Verité* was showing 'the obvious progress made by the French leadership in applying the political line laid down by the Third World Congress'. But if, as the IS letter declares, the French leadership 'continues to wish to apply the line of the 7th PCI Congress',

where would this be more evident than in *La Verité*? Our paper, *the principal external expression of our party*, is best capable of reflecting in the light of events, the political positions of the leadership which publishes it.

Thus, since the Third World Congress, the French leadership has effectively endeavoured to apply the policies of our International 'with understanding and discipline'. Further, it has maintained complete silence inside the party on the ever new demands imposed upon it by the IS. Inadequacies may have shown up here and there. They were inevitable. But this was in no sense wilful. If it were so, if the leadership had really desired to carry out a different line, this would have revealed itself not accidentally in episodic and piecemeal cases, but in the entire activity of the party, in all spheres, daily, and at every step. Examples of such an undisciplined attitude would be so numerous that there would be no difficulty in presenting a great many of them.

But the letter of the IS nowhere makes any precise, clearly formulated accusations.

In point of fact, there are two clearly distinct phases in the struggle between the IS and the French leadership. The first phase takes place after the Third World Congress, a period during which the party was orienting itself in its work on the basis of the French resolution. This application takes place with some necessary adjustments. Then there is a second phase whose date can be established precisely: it is December 6, 1951 when the IS issues a document entitled, 'For the reorientation of our trade union work in France'.

This document, of which it was not known whether it was a mandatory resolution effective upon its appearance, or a contribution to the discussion of the trade union problem in France, called into question anew the decisions and documents of the Third World Congress. The stupefaction and indignation which such a document raised in the leadership of the French party were well founded. It was no longer a question of interpretation, of doing a job of exegesis on one sentence or another: this text was in fundamental and formal opposition with the text of the French commission of the World Congress.

For instance, in the French resolution, the following statement is made: 'The necessary turn in the activity of the French party which results from the world turn in the situation does not in any case mean the abandonment of activities engaged in and of results achieved in such activities. On the contrary . . . , etc.'

that independent work must not be liquidated, but that on the contrary, it will be necessary to assign additional forces to this work'. The Italian comrades, in writing this, believe they are applying the line of the Third World Congress. But to say, as does the IS, that this Italian resolution 'advocates a tactic identical to that proposed by the letter of the IS of January 14 to the CC of the French party', constitutes a refusal to understand the obvious. The position of the IS in France makes independent work a supplement to entrust work; the Italian comrades are doing just the reverse. It is necessary to have a certain amount of political myopia to identify these two positions.

In my opinion the IS is seeking to mask the real reasons for the discussion by accusing the French majority of not wanting to apply the line of the Third World Congress and of wishing to substitute the line of the Seventh Congress of our party. Truthfully, the French leadership is not in opposition to the IS but to what we in France have labelled 'Pabloism'. That is what is involved. And today, under the cover of our international leadership, Comrade Pablo is trying to have his own positions carried out. When the French majority says that the trade union resolution, as well as the letter of the IS to the members of the Central Committee of January 19 and 20, is not the honest expression of the World Congress, it is only expressing in another form that Pabloism did not win out at the Third World Congress. To convince oneself all one has to do is to return to the article, 'Where Are We Going?' and to the theses of the Third World Congress.

The struggle in which the French party has found itself engaged and in which I am taking part, has had for its setting the punitive action of the IS in suspending the majority of the Central Committee, a measure directed against all the living forces of the party, against everything which directly or indirectly touches working class and trade union work. This punitive measure is unjust and unjustifiable. It is a suppression of all genuine leadership in all spheres of work. And how does the IS explain this measure? By charging 'political and organizational decomposition'. And upon what does it base this charge? Upon hearsay and gossip. But where the leadership of a party is decomposing politically and organizationally that ought to be confirmed by other means than by the charges of minority comrades. Decomposition, if it is political, must show itself in documents, and especially in the documents submitted precisely to the CC Plenum, where the majority was suspended. Political decomposition should also show itself in our central organ, *La Verité*, of which ten issues

The text of the IS explains: 'In order to realize these objectives which are *possible* right now, it is necessary not to attempt to set ourselves up as a *distinct tendency* (within the CGT), which is not objectively justified at the present stage — *but to integrate ourselves there by promptly becoming the best workers for the unification of the trade union movement, by taking everywhere a clear unequivocal position for the unity proposals of the CGT, and by skilfully manoeuvring as regards the Stalinist leaders so as to allay their suspicions about us and so as to let them consider us as useful instruments for the unity policy*'. (Emphasis in the original).

About all this, the letter of the IS dated January 21 does not say a word; in this way it makes the dispute between the French party and the IS incomprehensible. The opposition which manifests itself on administrative and organizational questions can only find their explanation in the light of the political positions of each of the opponents. Every other way of trying to clarify the discussion can in fact only muddy it up.

This is all the more true when one considers the January 14 letter of the IS to the members of the Central Committee. There too, and anew, the CC found itself confronting totally new positions contrary to the letter and spirit of the Third World Congress. The question was that of entry into the CP but of a very special kind of entry, *sui generis* as the IS itself described it. Independent work was to be subordinated to this entry. ('Independent work must be understood as having for its main aim the aiding of "entrism" work and is itself to be directed primarily at the Stalinist workers'. — 'Entrism work will develop in scope as we come closer to war'. Letter of the IS to the members of the CC).

But the World Congress stated precisely: 'In the countries where the majority of the working class still follows the CP, our organizations, of necessity independent, must direct themselves toward more systematic work aimed at the ranks of these parties and of the masses which they influence'. (*Theses on International Perspectives and the Orientation of the Fourth International*).

This is so true that the Italian comrades, whose political situation is analogous to ours in many ways, have elaborated a resolution for work directed at the workers of the CP. The question of entry is envisaged and resolved in the following way: 'This "entrism" tactic does not exclude but presupposes independent work . . .

'Taking these requirements into account, we reach the conclusion

have appeared since the World Congress. This aspect of the question of political decomposition of our leadership is all the more important because allusion is made in this letter, to Schachtman, to the POUM, to the Yugoslavs. Those of our comrades who participated in the Second World Congress took a stand against the proposal to recognize the WP as a 'sympathetic section'. Since that time we have neither said nor written a word which could justify an amalgam with Schachtman. No basis for comparison exists between our position and that of the POUM, to which *Verité* has replied in connection with its attacks against our Third World Congress. No position of ours is the same as the Yugoslavs against whom we have been conducting an offensive for over 18 months in all spheres where they have shown themselves (brigades, trade unions, youth). In what, directly or indirectly, does the argumentation employed by the French leadership resemble the positions taken by Schachtman, the POUM, the 'Yugoslavs'? In *nothing*. And there you have an unprincipled amalgam which can only condemn those who make use of it.

As for the decomposition of the leadership of our party from an organizational standpoint, what are the symptoms which reveal this? Have members resigned? Has the paper failed to appear? Have directives not been issued in order to initiate this or that action at this or that moment? If the leadership is decomposing as the motor force of the party, what better test than the last strike movements of February 12 as a verification of this? But there again, as in the past, our leadership, conscious of its experience, of the situation in the party caused by the violent *coup* of the IS, proved itself equal to the greatness of its task.

All this tends to demonstrate that a bad cause has the need for bad methods in order to defend itself. And this likewise explains why for us the struggle against Pabloism is not a struggle of secondary importance. The French majority has acquired the conviction in the course of many months in which it has been opposed to Pabloism, that the latter means the destruction of Trotskyism, at least in Western Europe. The sharpness of the struggle, on both sides, can be explained or justified solely in this perspective.

If we return to the question of trade union work, we see in the French resolution of the World Congress, a resolution which our CC has adopted, the following perspective described in these words: 'The agreements which have served as basis for 'Unité' (essential element of the trade union work of the French section) are taking place under the

hallmark of free expression for the various currents gathered together around this paper. The general activity of the party in 'Unité' continues without any changes'. This is clear and without the slightest ambiguity. Four months after these lines were written, we can read the following sentences from the pen of the IS: 'It is necessary not to attempt to set ourselves up as a distinct tendency' as against the Stalinists. What is the meaning of such a sentence if not to deliver ourselves bound hand and foot over to the Stalinist bureaucrats. For us, however, the perspective is clear: the situation in the French trade union movement is such that it imposes upon us the requirement not to surrender *in any way* the orientation laid down by the resolution of the World Congress. That variations in strategy require of us this or that tactic is obvious. But it is something quite different in the foregoing text of the

If we return to the question of entry into the CP, it is clear. We are not hostile to the examination of this question which had already formulated it well in advance of the meeting of January 14 to the members of the CC. But the matter of fraction work which cannot change the independent party and above all cannot in any way alter the independent character of the Trotskyist program remains a constant. Stalinism. Not only do we think it is necessary and indispensable, but we think the CP must be considered by the party as a necessary and indispensable ally. We must prepare ourselves in the event of a new and continued upheaval in the party and quite another thing that is necessary is the integration into Stalinism of a certain number of Trotskyists. This is a fulfilling.

Politics has its own logic and we must not be state to the CC. Transitional program is a necessary and inevitable judge as a moral and political standard. Comrad
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International) can only lose. It is impossible to destroy a Trotskyist section under the pretext that it does not share the personal ideas of Pablo on the role of the Soviet bureaucracy and on 'centuries of transition'. To destroy is not the role of a leader of the International: his role is not to destroy the human foundation of all politics, entrism or otherwise.

My letter has no other purpose than to warn you of this danger, to explain the situation and to ask your opinion. I hope I have accomplished my task.

With fraternal Bolshevik-Leninist best wishes, dear comrade, I am,

Daniel Renard

* * *

New York, N.Y.
May 29, 1952

Daniel Renard
Paris

Dear Comrade Renard:

I received your letter of February 16. Copies were also distributed to all the members of our National Committee, and in formulating the following reply I have had the benefit of discussion with them on the matter. If I have waited so long to answer, it is only because I am always reluctant to intervene in the affairs of another party without knowing all the pertinent facts and the people concerned. I make this explanation to assure you that I meant no disrespect to you by my delay in answering your letter. Just the contrary. My purpose was to give your communication the serious and deliberate answer it deserves.

In the meantime, the Tenth Plenum of the IEC has taken place, and its basic document on 'The Tactical Application of the Third World Congress Line', as well as its Organizational Resolution on the French situation, have been received here. We have also received a copy of the

said that to speak of the oscillations of the Stalinist bureaucracy means to put in question the workers' character of the USSR, adding that we will no longer see oscillations, but hesitations by Stalinism in accomplishing the tasks of the revolution. Has not Comrade Mestre, member of the Political Bureau, stated that entry *sui generis* has become necessary because 'Stalinism has changed'? All this is evidently not a product of chance. All this only expresses, in our ranks, the growing pressure of Stalinism upon the petty bourgeoisie of Western Europe which finds its echo in our organization.

This explains why I have personally stated that confronted by such positions the party must rise, unanimously, to condemn such crimes. I am not concerned with creating an atmosphere of hostility in the French section 'against the International' as the letter of the IS implies. I am concerned with defending the essential programmatic foundations of our movement, which is its wealth and which is its surest guarantee of victory.

The position which I have taken in this battle is the product of all the experience which I have accumulated during years of membership in the working class movement and particularly of my struggle for Trotskyism in the Renault plant. To create the notion that our opposition to the Pabloite line proceeds from an infantile anti-Stalinism is to conceal the real character of Pabloism, as it is revealing itself every day increasingly, every day more clearly. Today Pablo is compelled to call into question the fundamental ideas of the Transitional Programme in order to prop up his line. What will happen tomorrow?

The methods used by Pablo have caused me to reflect a great deal and I have in particular relived the struggle which Trotsky conducted against Schachtman, Burnham and Abern in 1939-40 in the American section. The methods used by the IS are absolutely the reverse of these. Trotsky, and all the American comrades at his side, fought politically and tried to convince the SWP comrades by the widest possible discussion and the most fundamental. In particular, Trotsky constantly turned towards the party's working class base, addressed himself to it, used the best pedagogical forms so as to accomplish this, that the discussion would at least serve to educate the party. Here, we see the working class base of the party disdained, because it is the majority. We see fundamental questions evaded under false pretexts. To an entire leadership which is opposed to its line the IS replies: 'Suspension' and justified itself by insults.

From all this the party (and when I say party, I mean the whole

'Declaration by the Political Bureau Majority on the Agreements Concluded at the International Executive Committee'. These documents — the Tenth Plenum decisions and the Declaration of your Political Bureau Majority — seem to me to advance the dispute to another stage and to throw more light on it.

I have used the intervening time, since receiving your letter, for an attentive study of all the relevant documents, including those above mentioned. Naturally, from such a great distance I cannot feel qualified to pass judgment on the many secondary questions and personal antagonisms which are unfailingly involved in such a sharp dispute as your party is now experiencing. However, the general picture from a political point of view now seems clear enough to justify me in offering you and the other French comrades a frank opinion, as follows:

I think the Third World Congress made a correct analysis of the new post-war reality in the world and the unforeseen turns this reality has taken. Proceeding from this analysis, the Congress drew correct conclusions for the orientation of the national Trotskyist parties toward the living mass movement as it has evolved since the war. Further, the Tenth Plenum, in its basic document on the tactical application of the Third World Congress line, has faithfully interpreted, amplified and concretized the line of the Third World Congress as regards its tactical application under the different conditions in the different countries.

I note your statement that the majority are 'not hostile' to the 'idea of entry into the CP' as 'the eventuality for which we must prepare ourselves'. That would seem to put the majority in basic agreement with the line of the IEC and clear the way for a jointly-elaborated programme of practical actions leading to an agreed-upon end. The differences seem to be reduced to questions of timing and pace. I should like to remind you, however, that in a fluid situation timing and pace can be decisive for the success or failure of an action. In such a situation, where an objective is agreed upon in principle, my own preference would be for decisiveness and speed.

I disagree in part with your formulation of the question of entry as 'above all a matter of fraction work which cannot change the work of the independent party and above all cannot in any way change the independent character of the Trotskyist programme with reference to Stalinism'. Two different questions, which ought to be separated, are combined in this formula.

Of course, neither entry, nor any other policy or tactic which could

be devised, can 'in any way change the independent character of the *Trotskyist programme* with reference to Stalinism'. But '*the work of the independent party*' in France, in the present historical conjuncture, can and must be radically changed, and that without unnecessary delay, for there is not much time left to seize the opportunity now open. We must get into the movement of Stalinist workers while there is yet time and by such means and methods as the situation permits, not those we might prefer to arbitrarily insist upon.

A policy of maintaining the French party as an *essentially* independent party, with fraction work in Stalinist-controlled organizations as supplemental and secondary, would turn the necessities of the situation upside down. The situation in France now imperatively requires a policy of *entry* (of a special kind) into the Stalinist movement. The independent party and press should serve, stimulate and guide the entrism movement, not substitute for it or contradict it. It is true, as every Trotskyist knows, that the independence of the revolutionary vanguard party is a principle. Its creation is an unchanging aim of the revolutionary vanguard, always and everywhere and under all conditions. The function of the party, however, is not to exist for itself but to lead the workers in revolution. Further progress in the construction of a revolutionary party, *capable of leading the revolutionary masses*, requires now in France a wide and prolonged detour through the workers' movement controlled by the Stalinists, and even eventually *through a section of the Stalinist party itself*.

The aim to build the Trotskyist party into a mass party remains fixed and unchanging, but the road toward it in France is by no means a straight one. If our French comrades should grow stubborn and formally insist on the functioning of the independent party as the *primary* and most *essential* work in the given situation, the living mass movement with its unbounded revolutionary potentialities would certainly pass it by and leave us with the form without the substance.

The breakup of the coalition on the trade union field around the paper, 'L'Unité', was a progressive development for our party. Those reformist trade unionists who make a speciality of 'anti-Stalinism' in order to cover and justify their pro-imperialist policy are an international breed, and they are well known to us. They are not fit allies for Trotskyists in the United States, in France or anywhere else. The logic of their Stalinophobia inexorably impels them to the right, and no tactical diplomacy on our part can arrest the process. On the other hand, the French Stalinist workers, by the logic of the irreversible

international trend of things, must be impelled more and more on a radical course. It is a matter of life and death for our comrades to establish connections with them and form an alliance with them against imperialism. The disruption of the 'L'Unité' coalition, provoked by the right wing, should be taken as a fortunate and most favourable springboard into this new and more fruitful arena.

As far as the anarchist phrasemongers are concerned — in the United States, in France, or anywhere else — time-wasting parleys and coalitions with them for the purpose of waging the class struggle against the imperialist bourgeoisie would make a mockery of things which ought to be taken seriously. This would not be revolutionary politics but a substitute for it.

Your letter, Comrade Renard, as well as the Declaration of the Majority of your Political Bureau on the Tenth Plenum, explains the political essence of your position in the conflict as opposition to 'Pabloism'. You define this as a revisionist tendency, aiming at 'pure and simple integration into Stalinism' and thereby a capitulation to it. This question, as you may be aware, has a history in the Socialist Workers Party and is, consequently, familiar to us. As far back as 1950, when the new tactical turn was first indicated, the Johnsonites attempted to terrify the party with the scare of 'Pabloism'. They sought to construe a struggle in the International Trotskyist movement of 'Cannonism vs. Pabloism'. Since we were fully in favour of the new tactical turn from the start, we did not see any ground for such a contradistinction of tendencies, and said so when the question was first raised by the Johnsonites — an answer which no doubt hastened their departure from our ranks.

We, for our part, are orthodox Trotskyists since 1928 and thereby irreconcilable enemies of Stalinism or any conciliationism with it, not to speak of capitulation. I do not think I overstate the case if I say that should any kind of a pro-Stalinist tendency make its appearance in our international movement, we would probably be the first to notice it and to say: 'This is an alien tendency with which we cannot compromise'. We do not see such a tendency in the International leadership of the Fourth International nor any sign nor symptom of it.

We judge the policy of the International leadership by the line it elaborates in official documents — in the recent period by the documents of the Third World Congress and the Tenth Plenum. We do not see any revisionism there. All we see is an elucidation of the post-war

evolution of Stalinism and an outline of new tactics to fight it more effectively. We consider these documents to be completely Trotskyist. They are different from previous documents of our movement, not in principle or method, but only in the confrontation and analysis of the new reality and the tactical adjustment to it. It is the unanimous opinion of the leading people of the SWP that the authors of these documents have rendered a great service to the movement for which they deserve appreciation and comradely support, not distrust and denigration.

I am sure that the International movement will not sanction or support a factional struggle based on suspicion of future intentions which cannot be demonstrated, or even deduced, from present proposals and positions formulated in documents. Nobody can learn anything from such fights, and the party is bound to be the loser. If you comrades of the majority should insist on a struggle against a 'revisionism' which is not evident to others, you could only disorient a number of worker comrades in the party ranks, isolate them from the other cadres of the International movement and lead them into a blind alley. Unfortunately, this has been done often enough in the past history of the French party by impulsive leaders who did not take thought of their course or heed the opinions of International comrades who sought to help them with friendly advice. I earnestly hope it will not happen this time.

It would be far better, in my opinion, to lay the suspicions aside — or, in any event, not to make them the axis of discussion — and try to come to agreement with the IS on practical steps toward an effective penetration into the movement of Stalinist workers — leaving the different views as to the prospects to the test of experience. Political tendencies which are not clearly revealed cannot be fruitfully debated. If there is in fact any illusion about Stalinism on the one side, or a fetishism of formal independence on the other, the test of experience will mature and clarify such errors and make it possible to deal with them politically. Conversely, if there are no serious differences latent in the conflict, experience will eliminate any ground for suspicion in either respect.

An entry into the Stalinist workers' movement and eventually into the Stalinist party itself, under the given conditions, with its rigid bureaucratic structure, is an extremely difficult and dangerous undertaking in the best case. It will be all the more difficult if there is no unity in the party leadership. The situation would be made many

times worse if the French party has to be punished with one more unnecessary split. This possibility cannot be ignored.

Don't deceive yourself, Comrade Renard. There is great danger of a split, even though both sides may have renounced any intention in this regard. A split is implicit in the situation as it has been developing in the recent period. In my opinion, the best way to avoid such a calamity — perhaps the only way — would be to shift the discussion for the time being to a concrete step-by-step programme, worked out jointly by the party leadership and the IS, to effectuate the imperatively-dictated entry into the Stalinist workers' movement and eventually into a section of the Stalinist party itself.

Along that line — if our judgment is correct — the French party should soon get into a position to expand its influence and prepare for the great role which history has assigned to it in the approaching war and revolution. You can surely count on the sympathy and support of International comrades in this great endeavour.

Yours fraternally,

James P. Cannon

DOCUMENT 6

The struggle of the French Trotskyists against Pabloite liquidationism, October 1953

We shall confine ourselves in this document to a recital of the developments of Pablist activities in France and of the struggle which he waged against the French section, we shall not attempt here to examine the problem of the origins of Pablistism, a subject of major importance which the International will have to submit to study and discussion, but which would require an explanatory work at least equivalent in length to the present text.

From its very nature, and contrary to the statements of Pablo and his partisans in the IS, Pablist revisionism, as is well understood in the IS and in the IEC, had an earlier development. Its first clear but incomplete manifestation, in an official document of the International, is found in the projected theses on the International situation written by Pablo and submitted by the IS to the Ninth Plenum of the IEC (November 1950) as a preparatory document for the Third World Congress. These theses, which take as their point of departure the closeness of the Third World War, propose a change (not yet specified) in the tasks of the International, proceeding in the direction of abandoning the building of independent revolutionary parties as the leadership of the masses in the period prior to the war. In this document also figure the first attacks against 'pure norms,' and the improbability of a 'free development toward socialism' is broached.

The IEC was disturbed by this orientation, and in accordance with a tactic which will constantly be his from then on, Pablo agrees to *integrate* certain Bleibtreu amendments, presented by Theo (Hol-

land), into his thesis which coexist with the contradictory statements of the first version in the theses bearing the name of Theses of the Ninth Plenum.

The Central Committee of the ICP had been called together at the very moment when the Plenum of the IEC ended. The uneasiness of the IEC invades it immediately. The members of the French CC, disturbed by the reading of the projected theses which had been sent them, see the members of the IEC who are present at their meeting in violent conflict with each other. Pablo is absent and it is Livingstone who takes his place and with shocking violence attacks Privas and Frank, who had indicated reservations on the theses within the IS. Except for two members of the CC (Michele Mestre and Corvin), whom Pablo has for the past two months made his direct spokesman in the ICP the CC criticizes the revisionist elements introduced into the theses and refuses to approve the draft. It agrees to meet again one month later.

At this January CC meeting, certain Bleibtreu-Frank-Privas addenda to the political resolution prepared for the Seventh Congress of the ICP and relating to its tasks in the struggle against war are adopted, despite a hysterical intervention by Livingstone, representative of Pablo. Privas proposes to the CC that he be assigned to the leadership of *La Verite* in place of Michele Mestre. This proposal is adopted.

From the Ninth Plenum of the IEC to the month of March, 1951, when the crisis will break out, the tendencies are in process of being defined within the leadership of the ICP and of acquiring the content which they will finally have. The opponents of Pablo within the IS (Germain, Frank, Privas) call the Parisian members of the CC of the ICP together, with the exception of M. Mestre and Corvin, in order to advise them of the threats of expulsion from the IS pronounced by Pablo against them: by a bureaucratic ruse Privas had already been expelled from the bureau of the IS, which had given Pablo the majority of three votes against two. Immediately afterward he demanded that Germain and Frank defend the line, which had become the majority line in this fashion, before the IEC and in the sections, or face expulsion from the IS.

From the outset, a difference in views shows up regarding the methods of struggle:

1. Germain, Frank, Privas, frightened by the organizational threats of Pablo, favor waging a campaign for the defense of democracy, for

changing the statutes of the IEC, for the recognition of minority rights in the preparatory discussion for the world congress, etc. . . .

2. Bleibtreu is against this orientation, estimating that a struggle against revisionism must be waged with *political* weapons, that abstract democratic demands by a 'minority,' which does not express itself politically, will interest no one. He proposes a *political counter-attack by the publication of a counter-thesis* by the minority of the IS or by the *majority of the ICP* Germain alerts the ICP from its orientation, 'Pablo has been waiting for a long time to destroy the French section.'

In order to divert the majority of the ICP from its orientation, Germain advises Bleibtreu (January 1951) of his projected ten theses on Stalinism, formally promising to submit them to a vote by the sections and by the world congress. With this formal promise, the majority of the ICP, when advised, agree not to wage a separate fight and to wait for the publication of the Ten Theses, considering that these theses constitute a very clear refutation of the pro-Stalinist revisionist elements in the theses of the Ninth Plenum and a noteworthy contribution to the Trotskyist analysis of Stalinism. Most of the Parisian members of the CC fall into line for these reasons, particularly since the IS is asking for a discussion with the PB, enlarged by the Parisian members of the CC, on the subject of the 'addenda' adopted in January.

On the eve of this common IS-enlarged PB meeting, the members of the French leadership receive a letter from the IS placing them under discipline to cancel their vote adopting the 'addenda' and to rewrite them along the lines of the theses of the Ninth Plenum. This letter appears shortly after 'Where Are We Going?' wherein Pablo develops his most revisionist ideas and gives some of them the most provoking tone ('We must unequivocally line up with the anti-imperialist forces,' etc. . . .) At the common meeting of the IS and enlarged PB, Pablo is again absent; it is Germain who represents the IS (Livingstone has so angered the French CC by his style of intervention — which earned him the nickname 'the cowboy' — that Pablo can no longer use him). One surprise awaits those attending this meeting: it is Privas who is reporting in the name of the IS and who, in a long embarrassed speech, tries to justify the positions of 'Where Are We Going?' which he had sharply criticized shortly before. He concludes that it is necessary to comply with the demands of the IS. Frank and Germain speak along the same lines. It is a confession of their capitulation, to which they were brought by their idea of a soft 'struggle' by

means of organizational pressures and measures. From now on, they will be compelled to outstrip themselves from day to day and to show themselves more Pablist than Pablo. The effect of this turnabout on the CC is the reverse of that anticipated by the IS. Without any prior consultation among themselves after receipt of the IS letter, the members of the CC all react alike. They readdress to the IS its demand for clear explanations, for explanations of 'bad formulations,' for more precision whether new views are involved which they consider as revisionist. The meeting decides on calling an immediate extraordinary CC session and on publication of an international resolution. It is noteworthy that the division in the CC between majority and minority leaves on the majority's side the comrades who are doing mass work (in the factories and trade unions, the youth organizations, etc.) and on the other side the flotsam which was unable to find a working milieu outside the party. The text (of the resolution) is worked out collaboratively.

The CC reassembles in April 1951. For the first time, Pablo comes there personally, not to defend his positions but to attack the French majority, which he accuses of conservatism and which, according to him, is succumbing to the pressure of Shachtman, of the POUM, of the Yugoslavs and of the neutralists (grouped around the weekly *The Observer*; it is necessary to point out that these neutralists are pro-Stalinists; they will support the Pablists at the time of the split, will give publicity to their publications and their meetings; Germain is one of the acknowledged and assiduous editors of this paper).

The CC adopts the theses, prepared by the PB and Parisian members of the CC, decides to postpone the date of the Seventh Congress of the party, against the wishes of the Pablists who are afraid of clarity and are using the argument of authority. Frank drafts a criticism of the majority theses which bears all the earmarks of political capitulation. Frank covers up the revisionism with which he does not really agree and attacks positions which are really his own by trying to read into them what isn't there. The majority, after having outlined its international political position, develops all aspects and all practical consequences of its policy in the daily work of rooting the French section in the masses. A series of reports (trade union, youth, organizational) is drawn up. The Pablist faction presents an opposition document on each of them: on trade union work, it proposes abandonment of the orientation toward rallying a class struggle tendency (which, according to them, cuts us off from the Stalinist workers, who

the discussion period, they will not be distributed in the International. This prepares the maneuvers of the world congress.

The Third World Congress takes place in France. The delegates from distant countries are called a month before its sessions and are 'insulated' by the IS. They are prepared by a campaign of slander against the French majority, which is pictured to them as splitters (it is even insinuated that some are 'captives of the Yugoslavs'). The three days of general discussion in the congress boil down to a series of violent attacks against the French section, contradictory attacks, the Pablist delegates attacking it one after another on the basis of imaginary positions. The Pablists are not afraid, in the course of their criticisms of the ICP positions, to attack the theses of Germain on Stalinism, characterized by a Dutch leader as a reflection of imperialist pressure!

The ICP presented three documents to the congress: its theses on international policy adopted by its Seventh congress, the 'Ten Theses on Stalinism,' then, during the course of the congress, numerous amendments to the theses of the Ninth Plenum correcting all the revisionist declarations in that document. The vote of the congress, without precedent in our movement, motivates the refusal to declare itself on the French theses (after a night of reflection) by the fact that the delegates were not informed on them (although they were able to polemicize against them during two out of three days); and the refusal to take a position on the 'Ten Theses' on the score that Germain, their author, 'did not write them with the object of having them voted on.'

Pablo wants to get rid of the majority by means of a French Commission set up as a tribunal. Some delegates are opposed to this procedure. The report made by Frank to this commission is a slanderous attack against the majority without counterposing program and conception of building the party. His sole aim is to have the congress hand over the real leadership of the ICP to its Pablist minority. The majority does not accede to this and Pablo cannot carry out his operation successfully, failing in an attempt to split the majority by the offer of a dubious compromise. . . . The last session of the French commission and of the congress saw a relaxation of the hostile atmosphere organized by Pablo against the French delegates. Pablo has to yield and accept the fact that there is no precedent for the violation of democratic centralism in the designation of leadership of national sections; the ICP retains the leadership which its own congress has established.

For the IS the international discussion has definitely ended with the congress. This includes the discussion on the Chinese revolution ('the most important event which has occurred since October 1917') which did not take place at the world congress and which the IS will open only after it will place the French majority outside the possibility of participating in it. By making a forbidden ground of every problem which poses the question of Stalinism anew, Pablo leaves the field free for the development of his pro-Stalinist revisionism.

An IS-ICP commission had been formed for drafting a program applying the line of the Third World Congress to France. Germain represents the IS there. The world congress confirmed for France the line of building an independent party. The resolution drawn up by the commission scarcely goes beyond this decision and proclaims the maintenance of what has been achieved. Pablo, in the course of a visit to the PB of the ICP states: 'it was not Pablism which the Third World Congress adopted!' Nevertheless, hardly have the delegates left France when the Pablist offensive is renewed; each sphere of activity of the party supplies an occasion for defining *the turn* toward the line of the 3rd World Congress. The special point of this offensive will first be trade union work. The Pablist minority is connected with all sectors of party work. By virtue of this, the proposed document of orientation in trade union work presented to the PB had been drawn up with the participation and agreement of Pierre Frank. Nevertheless we see the latter supporting an amendment by Privas at the PB which, by its tendency toward total alignment on Stalinism, by that very fact alone, brings into question (by extension) the necessity for an independent party in France. The PB asks the IS for its opinion on the Privas amendment. The 'enlarged IS' at which this question is placed on the agenda is a star-chamber affair at which Frank makes a fraudulent report on the activity of the party in the trade union group of 'Unity.' By means of this report Pablo succeeds in obtaining full power to settle this question. In this manner he is able to make up for all the time lost at the world congress. The document on trade union orientation which he draws up concretizes 'Where Are We Going?' in the direction of pro-Stalinist and liquidationist revisionism. He writes: 'Stalinist policy surely becomes *in practice* a policy of militant mobilization of the working class masses against the war preparations of imperialism. . . .It constitutes . . . *not an episodic or transitory* turn, but rather the expression of a forced march which the evolution of

imperialism toward the counter-revolutionary war imposes on the Stalinist leaders.'

The Pablist offensive continues on the level of youth policy and that of the paper. The leadership (majority), in various documents on these questions, denounces the transition from the positions of the Third World congress (and of the resolution of the French commission appointed by the congress) to liquidationist Pablist positions. This entire battle, however, takes place in the PB. It is closed to the party which the PB does not have the right to keep informed. An extraordinary congress is consequently the only way out. Pablo cannot again run the risk of nullifying his bureaucratic successes before a representative assembly. That is why, on the eve of the Central Committee called for January 20, 1952, an ultimatum document (dated January 15) unveils his batteries. This is the 'entry *sui generis* turn.' This text will be minutely analyzed by the French majority. It is the program of liquidation. The PB must accept it or resign. The CC denounces it, driving Pablo to decisive admissions: 'We cannot today discuss what the Stalinists are doing . . . nor with those who cling to the formulas of the transition program. . . . We will discuss with those who agree . . . etc. . . .' As a matter of discipline 'the leadership agrees to begin carrying out entrism into the CP but demands an extraordinary congress in order that the party can be clarified on this 'unprecedented turn.' In order to avoid the destruction of the party, the leadership refuses to agree to the principal point of the Pablist ultimatum: surrender of the leadership to the minority.

Pablo thereupon declares the majority of the CC suspended, without the IS having met during the course of the CC sessions.

The Pablists had prepared an act of violence against the party along the lines of taking over locals, files, etc. . . . but they fail. The majority refuses to submit to the illegal suspension, to the sole leadership of Pierre Frank, appointed gauleiter for the IS.

Emergency measures assure the security of the party. The majority publishes all the documents of the discussion and prepares the 8th Congress.

In these difficult circumstances the party shows its political maturity and its clear attachment to the principles of Trotskyism. All the living elements condemn the Pablist act of violence. The meetings called by Pierre Frank only manage to gather a few Pablists.

The extraordinary congress is prepared. The Pablists have to resign themselves to coming to meetings called by the majority. The general

discussion confounds and discredits them. Their sole strength lies in using the threat of expulsion and in using the bond of international organization to play upon the sentiments of militants bred in the most profound internationalism. The period of suspension (January 20-beginning of March) witnesses an intensive political life. Numerous writings unveil the real pro-Stalinist liquidationist face of Pablism.

Nevertheless, at the 10th Plenum of the IEC, the majority of the ICP accepts the distorted proposals made by Pablo (the extraordinary congress will take place, but the leadership is changed: it is to be dominated by Germain, who is to have a major vote. The majority accepts this formulation, because it hopes that in the light of the new developments of Pablism, French isolation will cease and that sections will join it in order to put a brake on revisionism. It agrees to a heavy sacrifice in the interests of international Trotskyism, to which it sends out an appeal.

The period lasting from the 10th to the 11th plenum, under the leadership of this new two-headed political bureau (Germain constantly acts along Pablist lines, but the majority keeps the levers of command in its hands) is a dark period.*

Except for the 'Unity' conference which takes place at the same time as the Tenth Plenum, it is a period of party atrophy and decline.

In the 'Unity' conference, the majority won a striking success, dealing a crushing defeat to the Yugoslav agents, readily isolating and scattering them, whereas the Pablist tactic sought to isolate us, in order, in the final analysis, to destroy two years of work, much to the advantage of the Yugoslav agents.

But seeing the leadership of the Fourth International abandon Trotskyism, many militants abandon their militant work. The party is paralyzed. The IS refuses the majority elected by the 7th Congress the right to present its political report to the 8th Congress which is in preparation. On the eve of the Eleventh Plenum of the IEC, Germain presents a new Pablist ultimatum: complete capitulation (not to defend our positions at the congress, the latter being transformed into a conference for carrying out entry *sui generis*) or outright removal from the leadership. There is no further choice. Pablo, through Germain's mouth, is demanding our self-destruction. The Eleventh Plenum gives him a free hand. The majority then decides to call the congress.

* A period marked specially by the publication in 'Quatrieme Internationale' of the report by Pablo on 'entry *sue generis*.' Pablo thereby publicly offers his collaboration with the Kremlin.

The Pablists know that the CC, with the support of the entire party, will reject the ultimatum. Consequently, a few days before the meeting of the CC, they ransack the technical apparatus of the party, and issue a pamphlet, which they distribute to the congress of the Indo-Chinese B.L. (a group which will be criminally but needlessly split on this account on the very eve of its return to Viet-Nam), accusing the majority of preparing a split. Secretly, two months previously, they had filed a statement with the police department establishing an ICP with a completely Pablist leadership. By this splitting tactic they think they have put an end to the party. At the CC they refuse to retract their splitting actions. The central committee suspends them. They organize a minority congress.

The Eighth Congress of the party finds that the split, so far as numerical forces are concerned, is of slight importance. All the working class elements of the party remain attached to its program and completely understand the pro-Stalinist liquidationist character of Pablism, but the split isolates us physically from the International for a period, because of the tactic of isolation which Pablo had employed concerning us, in order to first get rid of the main obstacle which the French section represented. This isolation initially discourages some militants. However, the majority does not lose its hope in the strength which lies in the attachment to principles.

Historical dialectic serves the Marxists and events come to our aid. The brief course of Stalinist adventurism in France has brought the Pablists to madness. After the disastrous demonstration of May 28, 1952, they proclaim: 'The French revolution has begun under the leadership of the men from the Kremlin' and they demand of the Eleventh Plenum that it expel the majority which 'is deserting the revolution.'[†]

While the split is taking place, the last Stalin course of United National Front comes as a brutal contradiction of all the prophecies of Pablism.

The first CC after the congress (September 1952), reaffirming its unalterable attachment to the Fourth International, drafts its plan of struggle for its reintegration in conjunction with a struggle against liquidation within the whole International.

Just as the party was able, upon being freed from the debilitating factional struggle, to turn outward and during the course of the year

[†] These same people say of the strike wave of August 1953 that it was not the revolution nor even a general strike!

1952-1953 to achieve a series of important successes (thanks to which we will win back many militants lost during the struggle against Pablism and before), so on the international level, our new situation allows us to establish direct contact with many Trotskyists in the International, as a starting point for the realignment of the International.

Disappointed in its hope to destroy Trotskyism in France by the split, Pablism resorts to the most odious means for accomplishing its work of destruction: police actions, slanders, collaboration with the Stalinists. These operations dealt serious blows to our cause but are finally turning against their authors, who are discredited from now on.

With the struggle against Pablism, the French section of the International experienced its longest and most painful crisis in (party) building. Heavily proletarianized during the last few years, tempered in the class struggle, it has magnificently survived this trial and demonstrated both its political maturity and its capacity for action. In this three-year struggle the incomparable value of our program has once again been verified.



Chapter Four

The fight against Pabloism is engaged

From the beginning of the fight against Pablo, different tendencies can be discerned among the forces which soon formed the International Committee. The letters by G. Healy show how the British leadership entered the fight in an endeavour to carry forward the building of sections of the International and to educate its cadre in struggle against liquidationism.

The attitude of the SWP leaders was markedly different. By the summer of 1953, they were faced with a Pabloite faction in their own camp. Cannon, having endorsed Pablo's positions throughout the period following the Third Congress, now swung around and prepared for an organizational break. The SWP leaders, imbued with pragmatism, were incapable of taking the fight beyond a re-statement of orthodoxy. It was the British section in particular, basing itself on the fight for revolutionary leadership in the working class, that was able to bring out the importance of the differences with Pablo and take the split as the starting point for new theoretical development.

DOCUMENT 7a**Letter from Sam Gordon to James P. Cannon,
May 13, 1953**

Dear Bob:

I feel I cannot delay forwarding the following information to you at once.

Burns returned yesterday from an IEC and called me up to have a talk.

The main topic of the discussion was a statement on the recent developments in Russia, a draft of which you have probably seen. There was general agreement on this, but Burns (after a previous consultation with me) raised two points: 1) On the question whether restorationist tendencies within the bureaucracy had been superseded by economic progress. (He put forward the view that before this is put forward as an official view, a great deal more discussion was necessary.) 2) On the practical tasks posed in point 2c of the draft. (He put forward the view that this was unclear and could disorient the work in a number of places insofar as it puts an over-emphasis, based on a situation which had far from matured, on attention to Stalinist movement. He proposed that this point be simply dropped.)

According to him, this brought about a sharp clash of views with Jerome and such of his supporters as Frank, Dumas, etc. They were 'all hopped up' over the new perspectives, saw visions of rapid denouements, etc. He stood his ground, received a certain amount of concessions to his views from Ernest in a summary, and from one or two others, but was 'lectured' by Jerome and his other friends. Finally, the draft was turned over to a commission for editing after being agreed to 'in principle' and Burns thinks, or 'hopes' that his objective will be met.

There was also, he went on, a restricted IS in which the SWP question was raised. According to him, Frank and Dumas as well as

Theo are already lined up with the minority. Jerome, he revealed to me for the first time, had been behind Campbell 'from the beginning,' and now said that on Russia 'we must choose between Wright and Frankel,' J. being for Frankel. In Burns' opinion, Ernest and Livio are not very firm on this line. Burns himself is 'politically' with the SWP majority, but feels that the sharpness and tension has obscured issues and desires very much a more objective discussion. He was cagey at the IS and exerted his efforts only to postpone taking a stand until an end of June meeting. This much he has achieved. According to him, his objective now is to get an IS majority with Ernest and Livio in order to prevent a pro-minority stand for which Jerome and Frank (the two others) are going to push.

Burns is very much worried about the whole situation and feels his own responsibility rather strongly. Organizationally he has always gotten along well with Jerome, likes him a good deal; now he feels that J. does not know what he is letting himself in for, that he is up in the clouds, suffering terribly from isolation. He wants to save Jerome, he says, from 'cutting his own throat.' He therefore intends to pursue a very cautious course.

He has indicated that he will write to you himself, at least in part, about these matters.

It goes without saying that I sympathized with him in the position he is in, although I expressed the opinion that I would be very firm and frank politically first of all and fit in the organizational problem within this framework. He replied that he has his own method of handling such a situation, and we left it at that.

I will leave further comment for some other time, as I think you should have this information without delay.

Yours,
Tom

DOCUMENT 7b**Letter from G. Healy to James P. Cannon,
May 27, 1953**

Dear Jim,

I have received the Stone information and felt it necessary to write you at once on this matter. What I have to say is for you and your closest associates. It should not be divulged in written form for obvious reasons.

There is an element of truth in what Stone says about your minority and Pablo. This what we have to face up to at once. The situation has been for some time extremely complicated here, because I personally have gathered this in the course of private and personal conversations with Pablo. Several weeks ago when he was present at our Congress I had cause to warn him in the presence of Cde. Lawrence about the dangers of correspondence with a man like Clarke. He hotly defended himself at first but cooled off when I sharply reminded him that even if every letter he wrote was correct, nevertheless it could be interpreted in certain circumstances to mean some kind of support, by an unprincipled tendency, thereby permitting them to feed from it for a time. I told him that as secretary of the international he should be extremely careful.

The problem of Pablo has for some time been a source of great anxiety for me. For the past few years I have been extremely close to him and have grown to like him considerably. On the present issue I thought and still think that it would be possible to prevent him from making serious errors, by endeavouring to hold him back until the issues in the SWP become sufficiently clear. At this stage, however, we need to get together and exchange ideas.

Pablo suffers badly from isolation in Paris. That French movement is a 'killer.' It really is impossible to hold an international centre

together when you have no national section to help it. Real international leaders can arise no other way except through a basic experience and training in building and leading a national section. Pablo has not yet got this and as a result has grown impatient. This has reflected itself most sharply on organizational questions. On several occasions we have clashed very sharply on how to allocate the financial budget. He tries to cover ground which is absolutely impossible from our slender material base.

Building a party, as you know, is a very real thing, and so also is building an international. There is a limited amount of human beings and resources at our disposal and you can only utilize these in a certain way. Some things you can do; others, no matter how important, you cannot. The essence of leadership is to know what you can and what you cannot. A correct political line forms the backbone of all of our work, but it is not enough and sometimes unless one understands its practical application in the circumstances surrounding the movement at one's disposal, then it can be a simple matter to abandon it and slip into the camp of opportunism and adventurism.

Take this talk about Stalinism. Impatient comrades thinking in terms of China, Eastern Europe and now even the USSR, see the impact of the post-war revolutionary forces upon these countries, but fail to recognize one vital thing that, as far as we know, we have not one single organized cadre group in these areas. In matters of theory they are carried away into the field of generalizations to the extent that they generalize themselves out of existence in the countries in which they are operating. They become overseas 'revolutionaries' and then begins the real drift into opportunism on the home front. They fight mythical battles all over the globe and then look for a 'short cut' in the country where they should be really fighting. It is the politics of illusions and impressionism.

There is no way around the hard day to day grind in building a party. Whilst it is true that the revolution has thrown Stalinism into a crisis, it still remains a powerful reactionary force. It has huge resources and tremendous apparatus scope. In the historic sense its 'sun has set' but right now it can deal the most savage blows against the revolution. Our sections are the vanguard of the revolution because they represent the only conscious force on the world scale which is organized for the revolution. They are our most precious capital. No matter to what extent the crisis upsets Stalinism, unless our people are on the spot there will never be a proper change in the

together when you have no national section to help it. Real international leaders can arise no other way except through a basic experience and training in building and leading a national section. Pablo has not yet got this and as a result has grown impatient. This has reflected itself most sharply on organizational questions. On several occasions we have clashed very sharply on how to allocate the financial budget. He tries to cover ground which is absolutely impossible from our slender material base.

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The disease which has gripped the movement is serious — a big fight lies ahead. I think we can transform it into a victory, but great care is needed with people such as Pablo. You can rest assured that we shall enter the arena of struggle behind you. At the moment I cannot speak officially for the section, but we have blasted conciliation to Stalinism here for some time now, and there shouldn't be much trouble. However, in these days you never know.

With best wishes,

J.

DOCUMENT 7c**Letter from James P. Cannon to Sam Gordon,
June 4, 1953**

Dear Tom:

Your two letters of May 13 and May 25 have been highly appreciated here. In the new shuffle and division of labor in our leading staff, I have been placed in charge of 'foreign affairs' and will pay the closest attention to it. You will be hearing from me directly or all matters in this domain and I will undertake to keep you fully informed.

As a beginning, I am enclosing herewith the following material:

1. My speech to the majority caucus of New York on 'Internationalism and the SWP.'
2. Our Plenum resolution on 'American Stalinism and Our Attitude Toward It.'
3. Two letters I wrote from California sometime ago on the question of 'Cominternism' (February 3 letter to Joe and March 9 letter to Farrell).
4. Letter of May 22 to Jerome, with copy to Jerry.
5. Jerome's dissimulating 'answer' to this letter addressed to Manuel under date of May 28.
6. Manuel's answer to this 'answer' under date of June 2. (This blunt answer will call an abrupt halt to dissimulation, at any rate.)
7. Copy of my final speech to our recently concluded Plenum.
8. Plenum resolution on the 'Internal Situation.'

(If the last two documents, or any others, are not enclosed in this letter, they will follow shortly.)

For convenience I will arrange this report under separate headings.

1. *Our May Plenum*

The Plenum ended not with a split, but with a firmer consolidation of party unity based on the unconditional acceptance of majority rule and the agreement to continue a literary discussion at a slower pace and in moderated tone, without a 'power struggle' for leadership.

The 'power struggle,' which has been going on for the past year, established a definite relation of forces in the party which were indisputably reflected at the Plenum. The minority finished with control of the Michigan organization and a fluke majority in the small Seattle Branch, which will not last long. That's all! Even in New York where they had the advantage of controlling the apparatus and the long period of preparatory underground factional organization, they wound up in a definite minority, although the minority in New York is a strong one (about 40).

At the Plenum, Burch and Breitman and Jean Simon (Cleveland alternate), who had previously taken an independent position, swung over to the majority and joined the majority caucus. Marcy, who has his own independent political position, as you know, stated categorically that the Buffalo Branch would not follow the minority in a split. It was this *relation of forces*, established in the course of uncompromising struggle, that made a favorable outcome of the Plenum possible and pulled the minority back from the split which they had contemplated.

After three full days of discussion, we demanded that the minority give the Plenum a clear statement of their attitude toward the realities in the relation of party forces. We demanded that they acknowledge the authority of the Plenum, acknowledge the right of the majority to lead the party and determine its policy, and discontinue the 'power struggle.' *On that condition*, we offered to give them fair representation on the party staff and full democratic rights as a minority in the subsequent development of the literary discussion; and the right to maintain their faction organization, if they wished to do so.

As an alternative, if they did not agree to that, we offered to call a party convention to decide and settle the fight. The minority then stated that they did not want a convention and did not want to continue the faction fight in terms of a 'power struggle.' They stated that they recognized the relation of forces and the right of the majority to run the party. They favored the proposal for a continuation of the discussion in literary form at a slower pace and in a calmer tone; they

asked for fair representation on the staff; and suggested that some of the harsh characterizations made of them in the draft resolutions of the majority be moderated, but emphasized that this suggestion was not put forward as an ultimatum.

We answered with an acceptance of their declaration. Subcommittees from the two sides then met to work out concrete details of the settlement. In the negotiations we agreed upon a new Political Committee of six majority and two minority, the minority being free to select their own representatives. The minority is to have a member of the full-time staff as executive editor of the magazine, but the editorial policy will be controlled by a board of three, two of whom being majority. Instead of moderating the harsh characterizations of the minority in our draft resolutions, as they had suggested, we went further and agreed to eliminate all harsh characterizations from the resolutions altogether pending the further development of the positions of both sides in the literary discussion.

The negotiating committee soon came to agreement on all these details and on a further proposal that the resolution on the internal situation should be a joint one, and that it include a declaration that both sides in the future course of the discussion should refrain from any talk of split. This resolution was adopted unanimously by the Plenum with considerable relief and enthusiasm.

It was agreed that I should make the final remarks at the close of the Plenum. What I said was apparently received with satisfaction all the way around. Factional tension has been almost entirely eliminated, and the social given by the New York Local last Saturday was a jubilant unity affair.

Two conclusions can be drawn from this experience:

1. The party crisis caused by a factional struggle, *which was instigated in Paris* and which brought the party to the brink of an unnecessary split, was resolved by the inner resources and capacities of the SWP itself.
2. A new flareup of factional struggle for a long time to come is impossible after the Plenum, unless it also is *instigated from Paris*.

2. 'Foreign Affairs'

The entire majority leadership here has finally become convinced, against their will, that the SWP has been used as a guinea pig for experiments in duplicity and intrigue which characterized the later years of our experience in the old Comintern; but which we never

expected, and for a long time could not believe were possible, in the international movement inspired by Trotsky.

My letter to Jerome under date of May 22 could not fail to be understood as formal notice that we are aware of the maneuvers against us; that things are going to be different in this relationship from now on; and that any kind of monkey business is out of date as far as we are concerned. My sending a copy of the letter to Burns was designed to let him also know that we are on guard and ready to react to the first openly hostile move against us. Our people throughout the country have been fully informed of what has happened and our evaluation of it, and it is already too late for anybody to take us by surprise.

Our next step, in the event of any overt act against us will be an international roll call to find out who are our friends and who are our enemies. This roll call will not be confined to a few individuals who mistake themselves for the movement, but will be addressed to the entire world movement itself. I hope that Burns takes a firm stand on our side. Collaboration between him and us has been very beneficial to both in the past, and can continue to be so in the future. But, as you know, all collaboration, as far as we are concerned, has to have a firm and clearly-defined principled basis.

If Burns, as we hope is on our side, this is my first request to him, which you can transmit. I would like to have a full and complete report of everything he knows about the conspiracy against the SWP leadership from the beginning. Your letter indicates that he has previous knowledge of these machinations. We have pieced them together by deduction, but we would like to have more detailed factual information.

I smelled something about this business a long time ago, as did others here. But we did not want to permit ourselves to believe that anyone with whom we had collaborated in good faith would attempt to play such a double game with us. The two enclosed letters I wrote from California — the February 3 letter to Joe and the March 9 letter to Farrell — seem now to have been written, so to speak, in anticipation. But they also show very plainly that I hoped for the best and did not want any rupture of collaboration to be initiated from our side.

You know that from the beginning of the reestablishment of international collaboration, after the end of the war, we wanted the organizational procedures to be regulated and moderated by the realities of an association of still feeble organizations; and feared any methods of

super-centralization which, in the circumstances, could only be a caricature. Our concern was not for ourselves, but to protect the weak, young groups and parties and give them a chance to grow and develop their own initiative, and to select out an indigenous leadership of their own in each case. You know how often we conveyed, through you and Bob, these suggestions which were the fruit of such long experience and deliberate thought on these matters. You know also how our suggestions in this respect were disregarded.

We have had the uneasy feeling for a long time that the unfortunate results in France — the loss of the majority in two splits since the end of the war — might have been avoided if the wise men in Paris had been willing to recognize that the building of a party, and the selection of an indigenous leadership capable of leading the party with the necessary authority, is a long, difficult and complicated process; and that the experience of others in this field might have been worth some consideration.

It is not a question of a 'hard' or a 'soft' policy in factional struggles, but knowing how to alternate them and to use each at the right time. For example, I don't know how much blood I lost in impotent fuming over the method of dealing with the Haston gang in England. That was too soft, for too long a time. I always thought the Burns group should have been helped to get out of that Haston jungle at least a year earlier, to give them at least one year more of precious time to lay the foundation of a real movement. I felt the same way about the ultra-soft and diplomatic policy with the Geoffroy group in France.

Conversely, we were flabbergasted at the tactics used in the recent French conflict and split, and the inconceivable organizational precedent established there. That is why I delayed my answer to Renard so long. I wanted to help the IS politically, but I didn't see how I could conscientiously sanction the organizational steps taken against the majority of an elected leadership. I finally resolved the problem by just ignoring that part of Renard's letter. But I am not very proud of the fact that such an evasive course seemed to be imposed by the circumstances.

Now we have an experiment with the SWP, with lightminded talk and proposals for 'intervention' which, if it has any effect at all, will only be to stir up another needless factional insurrection against the leadership and again endanger the party unity. I can tell you plainly that it will not seriously affect the SWP, because we will simply smash such an insurrection if it is attempted. But what do these methods

documents, but to watch alertly for the next stage of the evolution of the discussion on this question.

As you know, from the early days of our movement in this country, I personally haven't had much use for global politicians who can easily solve all the complicated problems of other countries, but manifest ignorance and indifference toward the concrete problems of their own country. That, as you will recall, is what our old fight against Carter — and to a large extent against Shachtman — was mainly about. We have the concrete problem of Stalinism right here in the United States, where we have to do our work and prove our worth as revolutionists, not as mere speculators and commentators on all the affairs of the great globe itself.

We are not going to allow the slightest ground for ambiguity, or misunderstanding, or misinterpretation of our analysis of American Stalinism and its prospects, and our attitude toward it. That is why we have set our opinion down in a special resolution on American Stalinism, which was adopted by the Plenum. In the final draft we will edit out some of the sharper expressions, but nothing else will be changed. The copy of the draft resolution enclosed herewith makes our position clear, I think.

In the subsequent discussion I hope to elaborate on this question more fully, taking each section of the adopted resolution as the point of departure for either a series of articles or a long connected one.

4. The Majority Faction in the SWP

The faction fight in the SWP was settled quite definitely, and for a long time to come, at the Plenum. Under normal conditions, this would lead to an attenuation of the factional organizations and eventually, probably, to their transformation into tendencies, rather than organized groups. The only thing standing in the way of this normal evolution is the threat of some artificial 'intervention' from Paris, which would feed the flames of factionalism, again call in question the authority of the majority leadership and plunge us headlong into an embittered factional organization struggle, with the implicit threat of split.

We have decided to prepare for this possibility. For that reason we are maintaining our caucus organization from top to bottom, on a military basis, and imposing an absolute discipline upon every member of the faction. This excludes the right of any individual to take any kind of action outside the faction, which might in any way cut

signify for weak and inexperienced parties? And what does an irresponsible rupture of the collaboration with us mean for the whole world movement? These are serious questions which serious people had better begin thinking about, and I sincerely hope that Burns and his friends will be among them.

3. *Third World Congress*

I was surprised and disappointed at your impulsive action in regard to the Third World Congress documents. We accepted them *as they were written*. When they try to tell us now that we don't understand them, we do not reply by saying that we reject the resolutions. We say, rather, that we reject any special interpretation of them that is not clearly stated in the written language.

If there is something in fine print that we overlooked or if something was written in invisible ink, to be deciphered by a special caste of priests who have been secretly tipped off — we don't accept that part. We don't admit the right of anybody to read into the documents anything that is not already there in plain print. We don't believe in priests. We don't need special agents, who know the secrets or special interpretations, to explain the resolutions to us the way the Catholic prelates explain the bible to ignorant laymen. It only confuses matters to admit, even by implication, that somebody has a special right to 'interpret' the documents; and that therefore, since we don't agree with some of the 'interpretation,' we reject the documents. We would be greatly pleased if you can see things this way and coordinate yourself with us accordingly.

The question of Stalinism, and our attitude toward it in the new stage of its development, can become terribly complicated and clouded if the slightest suspicion of hidden motives and double meanings enters into the consideration of the question and the interpretation of the documents. We, for our part, do not want to begin with this attitude. But we have had to admit that the persistent contentions of our minority, put forward with such inexplicable assurance, that we don't 'understand' the Third Congress documents; that the documents don't mean what we think they mean just from reading what they say in cold print; and now the new evidence that their self-confidence is not self-generated, but has all along been prompted by assurance of support from Paris — all that has ceased to be merely annoying and has become rather alarming.

Our disposition here is not to withdraw our support for the written

across or compromise the line of strategy decided upon by the faction leadership. If you recognize the necessity for this strict procedure in this next period, and are willing to work with us on that basis, we will naturally be glad to include you in the majority faction and coordinate all our work with you, furnish you with all information, and give you precise instructions in regard to any procedure. I personally don't have the slightest doubt that you will find this agreeable, as well as necessary in the situation, and that you will confirm the agreement in your next letter.

For the moment, at your own discretion, you are free to show this letter, and all or any part of the enclosed material, to Burns and his friends so that they can get an absolutely clear picture of our position.

Fraternally,
Jim

DOCUMENT 7d**Letter from Sam Gordon to James P. Cannon,
June 22, 1953**

Dear Jim:

I was glad to get your letter of June 4 and the enclosed material. After a long time without more than a general notion of what was going on at your end, I have in recent weeks had a veritable flood of bulletins, resolutions, minutes, etc. I am only just emerging from it. Meanwhile I have had to have prolonged conversations with Burns and others. Since my free time is considerably restricted and my eyes have been troubling me a bit lately, I have only been able to work haphazardly on a reply to your letter, really only on notes, that I started over a week ago and am now trying to knock into shape.

As you indicated, there could be no doubt about my agreeing to your proposition. I assume, therefore, that you were not waiting anxiously for confirmation from me. It is necessary, however, to clear up a few matters and to get a good, thorough mutual understanding.

The material you enclosed was very interesting all around and revealed to me more than ever that on all kinds of subjects our thoughts were running in the same or similar channels. There are some questions on which I have a somewhat different opinion from yours, but these are minor to my mind.

I have also seen the main political resolution of the Plenum and can vote for it with both hands. It was sorely needed at this stage internationally.

As I proceed, I shall try to make clear my own particular views.

Plenum Results

Everybody on this side too heaved a great sigh of relief at the outcome. I personally think that the peace, even if it turns out to be only a prolonged armed truce of the kind which this instable world of

today has come generally to accept as a substitute, is a very good thing. The swift pace of objective developments nowadays is a great help in correcting erroneous views, for one thing. In a calmer atmosphere of discussion this could possibly serve to mend the fissure which has appeared in our ranks. In any case, there is a considerable time lag in understanding the issues between the place where the dispute arises and other places. A slower tempo will therefore aid in crystallizing a firm international opinion. Moreover, there are a good many questions which have only been posed in the discussion (particularly on the recent developments since Stalin's death) and on which everyone needs self-clarification.

Meanwhile I ought to inform you about the reactions of others at the first news of the Plenum settlement.

Here in *London*, while there was relief and approval, there was a certain amount of skepticism. The outbreak of hostilities came suddenly for most people, and just as they began to sort out what was what and who was who, the reestablishment of the peace came just as suddenly. One view expressed is: perhaps the differences were not so serious as contended. Another view: perhaps the peace is not as real as it appears. It will take some time before the proper perspective on the struggle will be in focus. The resolution on the 'Internal Situation' has just come in. No doubt it will help in this respect.

Most people are studying the bulletins very carefully, nevertheless, although there are very few who have been able to get beyond those dealing with the New York discussion up to now. (This will give you an idea of the time lag.)

Burns showed me a letter from *Paris* in which Jerome jubilantly expresses the following opinion more or less: The peace settlement is due to Jim's wisdom, to the great ideological cohesion of the minority, to the Paris intervention which those at whom it was directed could not fail to understand, and also to Burns' group's resolution which acted in the same sense (presumably as the Paris intervention). He writes that it was a great victory for the SWP and for the international movement, which it was of course. Since I am not acquainted with the contents of the intervention, however, I cannot presume to understand this reaction altogether. You will probably be in a better position to.

Your Conclusions from the Experience

You underscore that the factional struggle was *instigated in Paris*

and that a new flare-up is impossible unless it springs from the same source. Elsewhere you repeatedly refer to the 'conspiracy against the SWP leadership.' It is necessary to be very clear on how this is meant.

If you conceive of the whole thing as a plot hatched by evil people for unclear motives, then I must say you are putting it on rather thick. There is no doubt about what you refer to as 'Cominternism' in organizational procedure, the long standing unrealistic concept of super-centralization and all the foibles that have gone with it. But I think we have always asked ourselves in similar circumstances: what are the politics behind the organizational procedures? It is necessary to do so in this case as well.

The factional struggle in the SWP was certainly instigated in Paris if you mean by this that the political fountain head was there I think this should be clear to all by now. When Frankel says that the 'new thinking' is not going on in New York alone, that is a pretty broad hint. (By the way, of all that has been written up to now on the opposition's side, Frankel's contribution appears to have been the most impressive, the only thing effective, among people here, and should be taken up in the coming literary discussion.)

In my opinion the 'new thinking' is not by any means finished, but is developing. In the sense that further developments in political line may cause another flare-up of the struggle, what you say about the future is quite true.

The root is political, and I shall try to explain my view of the politics when I come to the point on the Third Congress documents. Now the question is, how does this tie up with the organizational procedures? As I see it, here is the picture.

What Happened in Paris?

The essence of the 'new thinking' is that the objective situation has developed along lines unforeseen by our movement, by our theory of Stalinism. It was anticipated hypothetically — not as a genuine possibility — in some of Trotsky's writings. But Trotsky was a genius, whereas the cadres he left behind are not. The movement has to be rearmed, but the old cadres are putting up a conservative, 'sectarian' resistance. Hence arises the need to reorganize the cadre everywhere, to lop off the deadwood, to shape and mold the cadre anew.

That, put in the most objective terms (there is no need here to go into the fallacy of all this), is how the problem very likely appeared in Paris after the Congress. What followed concretely between say

Jerome and Livingstone, was a tacit understanding, a sort of 'entente.' There was broad agreement, but not necessarily any specific commitments. L. must have made up his mind that he would open up a fight in the SWP at that time and perhaps told J. that. The latter may have advised caution and probably explained that in any case, in view of his position, he would have to retain a certain impartiality, as the struggle unfolded. Aid from him could therefore only come in the form of developing the political line. That, too, may require concessions of a secondary nature to the conservative resistance, as was the case with the main Congress documents — he may have continued to explain — but nothing essential would be 'given away.' As to direct organizational support, time would show if and when that would become practical.

You can interpret that as duplicity, as a conspiracy, or what you will, but it is evidently politically motivated and that must be borne in mind all the time, as the key to an understanding of the struggle. Knowing the men involved intimately, and having observed their way of thinking and acting, I would say it is not a matter of bad faith producing bad politics, but of bad politics rationalizing what appears to be bad faith.

Burns' Opinion

I don't know what Burns can tell you specifically about the facts regarding what you call the 'conspiracy.' I have transmitted your request to him and know that he has sent you a first reply; meanwhile he is trying to reconstruct incidents in his memory. But he is sure of his overall impression that there was collaboration from the beginning, correspondence and so on.

In any case, he says, Gabe's last letter (among the material you enclosed) is striking not so much for evasion or dissimulation as it is in *revealing* what his position has been. I think he has a point there.

The Third World Congress

You write that you were 'surprised and disappointed' at my 'impulsive action' in regard to the Third World Congress documents. I presume that by 'action' you mean my last conversation with Manuel and the message I asked him to convey. I am sorry to hear that you were disappointed, and puzzled at your surprise. But I assure you it was not impulsive, but deliberate.

I had expressed reservations on these documents from the first and this was fairly well known in the leadership. If I am not mistaken it was even recorded in the minutes, I had early expressed the opinion to members of the present majority that it seemed to me Clarke's interpretation of the documents was the interpretation meant by the authors. After the correctives introduced by the X Plenum, I agreed that I might possibly be mistaken. I thought it could not hurt to wait and see, and meanwhile assume that it was a matter of the line straightening itself out, so to speak, I acted everywhere on that assumption.

From observation in various places, in the ensuing months, it became plain to me that Clarke was not the only one to have such an interpretation, but that it was fairly wide-spread among people who had nothing but the documents to go by. After the November plenum I became convinced that the line in Paris was not only not straightening itself, but on the contrary. It was shaping up more and more according to Clarke's concept of it. I dropped Bob a few lines in that sense. It became urgent, in my opinion, to counteract this trend and, above all, to alert the majority that if they expected political solidarity from Paris in the fight, they were due for great disappointment.

The Barr-Short-Herrick letter arrived. Taking that into consideration as well as Manuel's views in a number of conversations, I asked him to convey to you my full opinion, and told him he could convey it to Jerome as well. I suppose this last part is what you consider impulsive. That was deliberate on my part and meant to get Jerome to show his hand.

I think it served the purpose. His reaction was a letter to you (in reply to the Barr etc. letter, I believe) which was a giveaway. Burns showed me a copy at the time, saying he thought it was a 'mistake.' It started him thinking, however. For all I know, it had the same effect at your end.

What are you disappointed about? What is the argument? Was there a question of discipline involved? I am not aware of any, unless discipline applies retrospectively, so to speak.

Perhaps there is some further misunderstanding as to what my action consisted of. In that case I had better clear it up. I did not propose to reject the documents, or to ask you to reject them. Here is what I had in mind.

There had been a good deal of uncritical 'hoopla,' to borrow one of Frankel's expressions, about these documents that was part and

parcel of the developing 'Cominternism,' in my opinion. I thought it necessary to begin a re-examination of what was written and to speak up critically. It was becoming self-evident that you could not go on very long talking about two different lines and upholding one and the same text as a basis. A new clarifying statement of position was becoming urgent.

For my part, it was not a matter of reading fine print for of granting special rights to priest-interpreters, by implication or otherwise but of facing reality. There were obviously contradictory elements in the documents on the basis of a general agreement on the new relationship of class forces in the world and on the broader, long-term perspectives. These contradictory elements were so weighted or slanted that I could not — and believed that the SWP could not — continue to support the documents without further elucidation. Let me point out how I viewed this, as briefly as possible.

How the Documents are Slanted

1. While stress is correctly laid on the new element in the relationship of forces, which has become irreversibly favourable for the working class and socialism, this is given a slant so as to make it appear that the process is from now on more or less *automatic*, will not face any major obstacles or delays. (It is partly from this conception that the notion is fed about Stalinism being no longer able to betray. I leave aside for the moment the question as to how this ties up with the idea that we are in for an epoch of deformed revolutions, with which one of the authors was preoccupied in previous discussion, whether this represents a reversal.)

2. Due weight is given to the new fact of Stalinist leadership being forced in the post-war period to head revolutionary mass movements which tend to get out of hand (mainly in Asia, that is, by adapting to the colonial revolution). The overwhelmingly counter-revolutionary role of the Stalinist parties in the capitalist countries (particularly in Western Europe), still quite recent, is barely given a place in the balance-sheet. (This one-sided presentation further feeds wrong notions about Stalinism.)

3. Correcting a previous misconception, the drive toward war (and its character of international civil war, war-revolution) is put forth in fresh and incisive fashion. But there is a tendency to go overboard here, too, to lay major stress on the time-table attributed to imperialism, to allow for no serious hitches, (This is continued in

subsequent writings and is in contradiction to the concept of huge masses entering the political arena which in itself could — with events of recent months, obviously does — put a brake on the war drive.)

4. 'Growing homogeneity in each of the two camps' is set forth as the perspective, although the crisis in both capitalism and Stalinism is dealt with at length in the abstract. The unity of the capitalist camp is overstressed altogether. The unity of the capitalist camp is overstressed altogether. The dynamics in the anti-capitalist camp is not given much attention. (On this last point, the latest documents dealing with the USSR are an effort to make up for this.)

5. From all the foregoing the conclusion is drawn that a large-scale 'deal' (that is, an accommodation of the Stalinist bureaucracy to imperialism) is virtually excluded, although there is mention of possible partial, temporary, incidental agreements. (This further feeds the notion that Stalinism can no longer betray.)

6. The basic counter-revolutionary role of Stalinism is set forth correctly in the abstract, but in the concrete the revolutionary qualities of the Stalinist cadre is given undue and altogether incorrect emphasis. (A mountain is made out of a mole-hill and the illustration of how this works out in practice was given by the minority in the SWP.)

7. As a result there has been a serious misjudgment of the trend in Stalinist policy, particularly after the XIX Congress of the Russian CP — the latest aspect being the virtual ignoring of the recent 'peace' maneuvers.

8. This whole line of reasoning also affects the otherwise quite correct estimate of the effect of Stalin's death: Insofar as it sees the elimination of the restorationist danger on part of the bureaucracy at a time when, in my opinion, it arises more concretely than ever before with the weakening of the bureaucracy on the threshold of the showdown with imperialism. All past experience has been that an obsolescent social force, before disappearing from the historical scene, makes common cause with all that is outlived and reactionary in the final showdown. If this does not hold true of Stalinism, then we are in for a serious revision of theory in one respect or another.

To sum up: the slant given in the Third Congress documents is too one-sided, too pat and formal in its logic, in reality too superficial to serve as a correct estimate of the objective situation and in outlining perspectives with regard to Stalinism (although the document did

introduce important modifications that were very valuable). In this sense it lends itself to misinterpretation in the direction of revising our basic theory of Stalinism and makes for faulty analysis of new events which can disorient our movement.

That is the way I see the problem in brief. I could go into great detail, with chapter and verse, but obviously this is not the place. The question is what to do about it?

In my opinion, it is not a matter of withdrawing support from a general line, but of explaining what we understand by it. This has largely been done in the discussion. It further requires encouraging a critical attitude to the documents. They are not a *finished* analysis, but an important contribution which must be made more precise. Meantime, if there is to be no open conflict with Paris *politically*, it is necessary to find a formula for an understanding on current operation of the line.

On this last point, I would be perfectly satisfied with your Plenum resolution as a basis. Could such agreement be found? That is really the key question as to whether a resumption of the factional struggle will be 'instigated by Paris.' For the formalism and one-sidedness of their politics is merely reflected in the super-centralization and lack of realism of their organizational procedures.

I agree with you that our attitude to Stalinism 'can become terribly complicated and clouded if the slightest suspicion of hidden motives and double meanings enters into consideration of the question and the interpretation of documents.' I am only too well aware of the danger. At the same time I think that the greatest danger is an ambiguous political line in this respect. You have your resolution on 'American Stalinism' and that is excellent. Unfortunately, however, Stalinism is not just an American problem, if I may permit myself an understatement.

These are my views on this whole question. I don't know if this will please you, but I am sure you should know them.

For my part, I don't see any obstacle to coordinating myself with you.

Majority Faction

In view of the present circumstances, your decision is fully justified. As far as I am concerned, I am quite willing to work with you on the basis you propose, but want to stress to you the need of the fullest possible consultation before any important move is undertaken.

Burns

Burns has declared his complete political support of the Majority, and has stated to his committee that he will act in this sense in Paris. While the committee as a whole has not yet taken a position, there are a few who share his stand and most of the others want time to go over discussion material. For some time to come, therefore, his will be a delicate situation, although there has not been an opposition to the stand he has taken and none is expected. I am sure you will take this into consideration in any steps you contemplate.

I have shown him all the material you sent. In this connection I ought to tell about his reaction to your caucus speech. He appreciates the SWP cadre as perhaps no one else on this side does, because he really knows from hard experience what building a cadre means. Whatever his shortcomings, he has done most toward that end here. It is a group far superior to anything they have had here in the past. He therefore winced when he came to the part where you make comparisons and remarks that in this respect you were thinking in terms of ten to fifteen years ago.

I think there is a good deal in what he says, and it would be well to bear it in mind. His group has got to be regarded as a partner, and there will be other partners as well, I am sure. And the problem of relations with them will have to be given some thought.

Problems Raised

You write that in case of any overt act against you, you will undertake an international roll call. How do you envisage that? It is rather sticky question, as they say here.

In my opinion Jerome will be very cautious about any 'intervention' now. The danger is that he may just throw in the towel, as he has threatened to do a number of times in the past when he was under similar pressure. That could create all sorts of problems.

The best thing would be to try to find some *modus vivendi* with him for the time being, and to work out a long-term solution carefully and by close consultation.

Fraternally

Tom

DOCUMENT 7e**Letter from James P. Cannon to Farrell Dobbs,
July 9, 1953**

New York

Dear Farrell:

I enclose herewith a letter to Tom which I wish you would ask Reba to forward, as I don't have his address. I think we ought to wait for a report on the IS Plenum before coming to a definitive conclusion as to just what its resolution saluting the Plenum's outcome signifies. I have given quite a little thought to the whole matter as no doubt you have. I am disposed to suspend final judgment until we get the missing information, as to what the resolution signifies and just what brought about such an apparently sharp reversal of the previous trend over there. There's much food for thought in Tom's observations on many points. I will write on this at length a little later. Meantime if any opinions have been formulated in New York I would be glad to hear about them.

I am eagerly awaiting the translation of the draft resolutions for the Fourth Congress. *This time*, at any rate, we will go over all such documents with a fine tooth comb and make sure that our point of view is made clear and taken into consideration, and eliminate all possibility of contradictory interpretations of supposedly official documents.

Our resolution on American Stalinism will have to be considered as a serious contribution to the international discussion on this question. It is true, as Tom says, that Stalinism is not merely an American phenomenon, but American Stalinism happens to be that part of it which we have to understand and deal with. I read this resolution over again yesterday. I think it is 100% correct and that in the next stage of the discussion in our party this resolution should be elaborated and expounded at length.

If we really succeed in clarifying this question of the nature and perspectives of American Stalinism we will do a great deal to reinforce party peace and unity. That will still leave the question of the role and perspectives of the trade union bureaucracy and the perspectives of our party in relation to it. When we finally succeed in clarifying *this* question we will have eliminated the greatest danger to the peace and unity of the party and the self-confident work of its cadres in preparation for their great future.

I was well pleased to see *The Militant's* treatment of the German events again in this current issue. But again I was disappointed to find no reference to the position of the American Stalinist press. I haven't been able to get these papers out here, but I strongly suspect that they have laid themselves wide open for a devastating attack in defense of the German workers. By the way, if these German manifestations signify the beginning of the political revolution against Stalinism, and the Stalinists are answering with armed force and firing squads, what becomes of the precious theory that these scoundrels can no longer betray?

Or, are we going to sponsor the possible variant, as Clarke seems to intimate in the end of his article in the latest magazine, that the Stalinist bureaucracy will right itself without a political revolution? Under this head I would like to know the name and address of any previous privileged social groupings in history which have voluntarily overthrown their own privileges.

Fraternally,
J.P. Cannon

DOCUMENT 7f**Letter from Sam Gordon to James P. Cannon,
July 17, 1953**

Dear Walter:

Received yours of July 9, post-marked N.Y. July 14, as well as Barr report of June 22 and Manuel circular of June 17. While I am at it, I might also acknowledge a letter from Smith, on other matters, dated June 26, and on which I have nothing to comment that I have not said already.

It is unfortunate that my letter was lying around so long, since a good deal of time has been lost. I will try, for my part, to make up for the time lost.

Regarding the IS, I sent no report for the following reasons: The main business was two big preparatory documents, on 'Stalinism' and on 'Our Integration into the Real Mass Movement' — the lines of which and the import for your struggle is probably as clear to you as to me, I expect that you receive copies, although I am disturbed to see no mention of them in your letter. Burns wrote Barr, I believe, on the importance of urging postponement of consideration and decision on these, as well as for your comment. Secondly, on your struggle, there was officially only the letter welcoming the Plenum settlement and no further attempt at intervention. Thirdly, the rest was a series of impressions Burns conveyed to me — he had taken no notes — which it is difficult to relay second-hand. I had hoped he would write himself. He did write, and his letters should be in your hands by now. But, just to make sure you get as much information on this as I have, I will give you everything I have from notes at hand. This is all the more necessary now because of the apparent flare-up of your struggle.

I did not want to rush with Burns' impressions regarding the attitude displayed to him, and indirectly to you, because of the unity sentiment prevailing, and on which you were quite definite. I did not

want to be a disturbing influence, so to speak. I looked upon your settlement as really part and parcel of a settlement with Jerome, because to me Livingstone is closely associated with the latter, as I explained in my last letter. Here are the impressions:

Burns was received with hostility, put on the carpet for 'Trying to line up' his group behind you. All except Ernest engaged in this. Frank went so far in attacking your group that Jerome had to restrain him. Formally, however, they decided to go no further than the letter they sent you. In Burns' opinion, and of course in mine all along, his open break with them in May stopped them from intervening then; and this, coupled with your firm majority at the Plenum, accounts for the retreat Jerome and Livingstone have beaten.

In this connection, there are indications that Jerome has shifted his ground and is now intervening in Burns' group in order to remedy his previously weak position on this side, so to speak. He is attempting to act through J. L. [John Lawrence]. The latter has raised big objections to an article on Stalin written by Burton (along the same lines politically as in page 8 of Barr's June 22 report) as 'against the general line' and proposed to keep it out of the review, substituting for it the Clarke effort in your magazine. In Burns' opinion this is but part of a campaign that is being attempted here by Jerome. There are any number of other, minor indications, among them a headline smuggled into the weekly without consultation. Needless to say, Burns and his friends are on the alert and confident that they can handle the situation.

The flare-up on your side may quite possibly coincide with this development over here.

Further on the meeting: There is a first rate crisis in L. Roy's group [Ceylon], danger of large defection to Stalinism. They propose to send one of the two central people. Jerome himself proposes to go to handle the major opportunity which has arisen after April 1952 [Bolivian revolution]. Burns and I both have our misgivings about such trips, and in our opinion they indicate a state of mind which certainly is not very sober, to say the least.

On the two documents mentioned there was no full discussion but a tendency to bring pressure to get them passed speedily.

That is about all, on impressions. Next time, I hope, Burns will note things more carefully. The next session is July 22-23, but may be postponed again.

The important thing, however, are the documents. Each contains

concessions meant for you, that is obvious. In a certain sense, there is a reversion to the X Plenum here. But the basic line remains the same one-sided affair, which sees only favourable developments and no dangers. Our pre-congress contribution to the discussion, which Livingstone burned but which has since been published by him, is taken little notice of. In my opinion, the line is much closer to the 'revelations' of Isaac Deutscher than to what Clarke fulminates against the 'Old Testament' of Trotskyism. (This new remark of Clarke's is not surprising to me — I remember fighting against a phrase of his in a draft resolution I fought, to the effect that 'Titoism is the hope of humanity.' Both reveal a *trend*. I am afraid it is not confined to him alone.)

Naturally, there are a lot of good ideas in both documents that we can agree with. We can even agree 'in general' with the conception of the 'Stalinism' draft. But there are a few specific ideas which I cannot accept. I call your attention to Par. 15, which notes frankly a departure from our traditional concept of the struggle to come in the USSR. This poses the question as to which of two basic concepts we have to give up: Either that Stalinism (the bureaucracy) is an obsolescent, reactionary social force, or that obsolescent forces before they leave the historical scene make common cause with all that is reactionary in society? Par. 20 — which reiterates the impossibility of a compromise with imperialism. Par. 21, which says 'the socialist regeneration of the USSR almost as much as the socialist revolution in the USA will decide the world victory of socialism — what does that mean, in what sense does that hold? Par. 23, which is quite correct, but looks at the process as automatic. The wave of pacifism and its relation to the agitation for four-power talks is simply ignored, etc., etc.

In the other document, aside from ambiguity about secondary tactics which can at times become primary, there are the same old attempts at specific directives here, there and everywhere. Super-centralization shows its head here unmistakably. Burns has suggested that perhaps a section on the role and limitations of the leadership would be more appropriate.

I am writing this hastily and perhaps leaning more on impressions than I should. But I do not want to delay sending this off for a more thought-out comment. I have a reply to Frankel, which I have not sent on to you because I wanted to see first the tone of the literary discussion and adjust that to it. Perhaps I shall try to bring it up to date and send it now.

I had hoped that the development of events would bring us closer again. But up to now this is not the case. Neither the great, stirring rising in East Germany nor the crack in the bureaucracy revealed by the Beria disgrace has so far done so. But events show that our traditional concepts are absolutely correct and indispensable in judging the new developments — which, of course, we must not fail to recognize. We have every right to remain firm.

Practically, it is necessary to develop a common line in closest co-operation, both politically and organizationally. I am anxious to hear your views on this.

I may be out of town for two weeks after next week, so write to Burns directly in that time.

Best regards,
Tom

P.S. You can forget my remark about Burns' reaction to your caucus speech. It was merely a matter of looking for recognition that his group has grown. It may interest you to know that just the other day he said that he regards his group as part and parcel of yours, historically as well as politically. Also, there is no question but that the attitude to Stalinism is the same for them as for you. No one has expressed any difference on your resolution on this here.

P.P.S. There was also some talk at the meeting about the Bleibtreu group coming back, negotiations, etc.

DOCUMENT 7g**Letter from G. Healy to James P. Cannon,
July 21, 1953**

Dear Jim:

To provide a report on the last IS meeting, it is necessary to retrace in brief some of the events at the meeting of the IEC which was held just prior to your May Plenum. After that, I propose to set forth some opinions on the present situation in the international.

At the IEC a conflict developed between myself and Pablo on the way to approach the new events in Russia. This was not so much around the contents of the resolution (although some points required more elaboration) but on the way it was presented by the spokesmen for the IS. In my opinion, an all too optimistic colouration was introduced. No one can doubt, of course, the significance of the events, but to generalize these into language which implies a new millennium immediately for our section can cause disappointment and disillusionment later. I said that we should remember the mistakes of the French section on Yugoslavia (which in my view now had some roots in the IS). Here everyone was hopped up to the point where the Party was unprepared for the sharp turn that became necessary in August 1950 (the Kardelj speech to the UNO). The subsequent unfortunate events were in no small way related to this.

On the new stage of events in the USSR I said that we must avoid this in order to arm our people on a realistic approach, and warn them about the constant changes of Stalinist treachery in a situation which was getting ever more desperate for Malenkov & Co. The French and Pablo attacked me with great heat, even going so far at times as to interrupt me when I was speaking. Germain the reporter was much more considerate, and in reply went out of his way to answer satisfactorily my points. However, I have been long enough around to judge

incidents, and in the course of an IS bureau meeting the next day, whilst informally discussing the dispute in the SWP Pablo made his statement of support for Frankel and 'against the articles of Wright.' Immediately following the IEC Pablo made his way across the room to J. Lawrence, my fellow delegate, and took him away for a two-hour discussion. The contents of this are just beginning to emerge now.

On returning I reported my contribution to our EC. Lawrence gave what he terms a 'Factual' account. I reported that following the dissolution of the old IS we were called upon to elect a representative on the new IS. In doing this I expressed the opinion that our EC should know that I felt a little unhappy about things, especially Pablo's remark on the Frankel document. Lawrence got annoyed and heated, claiming that this was directed against him. His outburst took me aback, and I replied that I wanted the committee to be aware of my opinions before voting on my nomination. I explained that in point of fact, the IEC wanted to elect me at its session, but I avoided this by requesting time to report this back so that the committee could make a choice. This was also necessary out of courtesy to Lawrence who was the previous representative. After this, I was elected unanimously with Emmet abstaining. I cite these events to give a little background to the last IS. My informal reception from Pablo was decidedly cool. He told me that he had a letter from someone in your minority who told him that the agreement came about this way, 'At some point in the debate you [Cannon] asked Clarke if he was an agent of Pablo, when assured that this was so, you brightened up and after that agreement was reached.' He asked me to explain this, and I declined, stating that it was not my job to explain such things.

At the meeting we had the two documents now in your hands before us. Germain and Frank gave me a verbal translation before the meeting, but it was impossible to make a contribution on this basis. After a little discussion we agreed to send them out to all members of the IEC. The next item was a report from Pablo on the situation in Ceylon, where it appears that the Stalinist wing of the LSSP were making some progress. The IS bureau recommended that Germain should be sent. I did not feel happy about this, but as I had no concrete alternative I let the decision go. Pablo reported on Bolivia and stated that he was going there. He said that Sal Santen from Holland (who is in S. America and who was in Bolivia) was now in Uruguay, in a demoralized position with little money. He was sent there on Pablo's insistence last year.

We then came to your question. Frank opened up by emphasizing the political cohesion of the minority, stating his support for Frankel's document. He said that we must stress with the Americans the need for a very full discussion on the new documents for the Fourth Congress. This was necessary because of the 'American way of life' outlook prevalent in the SWP. This remark implied some lack of interest in international matters by the SWP majority. Pablo, Germain, and myself opposed him on this. I made a statement supporting the SWP majority. Pablo interrupted me with a violent attack. He said that I had maneuvered Lawrence from being our representative on the IS, that I was maneuvering my section to support the SWP majority, etc. etc. He had a factional report of our EC from either Lawrence or Hilda Lane (who is in touch with Pablo's wife). I fancy it was the latter. I let fly at him in reply and told him bluntly that this sort of nonsense made no impression, and that it was half-truths from beginning to end. I told him that he was not dealing with 'little boys' and that in a Bolshevik organization there were procedures for dealing with this sort of misunderstanding — all he had to do was write for an explanation, and not confront me in an atmosphere of intimidation on the IS. The matter closed without anything concrete emerging except an agreement on the statement now in your hands. Germain seemed neutral on the questions, but seemed friendly. Frank is the Frank he always was on such matters. Livio the Italian inclined toward the Frankel document. Afterwards, Pablo became more friendly, and we parted in a comradely way, but obviously under a cloud for the future. He is in touch with some elements here, and from that meeting onwards I have proceeded accordingly.

The next incident was last Wednesday at an editorial Board meeting of our Review. Tom had written an article on Stalin's death which up to the time of the meeting had only been read by Lawrence, and myself. Lawrence moved that we refuse to publish the article because it was contrary to the line of the IS. He did this with great force, which is not generally a characteristic trait of his. I replied that such an attitude was absolutely intolerable, and that we must have a discussion with Tom present when all the members could read his article. Lawrence then told me that I supported Tom politically, and should get down to amendments to the new documents. This was news to me, but the method quite old, and since I am not used to 'hoop-jumping' I replied that I must read all sides of the case, and make up my mind. I told Lawrence that we must not poison the international discussion

before we got started, and that any impatient tendency to stampede people was absolutely at variance with our traditional methods. I cannot honestly say that I agree with Tom, but it was not the question of 'agreement' or 'disagreement', that worried me, but the type of thing which ties up with a whole series of impatient experiences at the hands of Pablo. He is in touch obviously with people here, and the tactic seems to be to settle with Tom and push me into some line. These 'amateurs' like so many others before them, think we are a lot of ignorant peasants who do not understand politics from a bull's foot, but we shall see.

Before this we had a letter at our EC from Ceylon asking us to send one of our boys as a press reporter of the 'Samasamajist' to Bucharest Youth Peace Conference. They had received an invitation from the Stalinists. We took a decision outlined in the following letter:

Dear Leslie:

Mike [Banda] received your telegram and letter enclosing the cablegram about a press representative at Bucharest for the Youth Festival. We discussed this at our last Executive and I was asked to write you as follows.

1. We would be in agreement if any delegation we sent was representative of a worker's organization, which would in turn be able to protect the delegation. This would be very useful like your delegation in China.

2. A press representative, consisting of one young man alone in an atmosphere of picked Stalinists and their stooges, is something we could not risk at this time, even though we agree wholeheartedly with the desirability of getting closer to these countries.

In the present atmosphere of impending trials, there is an element of chance which we could not take. Even bourgeois correspondents representing powerful papers have been picked up from time to time, and Mike is fairly well known as a Trotskyist. It would be different if he were part of a representative delegation.

I am sure you will appreciate our point of view in this matter.

Fraternal greetings

Burns

We sent a copy of this letter to Pablo, and this is his reply:

'On the matter of Mike: Tilak has just written us also on this. Your precautions on the subject of sending Mike seem to us a little exaggerated. It is scarcely probable that the Stalinists could attempt the abduction of people invited officially by themselves, journalists, and who are not in any case Trotskyist leaders, who are not known nationally or internationally. It is scarcely probable that they could risk a campaign against their congress (which they would wish to be a

complete success) by entering into actions of so little profit for themselves. In any case, we hope that Mike has already replied by telegram to Tilak, so that they can consider sending someone else there.'

More rush, more impatience, apart from the fact that we have absolutely no news from inside these countries about the exact position.

You will, I know, excuse all these details. In the normal course of events, this would not be necessary, but what we are grappling with here is two very different methods in building an international. From experience, we have learned that the strength of a national section lies in the maturity of its cadre. Maturity flows from the collective way in which a cadre works. This, as you know, does not arise from the brilliance of this or that individual in a particular field. It arises from the historical selection of devoted people who supplement each other's talents by learning to work as a team. Like the development of the class struggle itself the development of those who comprise the cadre is an uneven one. You find people who have many weaknesses in some directions, playing a powerful positive role inside the cadre. This is, in fact, not only the great strength of the cadre, but also its weakness. A responsible, mature leader has these things fixed in his mind at all times.

Another factor which plays a role, is the receptiveness of the cadre towards changes in the political situation. Some people have quite a flair for this, and make useful contributions in assisting the cadre forward. Yet, it is possible to find on occasions, in comrades who make turns easily, a certain feverishness which can flow from a basic instability rooted in class questions. An experienced cadre checks from time to time these manifestations, and enables the comrade or comrades concerned, to go forward toward a new, more advanced, stage of development. On the other hand, a cadre will *always* contain such people because they are an essential reflection of the development of the class itself.

Experience has taught us that the construction of a cadre takes time and many experiences. In spite of the inflammable international situation you cannot short-cut cadre building. In fact, the two things are dialectically related. The more explosive the situation, the more experienced a cadre must be in order to deal with it. The long time taken in developing a cadre then begins to pay off big dividends. What appears previously to be a long difficult process now changes into its opposite.

Those of us who have gone through this process in national sections are familiar with its intricacies. Because of its enormous collective power, a cadre is also an intricate instrument. The wise leader must attune himself to the need for sharp changes, and what is all important, the way to prepare the cadre for such changes. He must know his people, and how sometimes to help the 'lame ones' over the stile. Leadership is not a question of theoretical ability only, one must know the cadre.

Our present international leadership came together after the war, but in spite of the important progress in knitting its work together, it has been impossible as yet to construct an experienced cadre, and the reason is not hard to find. If it takes a long time in national sections, with many experiences and difficulties, then it is considerably more complicated on the international arena. A national leadership must learn to know its country and itself, an international leadership must know the world, and embody the collective experience of the national sections.

Pablo does not understand this, and we now begin to see the trouble more clearly. Here is a man with many great theoretical qualifications, who is a powerful thinker. He gets out in front with the line, but fails to understand the strength and experience of our cadre who have to apply this. Here he gets terrible impatient, and the one-sidedness of his positive gifts begin to emerge. Not understanding (because he has never experienced it) the problem of a cadre, he proceeds like a 'talent scout.' The leadership of the SWP is sluggish, conservative, etc. so Clarke's the boy. Burns is 'awkward' and follows the SWP majority, so Lawrence is the man, etc. Then comes the trouble. The people picked up superficially seemed to jump into a line faster, but in their own sections play specific roles. Pablo, in failing to understand the decisive cadre fiddles around like a man with a hatchet in the operating theatre. He ignores the past history (which in some cases he has not understood) and proceeds to 'allocate' 'authority' to men who, as part of a cadre, are certainly important people, but as 'inspired guides' are shouldering impossible tasks. Pablo sends them on the road to destruction. Their weak sides are built up, and they get involved in struggles of self-distinction.

Take our section, for example. We educated ourselves from your history. This not only served us well in the big fight with Haston, but continues to assist us all the time. Lawrence is well known internationally both for his strength and for his weaknesses. In the decisive

fight with Haston he played practically no role, but in the LP work he has played an important one for some time. One of the reasons for this is the character of the man himself. Working in a team he evinces fine qualities, but as an individual fighter, he will be cut to pieces. During the six years since we parted with Haston, I have never lost an occasion to help him. In the dispute over Stalinism, where he made some serious and bad mistakes, I confined the issues to the Secretariat, and kept it from the EC so as to preserve his authority and prestige. Manuel can tell you this. We placed a whole department under his guidance, and I would no more think of interfering with his work than cutting off my right hand. He has weaknesses which crop up from time to time, but we let them pass. To pick him out for a specific role in Britain is a crime against the man and our movement. I tell you that I shall do everything humanly possible to protect Lawrence. We are not going to permit a factional situation to develop here if it can be avoided.

A few more points in conclusion. Our international has been badly administered for some time now. I should perhaps take some blame, but I did not want to go off on a wrong issue that would be misunderstood. . . .

Yugoslavia comes, and the French almost move there en masse. It's the 'golden gate' for a few months. Now of course we were all for taking the fullest advantage of the situation, but only if everyone knew the strength and weakness of this problem. We did a lot of work here, but we kept our powder very dry. A few days after Kardelj made his speech, we had a brigade of ours return from Belgrade. The Yugoslav ambassador booked a big hall here for our boys to tell what they saw. It was a 'big do' with the ambassador present, as well as a lot of young Stalinists. Under our instructions, we utilized part of the time to criticize Kardelj. The Stalinists, who thought they would have a great time at our expense over Korea, were taken aback. I well remember the angry way the Yugoslav contact man assailed 'my treachery.' All I could say was 'sorry, but there has been a misunderstanding — we are not a Stalinist party, and you are not the Cominform.' We were plenty flexible on Yugoslavia, but our line was applied on the basis of traditional Bolshevik experience. The French were not so fortunate. In a desperate 'all or nothing' impatient way they intervened, and laid the foundation for their crisis a few months later.

I think these events (whilst the lessons are well known to you) should help in looking at our present problem. We must save this man

Pablo. It is a big responsibility but it will require some plain speaking. Before anything is done I would like your views. We should work as close as we can together. I am attending another IS this Friday and a report will be sent. Your 'Peace Agreement' helps, but I fear a stormy time ahead. However, I am confident that we can turn it, like so many others, into profit in the long run.

Warmest regards,
Gerry

DOCUMENT 7h

Letter from G. Healy to James P. Cannon,
July 28, 1953

Dear Jim:

Your letter and enclosures dated July 15th have been received. By now you should have another letter from me, which was dispatched from here on July 21.

The enclosure from Pab. is typical and bears out a point I have discussed here many times with Tom. This man does not understand the procedure of our movement. I never for one moment believed that he got together in a faction with Clarke to prepare the fight in the SWP in a conscious way. The trouble is that he dabbled in business at first and then was gradually dragged into the thing. Such methods, contrary to what he claims, could only prepare the way for the danger of split. On the other hand, the SWP majority avoided split precisely because it proceeded firmly politically and organizationally.

For quite a time here, whilst I was at one with you politically, I did my best to prevent P. from making serious errors by avoiding an open clash with him, but I was not too successful. It was only when I put the cards on the table that everybody steadied up, because they knew a fight was coming. The bad thing then and now, is the way P. took my intervention, and when I saw him last week was decidedly cool. He does not try to learn collectively with us. He proceeds in a haughty, impatient way. I have many memories of this sort of thing in the old fights, and all of them are unpleasant. The intellectual who jumps around (no matter how brilliant he may be) usually gets into serious trouble.

Beneath the impatience is of course, the politics. P. supported the minority on two counts: a) the Frankel document, b) a more flexible

attitude towards the USCP. He was against turning away from the main orientation, but he continually referred to Trotsky's conversation (published by the Minority) and used it to suggest that the SWP majority were conservative on this question. After the news of the Plenum agreement came through, he wrote me saying:

'The Plenum has just finished with an understanding and a reciprocal promise of prolonged peace. This solution has intervened after three days of debates which made one fear the worst. The result is due, in my opinion, to the combined effect of wisdom of Jim and the other cadres of the majority, of the importance and ideological cohesion of the minority, and to the intervention, certainly till now discreet, but no less clear and firm (for those who understand) which were made from here to both sides.'

I have always been extremely suspicious of people who approach the serious internal conflicts which have engaged our movement with suggestions which tend to minimize the seriousness of these developments. During the height of the fight with Haston we had many of these fellows here and their 'neutrality' always turned out to be support of the wrong camps. P. and Lawrence tend to blame the majority for the bad atmosphere and support Frankel's document. This 'impartial' air is a reflection of political instability and it lies at the root of P.'s failure to understand the basis of your plenum agreement. It would be useless to blind ourselves to the dangers that can arise as a result of this.

Here, I feel sure that we can prevent Lawrence from becoming involved, without any factional heat. Of course, it is possible to be mistaken. At the moment he is in France at P.'s request and maybe they will 'try something,' but we shall hold it. We will not have our movement pushed around by experiments.

As I see the situation, we must introduce some sort of balance into the present international leadership. The trouble with P. is his impatience and haughtiness. In spite of great theoretical abilities these are bad traits and have to be watched. The problem is to help the man retain and develop his leadership capabilities whilst at the same time establishing more collectivity in taking decisions and responsibilities in relation to the internal affairs of our sections.

Concretely, I believe our section must work in the closest collaboration, politically and organizationally with the SWP. We should discuss the new documents for the Congress between ourselves before making any decisions on any amendments that might be necessary.

Tom and I collaborate most closely here. We shall let you have all the news in regular letters.

When it is understood in the international that we stand together as one solid unit, then it should tend to steady people all around. I await your remarks.

Warmest regards,
J.



Chapter Five

The Socialist Workers Party and the 1953 split

The split within the SWP in September 1953 came only weeks before the split in the International itself. The Clarke-Cochran-Bartell faction, with its liquidationist positions, was encouraged by Pablo on a course of factional disruption. Only at this point did Cannon and the SWP leadership turn sharply against Pabloism; their major reply to Pablo's positions was published shortly after the expulsion of the opposition faction (Document 11). Their rallying cry throughout the faction fight was the defence of 'orthodox Trotskyism' (see Document 8).

At the same time, the workers' uprising in East Germany, and the reaction of the Pabloites to it, were creating the conditions for an international split.

DOCUMENT 8a**Letter from George Novack to G. Healy,
August 2, 1953**

Dear Jerry:

The enclosed caucus letter by Dobbs will give you the information on the NY convention elections. It was a very hard-fought and embittered struggle that lasted about four weeks, which resulted in effectively blowing up the truce. And, as both sides stated, the truce had to find its decisive test in this key local of the key city.

What is most important from our standpoint is the consolidation of a strong political majority in the local, since all our votes were obtained on the basis of agreement with our plenum resolutions. The 12-8 vote enables us to take firm hold of the local, which has been paralyzed by the internal strife for eight months, and set it moving again. To do this we can count only on our own leadership and forces.

This has been made plain by the convention itself held yesterday.

The day after our victory in the elections, we made the following proposals to the minority, for the purpose of assuring their collaboration and showing there was no intent of reprisals or discrimination. Despite the provocations and heat of the pre-plenum brawling, we wanted to abide by the plenum agreement, and see if it could be sustained. We were not sure whether their pre-convention antics were a filibuster, an effort to pressure us into concessions, and to try and parlay a minority into a majority by devious means — or whether they had actually abandoned the truce and the collaboration connected with it.

Our proposals were: we would choose the organizer; permit them to retain the Assistant Organizer; include two majority, two minority and one Marcyite on the Municipal candidate election slate which must be announced in a day or so; eight majority, four minority, one Marcyite on the City Committee; with three majority and two minority alternates; Bartell was offered the Mayoralty candidate with assurance that his financial needs would be taken care of during the

campaign. They rejected this and would make no counter proposal. This was an ominous sign.

At the opening of the convention both the reporter for the PC and for the City Majority re-iterated the appeal for genuine collaboration, now that the question of the majority had been settled by the membership. If they were not satisfied with our terms, what did they propose, on their part for consideration? In their report, Bartell declared that we switched from war to peace to suit our factional advantage; that they had been tricked before by this, at the plenum; that they were not going to be caught in that trap again; and that they don't trust us; that we insisted upon a political determination in the NY voting because we thought we had them at a disadvantage because of the Seattle break-up of their caucus, and could disintegrate them here in NY; that this manoeuvre had failed; we had only succeeded in solidifying them, and making them see just what we were up to.

In the midst of such remarks, he let loose their big bombshell — or rather stink-bomb. He read excerpts from two documents: 1. Jim's report to the Majority Caucus of May 18 on Internationalism to the SWP; 2. from Jim's letter to Tom of June 4th.

These documents had been sent out to the local leaders of the Majority caucus. One set had been handed over to Bartell by Lou Becker, the Akron organizer, who Bartell announced had broken with the Majority and gone over to the Minority. You have met this comrade, and know him. He had been in NY the week before but, although evading discussions with us, had not expressed any change of mind or discussed his differences with us. Therefore the event was a surprise.

These were the most scandalous and shameful documents ever written in the movement, said Bartell. They demonstrated that Cannon was organizing an international faction against Pablo, just as he had previously set about to organize an unprincipled combination to dump Cochran nationally and Bartell locally. This was an unprincipled combination because he was enlisting the aid of Tom, who was opposed to the Third World Congress against Pablo, with whom he presumably agreed on the Third World Congress line. Or else, Cannon had never really agreed with that line, and was now exposing his hidden opposition to it. This proved what the minority had contended all along, that the majority only formally accepted the line, but did not actually approve of it and apply it. Instead they waged factional war upon its genuine interpreters and defenders here and abroad. Cannon

had a social democratic conception of internationalism, as a loose federation, and consisting essentially of consultation and collaboration, since he has said the SWP would take orders from no one. He said that the opposition between Cannon and Pablo was now plainly exposed to view, and they were going to fight on Pablo's side against this conspiracy of Cannon's. In this fight they awarded us the Bleibtreu group in advance. This was nothing less than a fight to save the whole international movement from being wrecked and destroyed.

The minority now possesses all the factional material we have sent out to date. This does not bother us too much in view of the developments. We are even not too much concerned to have Pablo and the others read this material. It will drive home the fact of the deadly seriousness of the situation. Fortunately, none of your letters to Jim have been sent out. All that they know, we presume, from these documents, is that Tom was given permission to show material to you, and to solicit your co-operation.

The minority expected that these Revelations would practically blow up the convention, shake a number of our people, and even several of our delegates, and place them on the offensive. But despite the surprise and momentary shock, so far as could be observed, the immediate impact did not have the desired results. In the course of this fight our comrades have become fairly well innured to this method of substituting sensations for politics, and scandals in place of discussion of opinions. As some of them remarked, 'this sort of thing had been pulled twice before,' and they were ready to wait for further and full information.

In our reply, we made the following points: 1. We condemned this school for scandal method which introduced matters which were not the business of the local convention. 2. If anything was irregular in this correspondence, Bartell as an NC member had the duty to bring it before the PC first. 3. Cannon had been corresponding on such matters for the past 25 years, and a large part of it has been published and provided education for our movement. Just as his previous correspondence in this and other fights had been published, so would this at the proper time. 4. If there are any differences in the world movement, these will be brought out and discussed in connection with the forthcoming pre-congress discussion, as is the tradition in our movement.

It was later explained to our own comrades that the correspondence was designed as a precaution to preserve the peace from any tamper-

ing with, by anyone. Jim's earlier speech on internationalism had already alerted the original members of the caucus to the possibility of such a development.

In his summary, Bartell indicated that the minority would not engage in joint collaboration, they would do work, of course, they said, but 'in spite of us.' He said we should make the proposals, and then they would decide what to do about them. This is really tantamount to a declaration of minimum activity and maximum friction. At first they proposed to have only token representation of one on the city committee, but later changed their mind, and designated their four candidates. But this is no more than a formal compliance.

Here is how, subject to further considerations and developments, we appraise the situation. The plenum truce is smashed. The NY local and party is in a state of *de facto* civil war. Whatever the time intervals, this is heading for a split on their part. Our problem is to smash the split. What can be their perspective? As the champions of Pablo and the Congress Line, in opposition to Cannon and the Old Trotskyism, they will further consolidate their faction, hop up their people, and try to pick up some more supporters. They will utilize the pre-congress discussion for that purpose, while contributing as little as possible to party building. We shall have the double burden of maintaining the organization and combatting them. After the next congress, we will either have to submit like the French or they will emerge separately as the official representatives of the world movement.

This perspective sheds light on several aspects of the minority's conduct and course which puzzled us up to now. Their confidence and belligerence, which was not justified by the situation here, has its source over there. Second, they did not want any voting on political lines here in NY until the unfolding of the congress discussion and Bartell attributed to us in his speech the motive of wanting to get people committed on the political issues before there had been any real political discussion.

Meanwhile there have been certain significant developments about political differences with the minority here. As you know, Clarke's article on Stalinism in the last issue of the magazine was not shown to us before publication and has aroused considerable protest. We called him to account on it, and especially for the next to the last paragraph, in the PC on its revision of our traditional position on the political revolution against the bureaucracy.

Now he has submitted two editorials for the next issue, one on the

Beria purge and the other on the E. German events, which go much farther. The main conclusion of the E. German article is the restricted repression of the Soviet occupying forces, and the extensive concessions of the regime.

It tends to embellish and whitewash the Stalinist bureaucracy. It does not counterpose any clear programme of revolutionary demands and action, along Trotskyist lines. The article on Beria sees the political revolution already under way within the SU itself, with the intervention and pressure of the Soviet masses producing differentiations and rifts in the Kremlin command, a conflict between die-hard and liberalizing factions which will provide rallying points and leadership for the next stages of the struggle. The lines of both articles run counter to the line put forward in the paper and was deliberately designed as their polemic against us.

We propose to print the articles under his signature with a notice that they do not represent the views of the *majority* of the editorial board, and will be answered in the next issue. In the same issue will be included a letter signed by Morris criticizing Clarke's earlier article and setting forth the party position very briefly. This will serve notice of the opening of the political discussion.

We cannot believe that these are merely Clarke's personal views. For example, some of us, disturbed by certain omissions in the IS declaration on the E. German events, have asked the following question: Why no call for the withdrawal of all occupying forces, and no call for German unity under socialist auspices? Why the omission in the latest IS draft on Stalinism of the following two sentences from the transitional programme: 'Only the victorious revolutionary uprising of the oppressed masses can revive the Soviet regime and guarantee its further development toward socialism. There is but one party capable of leading the Soviet masses toward insurrection, the party of the Fourth International'?

This brings us to the new congress documents, which you refer to in your latest letter of July 28. We intend to study them with extreme care; after our discussions on them here we shall pool our ideas and send them on to you for consideration. Or, if you wish, you can send us any suggestions you may have in the meantime. We do not have to decide now in exactly what form our criticism and amendments will take when they are submitted for the discussion. The first reaction of a number of comrades to the document on Stalinism is the feeling that it may well have a dual character. On the surface it presents itself as an

extension of orthodox Trotskyism, while its real drift in certain key passages is away from it. In view of the experiences with the previous Congress document, we want no possibility of ambiguity or misunderstandings in any new ones. And that is precisely what we propose to take measures to eliminate. We will either have agreement on a clear and unambiguous line, or forthright disagreement on opposing lines. But we are determined to end the abominable indeterminateness which has plagued us for so long, and which has obscured the reasons for the unfolding faction fight.

We are thoroughly in favour of a continuation, deepening and strengthening of our joint collaboration. This has now become a life and death question. The former axis between Paris and us has been shattered. Whether or not it is beyond repair remains to be seen, but that is not now the decisive factor. A new axis has come into being — yours and ours. You should know, from all our past relations, as well as the present ones, how highly we value that.

As for P., we are inclined to reserve final judgment until we see his reaction to the latest developments here. We do not propose to take any action first. But, speaking for myself, I have very little optimism about the outcome. I shall not speak of the personal confidence game played on me and others, whatever the motives. Fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice, shame on me. But the visits of Clarke and John do not leave much margin for doubt, along with the accusations of Cannon's machinations to destroy Pablo. This game of hide and seek which has been going on for so long is coming to end. Nor do I think you should nurse many illusions that the troubles we have had here will not crop up in your own bailiwick.

We have just received a letter from P. telling us about the two projected junkets. He proposes that Ernest see us instead of himself. From the standpoint of rational and realistic organizational methods these junkets come close to fantasy and recklessness. They are acting like compulsive grasshoppers leaping about without any steadiness of purpose. Even the best political line cannot be implemented in such a fashion.

In the light of our common experiences, I wish we had several days or weeks to talk all these matters over, but these few remarks will have to suffice for the moment. I wanted to bring you up to date on the most recent events. Jim will write separately to you.

M.

DOCUMENT 8b**Report given to the majority caucus of the New York local by George Novack, August 3, 1953**

The City Convention has registered a victory for the majority here in Local New York. Now we take on the job of using that victory responsibly; not, as Bartell insinuated in his inimitable manner, 'to divide the spoils,' but to share the work, in implementing the programme set forth by the National Plenum for this Local as well as all others.

This marks the opening of the second phase in the reanimation of the New York Local. Now we can proceed to put our house in order, insofar as that can be done under the given conditions. The first household task is to help de-odorize the atmosphere generated by the minority at the Convention. I refer to their efforts to scandalize the proceedings and poison inner party life by reading excerpts from supposedly sinister documents and letters purporting to demonstrate the existence of a Great Conspiracy, a super-sensational intrigue on our part.

We have already become somewhat familiar with these cloak-and-dagger manoeuvres. The minority has pulled them before. Most of you will recall the onion-skin letter from Cannon, which, in the early stage of the struggle last spring, was waved in front of selected comrades with the insinuation that this was part of an intrigue to organize a faction in order to perpetrate the most nefarious deeds. And Bartell, at the close of his presentation in the debate with Cannon, tried to make a similar sensation, quoting reports from various members of the minority on the National Committee about real or alleged conversations with Comrade Dobbs.

Now what were the aims of the minority leaders in springing their

latest would-be sensation? First, they thought to belittle the majority victory and derail the Convention proceedings. Second, they were seeking to extricate themselves from the corner into which they felt themselves pushed by the whole development and internal movement of the factional struggle — the consolidation of an authoritative majority in the national leadership at the Plenum, and subsequently the similar consolidation of a majority here in the New York Local. Third, they are endeavouring to keep their faction whipped up to white heat against the majority. Fourth, they are trying to becloud the opening of the new phase in the discussion of the political differences in the party here, and whatever differences may be put forward in the discussion which will precede the Fourth World Congress. Finally, they are using this 'scandal' as a pretext for their refusal of collaboration in party work and the renewal of their split offensive.

I will now read to you the full text of Comrade Cannon's letter. Those of you who heard Comrade Cannon's report on 'Internationalism and the SWP' — the other document Bartell quoted from — will, I believe, find in this letter nothing essentially new. The main points in the letter were either stated or alluded to in that report; the letter is a follow-up to the general viewpoint already set forth in that report by Comrade Cannon.

(Here Comrade Novack read the full text of Comrade Cannon's letter of June 4 to Tom, which was forwarded earlier to all caucus leaders and, if it has not already been done, should be made available to all the majority caucus to read.)

* * *

(After reading Comrade Cannon's letter, Comrade Novack continued:)

First of all, let me make two brief explanations. (1) On the point of Jerome's 'dissimulating answer.' When Comrade Stone broke with the minority, he reported to us that the minority claimed they were not only the true interpreters and defenders of the Third World Congress line, but that Comrade Clarke was the closest associate and most authoritative spokesman for Pablo in this country. We therefore felt duty-bound to report what may well have been a misuse of the authority of that comrade in the factional situation. We believed that we were entitled for a removal of any ambiguity on that score. However, the answer we received neither affirmed nor denied these

rumours which the minority had been spreading. That is why Comrade Cannon characterized the letter as a dissimulating answer.

(2) Bartell tried to make it 'unprincipled' that Cannon wanted an explicit understanding with Tom that there would be the closest collaboration, given their agreement on political fundamentals. Tom, for his part, recognized the principled character of Cannon's approach to the establishment of collaboration and was in full accord with it.

Tom's attitude stands in marked contrast to that of Clarke, who, when he was given the responsibility for making known our views in advance of the Third World Congress, violated that trust and — as he personally boasted at the Plenum — *burned* the document containing our views.

Now this letter by Comrade Cannon — which as you see is consistent with the international report he previously made to you — is similar to letters he has been writing to leading comrades throughout the movement for the past 25 years, whether or not there was a factional situation to worry about. I have no doubt that in the course of this struggle the minority also has conducted and is conducting a voluminous correspondence with quite a number of people. As a matter of fact, one reason which led us to conclude that the reply by Jerome was 'dissimulating' was the fact that we had been reliably informed that he had been corresponding with the minority leadership, and that such correspondence had not been made known to the leaders of the party.

Comrade Cannon pointed out in his international report how completely contrary such procedure is to the relationship we had with Comrade Trotsky in his lifetime, and to the procedures which have always been normal and correct in our movement. Comrade Trotsky would often reply to a comrade with differences, but he would always send a copy of his reply to comrade Cannon or to the leadership so that they could rest assured he was not attempting to tamper with the inner life of the party or doing anything behind the back of the responsible leadership. Otherwise, we would never be able to have a responsible elected leadership administering the organization, or have any kind of normal atmosphere in the party. Scrupulous adherence to such procedure is all the more necessary in the case of a faction fight threatening the unity of the party.

Comrade Cannon's apprehension that factionalism could be whipped up after the Plenum only by the introduction of the international factor has certainly been confirmed by the minority's conduct at the

Convention. There is no justification whatever for the continuance of any power fight or red-hot factional atmosphere, on any national or local grounds, after the Plenum and this Convention. But as I said, the minority leadership needed a fresh diversion in order to heat up the atmosphere. And Bartell, in his report at the Convention, very clearly made the implicit threat of split if we dared continue the course which he assumed was projected in the letter he waved.

Now this implicit threat of split is in itself a clear violation of the unanimous agreement to which the minority bound themselves in the Plenum truce. Therefore they had to manufacture a new alleged scandal to substitute for all those pre-Plenum and pre-Convention beefs which have now collapsed. But this new 'scandal' will be exposed and exploded too. We do not know whether the minority cooked up this would-be scandal on their own initiative, or whether it was undertaken in order to encourage some kind of intervention or action by others. In any event, we intend, as before, to repel any attempt from any quarter to stir up or encourage factional strife. For us, that is the only way to safeguard the peace and the unity of the party.

This letter, and other similar letters and documents, will be published, at the proper time, to insure that the comrades have a rounded picture and can give serious, objective consideration to the matters therein — just as all the material which has had a bearing on the issues in dispute up to this time have been presented either to our caucus or to the membership. You remember the hue and cry they raised about Cannon's onion-skin letter, about the Dobbs-Hansen-Stein memorandum, etc., all of which the minority challenged and dared us to produce — and all of which, in good time, we published. The comrades will understand that neither in the caucus, nor for that matter at all times in the party, is it possible, necessary, or desirable to bring everything at one time to the attention of the membership. But, sooner or later in the course of party life, whatever is essential is conveyed to all the comrades — and so it will be to you.

The minority has a wider aim in trying to raise a cloud of supposed scandal at the present moment, because they are now in the midst of a new smuggling operation. This time it is Comrade Clarke's smuggling operation in connection with the magazine. The method they are using is the same one Cochran used last spring when, while launching a broadside against party election policy in Los Angeles, he raised in the PC the charges of financial irregularity, discrimination against the

minority leading comrades on the staff, etc. Now we are confronted with this same method of crying 'Scandal!' as a screen for smuggling in revisions of established party policy.

In the current issue of the magazine, Clarke has an article entitled 'Stalin's Role — Stalinism's Future.' This article was not shown to a single one of the majority leadership before its publication. More serious still, there are in it many misleading statements. Most important is the attempted revision of the established Trotskyist position on the inevitability of a political revolution by the workers to overthrow the Soviet bureaucracy. In the PC we challenged Clarke sharply on this point. Soon after, he presented two further pieces for the next issue of the magazine, one on the events in East Germany, the other on the Beria purge. These present a different line than the one given in the paper, which is the official line of the party. At the same time, they constitute a veiled polemic against this established line.

Now we have never permitted, and cannot permit, two different lines to appear in the organs of the movement. But that would be the outcome — whatever Clarke's intent — if these two pieces appeared as editorials in the magazine.

We have initiated two steps in order to bring the issues in dispute out plainly before the working-class public and before the party. We will publish the two pieces as signed articles by Clarke, prefacing them with an editorial note that these are his personal views, and that his editorial associates hold to a different analysis which will be printed in the following issue of the magazine. This will be a rounded piece counterposing the party policy to the line of Clarke's articles. In the same issue with his two articles, we are publishing a letter by Comrade Stein which, from the traditional standpoint of Trotskyism, justifiably takes exception to two main positions in Clarke's article on 'Stalin's Role — Stalinism's Future.'

The positions to which we take exception are: (1) Clarke's assertion that the Soviet economy is 'nationalized in form, socialist in essence' — which Comrade Trotsky polemicized against in his debates against the Stalinist theoreticians. (2) This in turn is connected with Clarke's further proposition that is now not entirely clear what form the struggle between the Soviet workers and the bureaucracy will take. 'Will the process,' he wrote, 'take the form of a violent upheaval against bureaucratic rule in the USSR? Or will concessions to the masses and sharing of power — as was the long course in the English bourgeois revolution in the political relationship between the rising

bourgeoisie and the declining nobility — gradually undermine the base of the bureaucracy? Or will the evolution be a combination of both forms? That we cannot now foresee.'

I won't go into this at any length — but how on earth is it possible to combine two diametrically opposite forms: a 'violent upheaval' against bureaucratic rule, and a 'sharing of power' with it? That is something better brains than mine will have to figure out. But this internal contradiction is only one part of Clarke's throwing overboard, with no motivation or substantiation, our established position on the inevitability of political revolution in the Soviet Union. Our articles in the magazine will open a new phase in the political discussion here of our differences on theory, and they will very likely play a part in the coming pre-Congress discussion.

Neither in the discussion here, nor in the broader discussion, do we propose to allow any ambiguities to be contained in any new documents. We want resolutions that mean what they say and say what they mean — and we intend to get them. This squabble over who is the best interpreter of documents, or who is the best interpreter of what may or may not go on in the mind of Pablo, is something entirely new in the history of *our* movement, and alien to our movement.

But not entirely new elsewhere. I have here a letter from Comrade Cannon in which he remarks: 'We had that sort of business in the Comintern, in the later days of our sojourn in that jungle of machinations, intrigue and double-talk. Resolutions of the Comintern were always so worded that the factional battles would hinge around their *interpretation*. Many times the resolutions gave 'concessions' to our point of view — at least, that's what we, in our peasant ignorance, took them to be. But the Lovestoneites always claimed that the intention was different and that they had inside information to this effect. I must admit that the Lovestoneites always proved to be right in this respect, even if in nothing else.

'Under the regime of Trotsky in our international movement, however, I cannot recall a single time or occasion when there was the slightest doubt or dispute as to what the resolutions, articles and theses drafted by him really meant. They meant exactly what they said, every time. That, in my opinion, is the best system. We cannot feel easy about the state of affairs in our international movement until this tradition of the "old Trotskyism" is again reinstated as the invariable rule and not the exception.'

We intend to participate fully, with our contributions and our point

of view, in the forthcoming discussions on Stalinism and on all other questions. But our main job now is the work we have cut out for us here in the United States, on the basis of the line set forth in the Plenum resolutions — not only on American Stalinism, but on our perspectives for building an independent Socialist Workers Party in the United States. We have to offset the partial creeping paralysis that has been felt so strongly here. The positive outcome of the City Convention is that we can now put into practice in our daily work the recommendations for party building in the Plenum resolution.

So, having broken the factional log-jam, let's get moving forward.

DOCUMENT 8c**Letter from George Novack to the SWP National Committee Majority, September 10, 1953**

Dear Comrades:

Since Comrade Cannon's report May 18th on 'Internationalism and the SWP' we have sought to alert the majority caucus to the possibility that the Cochran faction had inspirers and allies in Paris and, if so, that the fight in the SWP would inevitably spread to a broader arena. It was known that Clarke started his factional operations upon his return from abroad two years ago; that the Cochranites persistently claimed he was Pablo's righthand man; and they claimed to be the real representatives of Pablo's interpretation of the Third World Congress documents. They recruited and held together their faction with the aid of this contention.

These circumstances indicated the possibility that the faction fight had been encouraged by some sort of understanding between Clarke and Pablo; that the Cochranites were proceeding with at least tacit support from that quarter; and that this was one of the main reasons for their arrogant and reckless behaviour.

Despite growing apprehensions on this score, we were reluctant to come to a definite conclusion that this was the case. On one hand, early in the year after the Dobbs-Stein-Hansen memorandum was written, we received assurances that the general line the memorandum defended was acceptable to the IS and provided an adequate basis for continuing collaboration. On the other hand, in the absence of irrefutable evidence, we hesitated to believe that responsible figures would knowingly engage in a double game behind the backs of our party leadership. We had to suspend judgment pending further and conclusive proof of devious organizational methods unprecedented in our movement and at odds with all our traditions.

We did inform the IS that any outside intervention in the unfolding

factional situation would be extremely unwise since it would serve only to complicate, prolong and embitter it, although we did not object to expressions of opinion by them on the political issues involved at some point in the literary discussion. The SWP has a leadership and membership mature and experienced enough in faction fights to solve its own internal problems. Moreover, as Comrade Cannon recalled in his report, we did not want any repetition of the moves made without our knowledge or consent in the fusion negotiations with the Shachtmanites during the Morrow-Goldman fight.

We learned later that, at any informal meeting in Paris held shortly before our May Plenum, Pablo and several others indicated sympathy with some of the minority's views and raised the question of taking a stand on the American struggle. This move toward intervention on behalf of the Cochranites was held up at that time by Burns' objections.

A week before the Plenum Comrade Cannon sent Pablo a digest of the information reported to us by Comrade Stone after his break with the Cochran faction regarding their claims to represent Pablo and his views in our party. We did this to give him the opportunity to repudiate these allegations and dissociate himself from the Cochranites and their-revisionist positions. His ambiguous reply added to the accumulating evidence that he was dealing with the Cochranites behind our backs. Moreover, as we learned directly from him, he had been in correspondence with Clarke, although we did not know the content of the correspondence.

The agreement made at the Plenum temporarily altered the outlook of the internal situation. Having accepted it in good faith, the majority leadership was concerned with making the truce effective and preventing any further flareup of factional hostilities. As Comrade Cannon wrote in his letter to Tom, the main threat of disruption could come only from 'some artificial "intervention" from Paris, which would feed the flames of factionalism, again call in question the authority of the majority leadership, and plunge us headlong into an embittered factional organization struggle, with the implicit threat of split.'

As his letter indicated, we would try to forestall such an unwarranted intervention, but would nevertheless prepare for its possibility. It appeared that the danger had been averted, at least for the time being, when a message came from the IS saluting the outcome of the Plenum.

The situation took a sharp turn when the Cochranites capped their disgraceful conduct in the New York Local by unloosing the 'scandal-sensation' of the Cannon documents and trying to make them the pivot of the convention proceedings. The minority aimed to blow up the truce and renew the split offensive; shove aside the Plenum resolutions as the basis for party activity; switch the discussion from the home grounds where they had fared so poorly onto the field of foreign affairs. They sought to cast off party discipline in the name of allegiance to Pablo, and to justify their withdrawal from collaboration in party work and sabotage of party finances with the pretext that Cannon was organizing a personal international faction against Pablo.

This declaration of war was promptly followed by Clarke's trip abroad which was a defiant demonstration of international factional activity.

Now, as a sequel to these developments, come the IS letter of August 10 addressed to the NC Majority. This hypocritical letter confirms our worst expectations. It is contrived to back up the false allegations of the Cochranites and prepare the ground for extending their unprincipled factionalism throughout the world movement.

It is clear that this threatening letter is only a preliminary to a series of hostile moves against us and other orthodox Trotskyists. This has been made plain by the expansion of the factional warfare into England. There a group around Lawrence, obviously set into motion by Pablo, has opened hostilities against the Burns majority.

The internal struggle in England is unfolding along parallel lines and around the same fundamental issues as in this country — with the Lawrence clique using the same unsavory organizational methods as the Cochranites. For example, they have gone so far as to brand Burns an 'American agent,' and tried to impose IS discipline as a gag upon him to prevent him from expressing criticisms of the IS documents at the beginning of the discussion in his own party. Such methods, employed by the Comintern, have been unheard of in our movement.

Simultaneously the IS has called a special meeting which portends new hostile acts of the same type, despite the declaration in their August 10 letter that 'we are resolved to undertake nothing in this matter.'

Even if there existed no serious political differences, such abominable organizational methods would have to be openly challenged and vigorously combatted. However, the severity of the clash on organiza-

tional grounds betokens the presence of political divergences on basic questions which will have to be fully brought out and counterposed to each other.

The nature and trend of these opposing views have already been manifested in the fight the majority has been waging against the Cochranites for the past year and a half. Under the war-cry of 'Junk the Old Trotskyism,' this revisionist and liquidationist tendency has been throwing overboard more and more of the principles and positions of our party, including our conception of the role of the revolutionary party and the Trotskyist analysis of the character and role of Stalinism.

It is now apparent that the lines developed by the Cochranites is merging with that of an international tendency which not only shares their general outlook but may well have prompted at least part of their ideas. Those who support the course taken by the Cochranites do not represent the views of orthodox Trotskyism — and that is precisely the core of the developing political dispute.

The major task before us is to clarify the growing theoretical and political differences between the orthodox Trotskyists and those who are moving away from basic Trotskyist concepts, especially on the nature and role of Stalinism and the role and prospects of world Trotskyism. The international discussion preparatory to the Fourth World Congress will be utilized for that purpose, and we shall continue to press for the fullest probing of the political questions at the bottom of this conflict.

As a number of comrades have already observed, the trend of thought in Pablo's article on 'The Post-Stalin "*New Course*"' in the March-April magazine approaches the appraisal of the Stalinist bureaucracy and Stalinism's future which we have already challenged in Clarke's Articles. There Pablo envisages the liquidation of Stalinism, not through the organization and victory of the uprising of the Soviet masses against the Stalinist bureaucracy, but through the progressive reform of the bureaucratic and police regime under mounting pressure from the masses.

He raises the question: what form will the now irresistible liquidation of the Stalinist regime take? 'Will it be that of an acute crisis and of violent interbureaucratic struggles between the elements who will fight for the status quo, if not for turning back, and the more and more numerous elements drawn by the powerful pressure of the masses?'

This is a partial projection of the idea put forward by Clarke that the bureaucracy may reform itself, share power, and a section of it even lead the anti-bureaucratic movement of the masses. In our opinion this is not a realistic view of the way Stalinism will be liquidated; it points toward liquidation of the Trotskyist programme of the necessity of the mass uprising to smash the entire bureaucratic caste.

In the forthcoming discussions in our party and in the world movement, we propose to challenge all such false conceptions head-on. Against the revisionist cry of 'Junk the Old Trotskyism,' we will raise the slogan of 'Hold fast to Orthodox Trotskyism against the new revisionists.'

Fraternally,
William F. Warde

DOCUMENT 9

Some remarks on *The Rise and Fall of Stalinism* by Morris Stein, August 23, 1953

In reading 'The Rise and Fall of Stalinism' I came upon the following endorsement of the Trotskyist programme for the Soviet Union: 'The programme of action put forward in this connection by the *Transitional Programme* and which the Second World Congress reaffirmed and concretized, now acquires burning actuality.'

This statement of support would seem to apply to the programme in its entirety. The document, however, does not leave it at this. It proceeds to cite the *Transitional Programme* in a footnote. But in citing it, it stops short of the two last sentences reading as follows: 'Only the victorious revolutionary uprising of the oppressed masses can revive the Soviet regime and guarantee its development toward socialism. There is but one party capable of leading the Soviet masses to insurrection — the party of the Fourth International!'

Why are these two sentences omitted? They contain the two central political conclusions of our programme, namely: (1) that only a mass uprising of the oppressed masses can guarantee the Soviet Union's further development towards socialism and (2) that only a Trotskyist party can lead such an uprising. Without such a clear-cut-statement as to how and by whom the programme will be carried out, it remains suspended in mid air. This omission becomes all the more glaring in view of the statement that this programme 'now acquires burning actuality.'

I propose to deal here with the reasons for this omission as I deduce them from the document.

The main conclusions of the document.

The main political conclusions of the document can be summed up in the following passages of the introduction to 'The Rise and Fall of Stalinism.'

'The fundamental conditions under which the Soviet bureaucracy and its tight hold over the Communist parties developed, namely, the ebb of the revolution, the isolation of the Soviet Union and the backward condition of its economy — these conditions have disappeared' (p.2).

These qualitative changes in the objective world situation — that is the disappearance of all the conditions which originally gave rise to the Kremlin bureaucracy — have already set into motion the forces for the socialist regeneration of the SU and the disintegration of Stalinism the world over.

That is the next proposition. It is stated as follows: 'The events which have taken place in the Soviet Union following Stalin's death do not constitute only the first stage of a process which must end in the socialist regeneration of the Soviet Union. These changes likewise constitute the relaxation of the brake, which has operated in the most conservative and even reactionary way over what today still comprises the most important revolutionary vanguard in the world, even in the many countries where the Communist parties are extremely weak. As a result there has opened up a new stage not only in the Soviet Union but also in the development of the Communist parties and of the non-capitalist countries, accelerating the disintegration of Stalinism in the sense indicated above.'

What can be the tasks of the Trotskyist movement in the face of this alleged development? If we are witnessing the beginning of the socialist regeneration of the Soviet Union and the disintegration of Stalinism as a political power on a world scale, then we have made a leap into a new epoch. This would require indeed that 'we junk old Trotskyism'. In this context the omissions from the Transitional Programme assume precisely this meaning.

From this also flow perspectives and role for the Fourth International which is set down in the document as follows:

'The role of the Fourth International, which was created in order to assure the continuity of Marxist revolutionary programme and organisation is to intervene in this disintegration in order to rally around its banner the forces influenced to this day by Stalinism.' (p.4.)

There is no support for this contention in the founding documents of our movement which assigns to the Fourth International the solution of the historical crisis of the leadership of the proletariat. The Transitional Programme states categorically that 'the crisis of the

proletarian leadership, having become the crisis in mankind's culture, can be resolved only by the Fourth International.'

Yet it is the propositions set down above that constitute the general framework of 'The Rise and Fall of Stalinism.' It gives the impression of being a traditional Trotskyist document. This historic review of the world situation, following the Russian Revolution is largely based on Trotsky's writings. The analysis of the present situation and the predictions of things to come, seem to flow logically from this historical review.

A Liquidationist Document

But that is only the first impression. A careful study of the resolution reveals it as the most deep going revisionist document seen in our movement to date. Acceptance of the main line of the resolution would result in complete ideological disarming and eventual liquidation of Trotskyism.

If there has been so sweeping a change in the Soviet Union and in world Stalinism as the resolution asserts, then an entirely new system of political ideas and organizational perspectives is in order. For example, what is needed in the Soviet Union is not a Trotskyist party to lead the mass uprising, but a party of reform that would help along in the 'socialist regeneration' that is already on the way. Or, no party at all but an alliance with the 'reform' forces inside the CP. If Stalinism is disintegrating within the existing communist parties, why wrestle anywhere with the task of building independent parties? We should on the contrary be devoting our thoughts and efforts to the best ways of intervening in the existing Communist Parties to help the disintegration of Stalinism already taking place at an accelerated rate. Small though some of them may be — they would nevertheless offer the best immediate prospects. There may be a chance to enter. Or perhaps fuse with a given CP or an important segnurity in small doses without serious motivation. The resolution undertakes to provide such motivation.

Motivation for Political Conclusions

It begins with the following historical review as its point of departure:

'The evolution of the Soviet Union and of the world working class movement since 1917 is fundamentally determined by the dynamic of the relation of class forces on the world scale. This development has passed through three major phases: the rise of the revolution in 1917-23, the ebb of the world revolution in 1923-43, and the new revolutionary rise since 1943.'

Take careful note of the alleged three major phases and especially of the contention that the ebb of the revolution lasted from 1923 to 1943 — twenty long years, while, on the contrary, there has been a continuous rise since 1943 — the last ten years. This is the keystone for the contention that we are now living in a fundamentally different epoch. It therefore deserves the closest scrutiny.

To begin with, it introduces an entirely new calendar of revolutionary ebb and rise. From 1923 to 1943 it records nothing but 'ebb.' The defeats of the workers resulting from the betrayals of the traditional leaderships are used to blanket out the abundance of revolutionary situations. For precisely during these two decades designated as the period of ebb, the capitalist world was convulsed by one revolutionary crisis after another. 1923 itself was the year of the revolutionary situation in Germany created by the French occupation of the Ruhr. 1925-6 saw the British General Strike and profound revolutionary convulsions in Poland. 1925-7 was the period of the Chinese revolution. 1931-37 marked the Spanish revolution. 1934 saw the pre-revolutionary situation in France, which came to a climax in 1936, when the 'Peoples Fronts' destroyed it.

In other words, during this so called twenty year ebb, the whole capitalist world, engulfed in economic crisis, was shaken by revolutionary convulsions. Even the United States, the most privileged capitalist country in the world, witnessed a tremendous working class upsurge in this period. The Transitional Programme speaks of it as follows: 'The unprecedented wave of sit-down strikes and the amazingly rapid growth of industrial unionism in the United States (CIO) is the most indisputable expression of the instinctive striving of the American workers to raise themselves to the level of the tasks imposed on them by history.' Why then is this entire period wrongly designated as one of ebb? Because, the resolution tries to explain, 'despite these many opportunities the ebb of the revolution became more and more accentuated, it was not all due to the automatism of the mass movement, but, on the contrary, to the pernicious role played by the workers' leaderships.'

Criteria for Revolutionary Ebb and Rise.

This explanation confuses matters instead of clarifying them. It identifies revolutionary situations with revolutionary victories. Defeats are made to cancel out everything, including the appearance and struggle of the revolutionary masses. Trotskyists have never used such a criterion for determining the character of a given period. The distinguishing features of the period 1923-1943 was its profoundly revolutionary character, despite the countless betrayals of the Stalinists, Social Democrats and the Anarcho-Syndicalists (Spain).

This innocent looking re-evaluation of an entire historical period serves, as we shall presently show, a far from innocent design. For the moment, however, let us go along with the contention that the 'pernicious role played by the workers' leaderships justifies the designation of revolutionary periods as periods of ebb. This same criterion should then also be applied to the period beginning with 1943 — the ten years of 'revolutionary rise.'

This period is quite fresh in our memory. Let us recall among other other things that the Stalinists played the major role in betraying the French and Italian revolutions, in the crushing of the Greek revolution and in the general rehabilitation of the bankrupt capitalist system in Western Europe. This is also the period when we saw in Yugoslavia both the conquest of power by the CP as well as the merciless Kremlin campaign which finally drove the regime to seek 'protection' in the imperialist camp. There is obviously something wrong in including all of these under the general heading of revolutionary rise. Partial victories are here used to blanket out the 'pernicious role' of the official leadership. The authors of the resolution are not unaware of this, and to mend their fences they introduce the following modifying proposition. 'The period from 1943 to 1947 . . .discloses itself as a transitional period between the ebb and the new rise of the world revolution.'

It is called 'transitional' because 'The world revolutionary rise was still not powerful enough to permit the bypassing and engulfing of Stalinism . . .' (with the sole exception of Yugoslavia). It was only after 1947 therefore, when the real rise came. It was then that ' . . .the revolutionary wave, above all the victory of the Chinese revolution, overcame this total attempt by the Soviet bureaucracy to maintain a policy of equilibrium.'

The factor of 'pernicious leadership' which determined the twenty years' period of 'revolutionary ebb' up to 1943, is cast off here with the same facility as it was introduced a moment earlier. It now gives way to a new mystical criterion — the power of the revolutionary wave 'by-passing and engulfing Stalinism.' The epochs of revolutionary ebb and rise are juggled to serve preconceptions. All revolutionary struggles dating back to the October Revolution are thus cast in a new mould. For what purpose?

Is the purpose perhaps to lay claim that the Chinese revolution, unquestionably the biggest victory against capitalism since October 1917, has introduced a qualitative change in the world situation? Let us then discuss on that basis. But why come to this claim by such a devious route and in such a tortured manner? Why force historic events into an artificial construction of revolutionary ebb and rise in order to reach an understanding of the significance of the Chinese revolution? The interests of political clarity would dictate a direct approach. We would then take the Chinese revolution as the point of departure in a precise assessment of the concrete relationship of forces resulting from this revolution and determine whether it has indeed 'engulfed' Stalinism, and transformed this entire period dating back to 1943 up to the present and apparently for all time to come into a period of continuous revolutionary rise. A concrete analysis of the Chinese revolution and its consequences would not permit of such loose talk and thinking.

'The Engulfing' Revolutionary Wave.

The Chinese revolution has been thrown in as simply one of the ingredients of a new panacea — the all-engulfing revolutionary wave. The other ingredient consists, as we have seen, of juggling with the rhythm of revolutionary developments. We come next to a third ingredient — distortion of historic facts.

The resolution states that during the so-called transitional period, 1943-47, 'the world revolutionary rise was still not powerful enough to permit the by-passing and engulfing of Stalinism. . . . But this wave was sufficiently menacing to bring imperialism to seek a *modus vivendi* with the Soviet bureaucracy. The latter undertook to halt or try to force back the revolution in return for territorial and economic concessions.' But then the resolution goes on to add that the revolutionary rise came into full force and 'Engulfed by the revolution, stifling

within a vital area far too narrow for its needs and menaced by terrible economic shocks imperialism sought to pass on to the offensive. . . .'

The above is at variance with what we have said on many previous occasions. The facts are 'engulfed' here under waves of inflated generalities. The truth is quite different.

Imperialism passed to the offensive not when it was 'engulfed by the revolution' but when the post-war revolutionary wave seemed to be no longer threatening; when capitalism in Western Europe was rehabilitated not so much thanks to US aid as to the 'pernicious role' of the Stalinists. It was precisely when the Stalinists finished their treacherous job that they were booted out of the West European cabinets. The Truman doctrine was proclaimed and the Marshall Plan followed. It was only then that the Kremlin bureaucracy, in self defence began to eliminate the capitalist elements in the buffer zone.

So far as Western Europe is concerned the years immediately following 1947 have been marked, by and large, by a recession and not a rise. It should be obvious then, that we are dealing here not with a global revolutionary rise preceded by a 'transition' period, but with an uneven and contradictory development in which the betrayed European revolution (1943-47) has resulted not in a period of revolutionary rise but of the resumption of capitalist offensive. What the imperialists — and the Kremlin — did not figure on is that the Chinese CP, under the impact of the peasants uprising and in the face of Chiang's offensive would dare make a bid for power. The triumph of Mao Tse-tung therefore upset the equilibrium between the Kremlin and the imperialists, as the resolution claims, simply because that equilibrium had been previously upset on the European arena. We have thus witnessed the unfoldment of the Chinese revolution while the Western European workers were on the defensive.

The bankrupt and chronically sick capitalist government of France, for example, has dared to repeatedly provoke the workers by attacks on their living standards. How does this fit into the scheme of an 'engulfing' revolutionary rise? They dared do it because they knew that their rule is not threatened either by the Socialists or the Stalinists. It is noteworthy that even at the height of the general strike in France (Aug. 13, 1953) the *N.Y. Times* does not hesitate to say editorially, 'It would be a gross exaggeration today to believe or give the impression that a revolutionary situation is brewing in France. A better way of putting it is to use Paul Reynaud's phrase: "the sick man of Europe"'. French vitality is such that one can feel reasonably sure of

recovery.' It is not 'French vitality' the *N.Y. Times* is relying on, but the prostration of the official workers' leaderships in France. 'The sick man of Europe' can go on being sick so long as there is no one to administer the *coup de grace*.

This general strike of several weeks' duration underscores the basic Trotskyist conclusion of the iron necessity of the revolutionary party as the only way of resolving the crisis of proletarian leadership. What is decisive is not a wave, 'engulfing' or otherwise, but the issue of programme and leadership. The General Strike created a revolutionary situation in France, it posed the question of power point blank, but there was no revolutionary party in this situation. This is the principal lesson that must be drawn and hammered in France. It is just as true today in the period of 'revolutionary rise' as it was in the alleged twenty-year period of 'revolutionary ebb.'

Inflated Optimism.

This brings us to yet another ingredient of the mystic formula of 'engulfing waves' — and that is inflated optimism. Let us take a close look at the following quotation.

'With the victory of the Chinese revolution over the Kuomintang regime, the period of the revolutionary upsurge, which began in 1943 with the downfall of fascism in Italy, entered a new stage, basically marked by a relation of international forces favourable to the revolution and evolving on a global scale more and more favourably for the revolution. The revolutionary wave spreads from country to country, from continent to continent. It has recently reached the Soviet Union itself and the buffer zone.'

Such inflated optimism is not even excusable as a peroration in an agitational speech. But here it is presented as an ostensibly sober statement of fact, as the point of departure for the revision of traditional Trotskyism. It would be excusable to speak of 'a new stage, basically marked by a relation of international forces favourable to the revolution' if one could point not only to capitalist decay, which is the constant element in our epoch, or the mood of the masses, who have proved their revolutionary zeal and combativity over and over again, but also to parties and leaderships, whose revolutionary capacities are beyond doubt. This is a lesson we have learned from Trotsky and which has been verified again and again through bitter experience.

But even if we could boast of tested Marxist parties in every country of the globe, it would still be wrong to say in such a Pollyanna manner that 'The revolutionary wave spreads from country to country, from continent to continent'. It does not help in this painful epoch of transition from one social order to another to under-estimate the power and resources of the capitalist adversary and to minimize the crisis of leadership from which the revolutionary forces suffer.

Since October 1917 decaying capitalism has lost much ground. But a sober assessment must also take into account the fact that as a world system it has survived the onslaught of the October revolution, World War II and the Chinese revolution. Capitalism is still the dominant force in world economy. What is worse, there isn't a single capitalist country in which we can truthfully say that the crisis of proletarian leadership has been fully resolved. We have the beginnings. These can grow and develop into mass parties. The prerequisite for it is that they be not engulfed by illusions but learn how to face reality. It would be a good exercise in sober thinking to start with a listing of all the countries of the world, continent by continent to see where the above-quoted contention of the resolution actually stands the test. It does no good to add up all the plus signs on the side of the workers' revolution as against the minus signs on the side of capitalist counter-revolution. Such a balance sheet would naturally look very imposing. But you could only get into trouble if you try to draw on it.

Revolutionary Romanticism.

The concept of uninterrupted revolution was quite wide-spread, following October 1917. There were many then who saw ahead nothing but the continuous offensive of the revolution. They saw the weakness of world capitalism following the war, the inability of the bourgeoisie to strangle the October revolution and concluded that therefore there is nothing ahead but revolutionary offensive which would topple the system. They too overlooked one point: the importance of the party in scoring revolutionary successes. It took the combined authority of Lenin and Trotsky to put an end to this revolutionary romanticism and to direct the young Communist parties to apply themselves to the task of educating cadres and winning the masses.

A similar mood is apparently rife in our movement following the Chinese revolution. But these are not the early 20's. We have lived

through the experiences of the last three decades. We have had the benefit of Trotsky's illuminating analysis. Such romanticism is completely out of place in our ranks. The Chinese revolution is to be sure a great victory, but we can't expect from it more than it can give. Leaving aside the regime in China — Stalinist in origin and ideology — the country as a whole is completely dependent on the Kremlin for economic and technical assistance. This dependence has grown greater as a consequence of the Korean war. Following the Korea truce, the tendency in China must of necessity be similar to the tendency in the Soviet Union following the Civil War. While in Russia the tendency away from Internationalism and toward 'socialism in one country' met with the fierce resistance of the Left Opposition, i.e., the conscious wing within the ranks of the leadership, we are not aware of any such comparable revolutionary tendencies and forces in China. It is ominous that a bloody Stalinist-type purge followed the armistice in North Korea. This purge could not have taken place without the consent or connivance of the Chinese leadership who dominate the country militarily. We do not presume to know why the purge, but we can surmise. Under the circumstances of a truce *which involves important concessions to imperialism* those to be purged were most likely those *who resisted these concessions*.

What the Chinese revolution itself needs more than anything is the extension of the world revolution, so that it can be saved from further degeneration and retreat. This need cannot be resolved by glowing phrases about engulfing revolutionary waves.

The resolution stands on its head the Trotskyist concept that the key to the extension of the world revolution is in the hands of the subjective factor, i.e., the revolutionary party. Instead of the subjective factor being the necessary element in the revolution, the 'engulfing' revolution by its own inherent power resolves the subjective factor. This formula transforms the traditional workers' parties, the agencies of defeat in the past period into agencies of revolution in this so-called new epoch.

This revision of the Leninist-Trotskyist concept is impelled by an impatience with historical processes — a desire to hurry things up. To find a streamlined solution applying equally well to all continents and which would settle all the contradictions once and for all.

The formula of 'engulfing revolution' does wonders — on paper. It resolves the problem of revolutionary leadership not only for the capitalist countries, but also for those dominated by the Kremlin

bureaucracy. The same alchemy which transforms the traditional parties of betrayal into parties of revolution operates equally well in both cases. This is why the resolution discards the key propositions of the founding programme of the Fourth International.

A syllogism for Conservatism

In the section on the buffer countries the resolution states: 'It is still too early to predict the precise organizational form which the revolutionary rise will assume in the buffer zone countries.'

Why should it be too early 'to predict the precise organizational form which the revolutionary rise will assume in the buffer zone countries'? The transitional programme predicted it in precise terms for the Soviet Union in 1938. Furthermore, the 'Rise and Fall of Stalinism' states that the tasks in the buffer zone countries are 'in general similar to those we have in the Soviet Union.' Why then this sudden 'caution'? The truth is — let's face it — the 'too early to predict' formulation is a hypocritical cover for discarding the Trotskyist programme. The 'caution' in making predictions is discarded in the very next sentence. It reads: 'Two variants are possible .' The resolution then proceeds to make 'precise' predictions. They are precise chiefly in one sense: they leave no room for a Trotskyist party, as outlined in the following variants:

'The development of independent mass movements finding their co-ordination outside the legally existing organizations through the appearance of new political currents or the revival of Social-Democratic organizations. ...'

'The development of autonomous mass actions transmitting themselves to the native communist parties and giving rise to leftist currents capable of giving leadership to the upsurge. ...'

There is yet another variant.

'A combination of these two organizational forms can by no means be excluded.' This third variant is not explained. However, none of the three variants speak specifically of the emergence of a Trotskyist party. As we read on, furthermore, all the three variants become united into one.

Here is what the resolution says later on on this point: 'On the other hand, the more the outbreak of the revolutionary rise is retarded, the more will the young generation awaken to political life. This generation will have known no form of political organization other than the

CP, and the latter will tend to become the natural arena in which the leadership of the new revolutionary rise will develop. That is why our forces must seek to realize their tasks, which are in general similar to those we have in the Soviet Union, through an entrism tactic toward the CP, while remaining prepared to join quickly any other mass organization which may appear at the beginning of the upsurge.'

The simple syllogism that since the young generation will have known no form of political organization other than the CP, *therefore* the CP will become the natural arena in which the leadership of the new revolutionary rise will develop, can be used with equal logic to predict indefinite political stagnation in every country of the world. Fortunately, life does not follow such a pattern. The political awakening of the youth, contrary to this conservative concept will take place in struggle and revolt against the existing political forms which are tantamount to their political disenfranchisement.

A Trotskyist worker in the Soviet Union or in the buffer zone would no doubt say to the above: 'Thank you for your learned advice and expert generalship with which you marshal your forces. But you see, the workers in my factory, young as well as old, have some prejudices against the CP. They see in it the party of bureaucrats who abuse them and mistreat them, of the secret police who always snoop on them, and the army officer caste who kick them around when they are soldiers. They are suspicious of everyone with a party card — for fear he may be spying on them. They never confide in a party member because those who did had the misfortune of disappearing without a trace. There is a gulf between the workers and the CP. Wouldn't it be better to organize my own group even on a modest beginning? Such a group would be bound together by the common ties of hatred for the oppressive, treacherous bureaucracy. Opposition views among workers find an echo and protection. But to enter the party of the bureaucracy with opposition views and with illusions concerning the nature of this party would be tantamount to political and physical suicide.'

The confident statement in the founding program that 'There is but one party capable of leading the Soviet masses to insurrection' is not an abstract political slogan but a guide to action based on the Soviet reality.

It was painful to see that in its statement on the recent uprising of the East German workers, the IS raised the slogan 'democratize the CP.' The workers who rose up in a life and death struggle against the CP puppets of the Kremlin demanding their overthrow, are not told

to build their own party as the only guarantee of victory. They are given the address of the party against which they revolted.

The inflated optimism about the revolutionary wave which is spreading from country to country and continent to continent, is thus a cover for deep pessimism about the capabilities of the working class and the revolutionary vanguard. The sum total of this line can only be liquidationism. Why bother building a party when everything is becoming resolved — or will be resolved eventually — by a mounting revolutionary wave. Why be interested in Trade Union activity or have patience with backward workers when everything is ablaze with revolution. Why study Marxist classics when they do not apply to the new epoch?

The claim may be made that in exposing the liquidationist political line of the resolution, we are opposing the entrism tactic. Far from it. We believe firmly in utilizing the entrism tactic as an aid in the construction of the revolutionary party. But this is not what is involved in the document under discussion. Entrism here is merely incidental to a political line of liquidationism.

The foregoing remarks on the resolution have dealt only with two aspects: the objective situation and the role of the party. Just as wrong are other contentions in the resolution to the effect that there has been a fundamental change in the Soviet economy, removing the conditions which gave rise to the bureaucracy. Wrong are the interpretations placed on the developments in the Soviet Union following Stalin's death. All of this, plus a more precise evaluation of the Chinese revolution, will no doubt be brought out in the discussion period. Here I attempt to call to the attention of the majority comrades the deep-going revisionism in the resolution which flies directly counter to reality and counter to the traditional political conclusions of our movement, with which the authors of the resolution say they are in agreement.

My remarks are intended to start the discussion going among the leading members of the majority. Once we have reached agreement among ourselves, we must carry the discussion into the ranks. We must once again Trotskyize the Trotskyist movement.

DOCUMENT 10**Talk given to the New York majority caucus by
George Novack, August 17, 1953***Clarke's Views on Stalinism*

Revisionism comes from a masked change in the fundamental theory, methods and perspectives of the revolutionary workers' movement. It is a departure from scientific socialism in theory and in practice which derails the class struggle from a correct and consistent course. It is undertaken under pressure from alien social ideas, interests and forces. In its first stages, revisionism does not come forward in an open and forthright challenge to the Marxist position, but proceeds by stealth. It tries to insinuate its new ideas into the structure of the established ones, inserting them as levers in order to undermine and eventually overthrow the established positions. It doles out its modifications bit by bit, until it becomes bold enough to counterpose its revisions squarely to the old line.

This procedure often may appear like deliberate deceit; it is imposed upon the revisionists, however, by circumstances beyond their control. On the one hand, this procedure reflects the objective trend of revisionist thinking, which deviates from Marxism a step or so at a time — often without admitting that fact to itself, or to speak of others. On the other hand, the revisionists have to reckon at every stage with the solidly-rooted traditions of the revolutionary movement, which stand like a giant barrier athwart its path; and they must therefore resort to protective colouration. The favourite pretext is to claim that they are doing nothing but bringing Marxism up to date, modernizing it, bringing it abreast of new events unforeseen by anyone, especially the founders and great leaders of the movement. For example, in 1939-40, Shachtman counterposed to Trotsky's vigorous defence of Marxism, what he called the 'concreteness of living events.' And that is precisely how the Cochranites have been proceeding.

I propose to demonstrate this by analyzing George Clarke's article in the January-February magazine entitled, 'Stalin's Death — Stalinism's Future.' In this article we see evidence of a growing disposition to embellish Stalinism, and to eliminate the distinctive counter-positions of Trotsky. Clarke alters the history of the Soviet Union since 1923; he alters our scientific definition of Soviet society and the Stalinist bureaucracy; he paints up the role of Stalin — all of this in order to pave the way for a change in certain planks of the Trotskyist programme, especially our position on the inevitability of a political revolution through the mass uprising of the Soviet workers against the Kremlin caste. Clarke does not do this directly but in a concealed fashion, by confusions, omissions, as well as outright falsifications.

It is quite possible, of course, for a comrade now and then to strike a false note. When it is called to the comrade's attention, he will correct his error. Even though he may persist, one needn't place too much weight upon it if it is an incidental, episodic falsity. But when a leading comrade, who presumably speaks in the name of the party as executive editor of its theoretical organ, writes an article on such an occasion on such a subject, and strikes a whole series of false notes — then one detects a methodical line, and one says: This is not simply a false note, but a new tune.

This was a smuggling operation on two counts. First, Clarke didn't show the article to any of the majority comrades who had co-responsibility for the contents of the magazine. Second, we can assume that his reason for not showing the article was that, under the guise of presenting an orthodox Trotskyist analysis, he wanted to slip in views which have a different trade mark and another content. That is why it is necessary to subject his article to careful scrutiny and critical dismemberment.

Let us first contrast the two versions of the history of the Soviet Union since 1923 — the Trotskyist version and the version Clarke sketches. For us, the development of the Soviet Union in the last 30 years has been an extremely contradictory one. Politically, these 30 years have been essentially a period of counter-revolution. After the giant revolutionary leap forward, the working class was totally deprived of its power and rights. A bureaucratic caste numbering millions concentrated all power in its hands and set up a totalitarian apparatus to oppress the people and to guard its power, privileges and income.

Stalin became the agent, the head, the supreme arbiter of this completely counter-revolutionary social stratum upon which his regime directly rested. This domination of the usurping bureaucracy in the Soviet Union led to the transformation of the Communist International and the Stalinist parties into mere instruments of the bureaucracy. It led to one defeat after another of the world working class, and to the degeneration of the Stalinized international movement into a reactionary, and finally, a counter-revolutionary political force in the world labour movement, as was witnessed in Spain and during the Second World War.

However, while betraying the revolution at home and abroad and destroying the gains in the Soviet super-structure, the Stalinist bureaucracy did not do away with the fundamental economic conquests of the revolution — the nationalized property, planned economy and monopoly of foreign trade. These were maintained, developed and after the Second World War, even extended. The socialized property and productive relations were factors and forces primarily responsible for the amazing achievements registered by the Soviet Union in war and peace. These achievements were possible because of the surviving institutions of the 1917 revolution — and despite the crimes and mismanagement of the bureaucracy at home and abroad. The credit for them belongs, we have always contended, not to Stalinism, but to the revolution which the bureaucracy opposed and exploited for its selfish aims. That has always been the Trotskyist viewpoint.

Now one would have expected a Trotskyist spokesman to have presented that viewpoint as the line of an article summing up Stalin's lifetime from 1923 on. But what is the history of these years according to Clarke? For him, the Stalinist epoch was a period, not of political counter-revolution, but of 'reaction.' He does not once use the designation 'political counter-revolution' in his article summarizing the past 30 years. One would gather from his treatment that what actually took place was not a collision between the forces of the revolution and of the counter-revolution within the Soviet Union, but rather a revolution which went forward in a zig-zag way. During this period, despite twists and turns and setbacks, the revolution, according to Clarke, continued.

For example, he writes that, after a right turn from 1923 to 1929, 'The revolution turned to the left again. . . . The proletariat imposed its historic interests on this bureaucracy. . . . The Stalinist bureauc-

racy were compelled in the interests of self-preservation to again arouse the plebeians of the 20th century.' And how was this done? They summoned the working class 'to carry the major brunt of toil and sacrifice in the execution of the Five-Year Plans' and sent out the 'most hardy and courageous elements of this class' to collectivize the peasants. This aroused colossal enthusiasm among the workers during this period and the revolution spurred forward.

Now it is true that the course of leaning upon the kulaks in the struggle against the revolutionary elements of the working class was abruptly halted and turned about after 1928-1929. But, as Trotsky explained, the resultant left turn of the Stalinist bureaucracy, taken in panic, did not represent a renewal of the revolution but rather an attempt by the bureaucracy to save itself from further aggressions on the part of the openly restorationist elements. In the course of this struggle, the working class in the Soviet Union was prostrate, bound and gagged, and a new aristocracy crystallized.

The workers naturally gave support to the bureaucracy insofar as the latter proceeded against the kulaks — though giving no sanction to the methods of the bureaucracy. They were naturally drawn in, and with great enthusiasm, to the first achievements of the Five-Year Plan, since this too was an objective in their own interests. But at the same time they were completely excluded from democratic participation in the Plan, and mercilessly deprived of the necessary means to give their best to it. According to Clarke, however, this period was essentially an upsurge of the revolution.

Clarke's picture of the historical process is not one of the revolution reversed and betrayed, but the revolution impeded yet carried forward, though in a harsh, expensive and bureaucratic manner. What, according to Clarke, was the role of the bureaucracy in this process? Was it counter-revolutionary? No. According to Clarke, it was 'anti-revolutionary.' Clarke introduces here a change in the vocabulary traditional to our movement; and this change in vocabulary is part and parcel of his change in appraisal. All this is so consistent that one can only deduce that it springs from a different set of estimates of the events themselves. The bureaucracy is not the promoter of the *counter-revolution*, but in certain of its aspects and activities becomes the involuntary promoter of the revolution. This is reflected in Stalin's role, since obviously no one better represented the bureaucracy than Stalin himself.

I will quote what Clarke says on this: 'The revolution not only

survived' — that is, survived the throttling of the revolutionary wing of the Russian working class, the smashing of the left opposition and the removal of the proletariat 'as the conscious guiding force of the revolution and from all direct participation in the state and the economy' — 'it not only survived but it even succeeded in making its agent in a distorted and unexpected way the very engineer of the triumphant reaction, Stalin himself.' Note here the avoidance of that terrible word 'counter-revolution.' Stalin is no more than the engineer of the 'triumphant reaction.' Further on, Clarke states this view even more precisely: 'Stalin's role was fundamentally a barrier to the progress of the Russian Revolution.'

Now this puts everything upside down. It was not Stalin who was a 'barrier to the revolution,' but the revolution which was the greatest of barriers to Stalin. It was not the revolution which 'impressed Stalin unwillingly into its service,' but the counter-revolution which willingly impressed him into its its service. At least this is the way Trotsky explained it to us. It was precisely the living forces of the revolution, its conquests as embodied in the structure of the Soviet Union itself and the consciousness of the people which stood as the barrier to the political counter-revolution embodied in the bureaucracy and directed by Stalin as its spearhead.

Let us listen further to Clarke. The achievements of the Russian Revolution in the post-Lenin era 'were consequently a victory over Stalin's opportunism.' Over Stalin's 'opportunism'!! — not over his counter-revolution. 'It was not he who led the revolution (there is a real discovery!) but the revolution which impressed him unwillingly into its service, at tremendous cost to itself.' Such a description could by and large be applied to a Tito who did, in an opportunistic and empirical fashion, so lead the Yugoslav revolution. We say: 'the revolution caught up Tito and his party and his movement and projected them forward.' But that was not true of Stalin. He led the counter-revolution, not only in relation to the Soviet Union, but later in relation to Yugoslavia itself.

For Clarke, Stalin appears to have played a political role similar to his military role in the Second World War. He wasn't a volunteer of the revolution but its conscripted Marshal drawn into it willy-nilly. Just as he led the Soviet Union to victory in the war, though in a bureaucratic and reactionary way, so, despite zig-zags and in a bureaucratic and reactionary way, he was pulled along with the revolution which crawled forward during his period of rule.

Confusion is an indispensable weapon of revisionism. As a matter of fact, we can say that with the revisionists confusion is almost an art. In Clarke's article you find this art displayed. Take the term 'regime,' for example. Clarke uses the word in two different and opposing ways. At one point, he uses it to mean the *political* regime, that is, the political superstructure; at another point, the term refers to the *social* regime. He says, for instance, that it is a 'totally false conception that Stalin like other dictators in the past was the keystone of the Soviet regime.' Now in one sense that is true; but in another sense, it is not true. Stalin was certainly not the keystone of the *economic* regime in the USSR, that is, the social foundation. But on the other hand, he *was* the centre of the bonapartist dictatorship which is the governing system in the Soviet Union. But this dictatorship rests upon foundations of a completely contradictory character; a social regime, on the one hand, which issued from the October Revolution, and a political regime, on the other hand, which issued from a counter-revolution against the achievements of the revolution. Yet at one point Clarke compares the Stalin regime with Lenin's regime and with the post-Stalin regime, and one would therefore naturally assume that by 'regime' he means simply *political* regime. At another time he uses the term in comparing Stalin's regime with Cromwell's regime, as though he were talking about the social foundations of the regime.

Now this again is not accidental. By using the word in two different senses and not making it clear that he is doing so, he blurs over and in fact erases the fundamental and growing conflict between the social foundations of the regime and the totalitarian rulership which is essentially opposed to it. As you examine these examples of Clarke's method, it becomes increasingly clear that confusion is the objective result if not its conscious aim. The result of Clarke's blurring of the characterization of the political regime, is that it becomes not counter-revolutionary but 'reactionary' and 'anti-revolutionary'; it is no longer a more or less conscious agent of counter-revolution, but its leaders become converted into objective agents of the revolution.

This leads Clarke to revise our traditional concepts of the social regime itself. He characterizes the Soviet economy as 'nationalized in form, socialist in essence.' In addition, he states that the methods of planning now in force are 'socialist methods.' Comrades who have studied *The Revolution Betrayed* know that Trotsky polemicized against the Stalinists on this very point. Trotsky explained that Soviet society was a transitional system halfway between capitalism and

socialism, and marked by all kinds of contradictions. In its foundations there were the elements necessary for a socialist society: on the other hand, in the superstructure and in Soviet society itself there were forces and tendencies which were directly anti-socialist. He explained that it was necessary to take all of these into account in estimating the real character and direction of development of the Soviet Union. He said that the methods of planning of the bureaucracy were not at all those which would be proper to a democratic workers' government or to a socialist society; that these methods of planning were carried on for the benefit of the bureaucracy in the first place, even though in the last analysis the forces of production in the Soviet Union experienced a great development thanks to their nationalized character. The Soviet economy, he explained, represents a higher system of property and production relations; but in order for the methods of planning to be genuinely socialist in tendency, they would have to be under democratic control and with the direct participation of the producing and consuming masses themselves.

One would have expected that, in a review of 30 years of Stalinist rule, Clarke would give a proper characterization of Stalinism. But in his article he characterizes Stalinism solely as 'a philosophy of conservatism and defeatism,' 'the rationalization of a temporary phenomenon,' and so forth. That is, he gives us an ideological definition. He includes a political characterization, up to a certain point, when he indicates some of the historical circumstances which formed the Stalinist bureaucracy. But what he leaves out are the *material interests* of the Soviet bureaucracy, the power and income of a social stratum which numbered, according to Trotsky's figures when he wrote *The Revolution Betrayed*, about 25 million people who benefitted from the privileges of the labour aristocrats and bureaucrats. The material interests of this enormous bureaucracy find their political and ideological expression through Stalinism, and are projected internationally through all its agencies. But it is precisely this material content of Stalinism that fades away in Clarke's definition.

I could go into several other deficiencies in the article, but I want now to point out the function which these revisions perform. They are all links in a chain. The revision of Soviet history, of the nature of Soviet economy, of the Stalinist methods of planning, of the nature of the Stalinist bureaucracy and Stalin's role — all these are necessary steps leading up to Clarke's specific political conclusions. According to Clarke, the revolution is once more moving to the left within the

Soviet Union. This process has been gathering momentum since 1943. It was already visible at the 19th Congress of the Communist Party. It has been accelerated considerably since Stalin's death. (In Clarke's discussion article, 'Shake-up in the Kremlin,' in the latest magazine, he says: 'Writing about events since Stalin's death a scant four months ago is almost like describing a scene from a fast-moving train.' One comrade remarked that this is an optical illusion — Clarke is moving away so fast from Trotskyist positions that he confuses his own motion with movement to the left on the part of the Stalinist bureaucracy.)

But to return to Clarke's description of the movement of the Stalinist bureaucracy. Today, he says, as has happened on several occasions in the past, the momentum of the revolutionary upsurge is dragging the bureaucracy along with it, though the bureaucracy resists the pressure, either in whole or in part. The film of history, he says, has reversed its direction and 'is now unwinding toward socialist democracy in the USSR.' Now we do not deny, thanks to all the revolutionary developments which issued out of the Second World War and its aftermath, that this is the underlying and fundamental direction of development and that it has been gaining momentum, that is to say, that the fundamental positions of Stalinism and the Stalinist bureaucracy are being undermined on a world scale and, in part, within the Soviet Union itself.

But the question to be asked and answered is: How is the destruction of the bureaucracy going to come about? What is our fundamental line on that? We say that the overthrow of Stalinism and of its bearers, the Soviet bureaucracy, can and will occur only through an uprising of the Soviet workers against the totalitarian regime, the smashing and overthrow of this regime by the workers, and by a renovated workers democracy.

Clarke offers a different set of ideas and perspectives. In his article, 'Stalin's Role — Stalinism's Future,' he projected them openly for the first time. He raised there the possibility of three variants for the process of the downfall of Stalinism. I would like to read the salient paragraph. 'Will the process take the form of a violent upheaval against the bureaucratic rule in the USSR? Or will concessions to the masses and sharing of power — as was the long course in the English bourgeois revolution in the political relationship between the rising bourgeoisie and the declining nobility — gradually undermine the base of the bureaucracy? Or will the evolution be a combination of

both forms? That we cannot now foresee. *But that this process means not the end of socialism, but its great renaissance — that is certain.*'

Here you have three possibilities: (1) a violent upheaval against bureaucratic rule in the USSR; (2) the reform of the bureaucracy, its 'sharing of power' with the Soviet people; and (3) a combination of both forms. I am at a loss, as I said before to deal with the third variant — except to point out the intrinsic absurdity of combining the mutually exclusive perspectives and programmes of the *reform* of the bureaucracy with its revolutionary *overthrow*. We understand that in the first stages of the gathering of forces of the new revolution there can be **concessions and modifications in the Soviet set up** produced by shifts in the relations between the masses and the bureaucracy, prior to the decisive overthrow of the bureaucracy. But how you can take two completely opposed forms of development and put them together into a single reality — that I will leave to Clarke to explain.

But I want to concentrate here on the two counter-positions, namely, the perspective of political revolution and the perspective of reform. In this article Clarke doesn't give anything to substantiate the possibility of a reform except a historical parallel in the 'Glorious Revolution' of 1688-89 in England. This was a political revolution, to be sure, but of a special bourgeois type. The government of James II was overthrown and replaced by the government of William III by means of an armed struggle. William landed on England with a certain number of forces and there were a few battles, but not a long civil war or convulsive social upheaval like the 'Great Rebellion.' But the social essence of the revolution was revealed in its outcome: an agreement between the ruling bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisified nobility, in which the latter were exclusively subordinated to the former and thereupon became the direct agency of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie governed through Parliament, which was thereby elevated to the political supremacy it has held ever since. This was a compact between two propertied classes, directed against the masses — similar to the compact, for example, between the Southern planters and the Northern bourgeoisie in establishing the US constitution of 1788-89 against the masses of the people. It was precisely because there were common material bonds of property and privilege, that these two classes could share the power, with the dominant class, the bourgeoisie, giving a few concessions to the other in order to arrive at a constitutional compromise.

We must now ask: How does this resemble the relations between

bureaucrats, as shown by its panicky reactions. It couldn't even rely upon its own police forces. What saved the regime? Was it American imperialism? No. Was it the lack of strength within the East German workers? No. They had the forces to get rid of the regime. *The sole objective factor which prevented the political revolution of the East German workers from being victorious was the presence of the occupying forces of the Kremlin.*

It is precisely that fact which constituted the counter-revolutionary role and effect of Stalinism in East Germany. Again a Trotskyist had to ask himself: Even if the aim of the working class was limited to democratizing East Germany, how could that have been done without getting rid of *all* the agencies of the Kremlin bureaucracy? Not only the Grotewohl regime; not only its bureaucratically dominated Communist Party; but above all, its main instrument of force, the Soviet troops and tanks in that territory. Clarke, however, sets out to give quite the opposite impression.

Finally, in neither of these two latest articles — and this is the other side of his position — does he bring forward the inescapable necessity of the mass uprising to get rid of the Kremlin bureaucracy. It is for that reason that we decided to open a public discussion with Clarke and the Cochranites in the March-April issue of the magazine. We are publishing a letter by Comrade Stein challenging two of the main errors in the January-February article; a long editorial note by the editors — that is, the majority editors — in which we solidarize ourselves with Comrade Stein's criticisms; and a statement disassociating ourselves from Clarke's analysis, and announcing for the next issue an article which will present our estimate of recent events in the Soviet Union and East Germany. From there we propose to take the discussion throughout the party and the world movement.

DOCUMENT 11

Memorandum of the SWP National Committee on *The Rise and Decline of Stalinism*, October 5, 1953

The resolution on 'The Rise and Decline of Stalinism' sets out to bring up-to-date the Trotskyist appraisal of the Soviet Union, the Kremlin bureaucracy and the Stalinist world movement especially in the light of the events following Stalin's death. However, its method of analysis misrepresents the real state of affairs and leads to political conclusions diverging from our traditional views.

I. Three Periods of the World Revolution

This can be seen, first of all, in its arbitrary manner of breaking up world historical developments since 1917 into three main periods: the period of revolutionary rise from 1917 to 1923; the period of revolutionary ebb from 1923-43; and the period of revolutionary resurgence on a higher level since 1943. This division provides the fundamental framework for the resolution and serves as the starting point for a revision of our conceptions on the nature and role of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

According to the resolution, the third period has created a relationship of class forces on a world scale and in the Soviet Union which requires a new appraisal and approach to Stalinism. This period has already had two phases. The years from 1943 to 1947 represent a transition from the second to the third period, partaking of the features of both.

This was the time when the Soviet bureaucracy appeared to reach the peak of its power. The world revolutionary rise was still not powerful enough to permit the bypassing and engulfing of Stalinism. The Kremlin and its agencies were able to restrict and control the revolution, except for Yugoslavia. The deals with imperialism, the right turns, the betrayals of the revolution continued the former era; the Yugoslav revolution prefigured the new.

But since 1947 the old equilibria have been definitively broken and cannot be regained. The new international revolutionary rise disrupted the equilibrium between the world working class and imperialism. The aggravation of the crisis of the capitalist system and the crushing supremacy of American imperialism has upset the equilibrium between the different imperialist powers. These international changes combined with the domestic changes have broken the equilibrium of social forces in the Soviet Union and undermined the objective foundations of the ruling caste.

The victory of the Chinese revolution marked the turning point in this world transformation and ushered in a new and higher stage, 'basically marked by a relation of international forces favourable to the revolution and evolving on a global scale more and more favourably for the revolution. The revolutionary wave spreads from country to country, from continent to continent. It has recently reached the Soviet Union itself and the buffer zone.'

This revolutionary wave of global dimensions and unlimited duration, will continue to mount higher, despite minor refluxes, up to the war. The war itself 'will coincide not with an ebb but with a new leap forward of the world revolution.' (p.19) This will continue until the end of the Third World War. Nothing can long withstand this all-engulfing revolutionary torrent. It will sweep all established forces into its vortex; both imperialism and Stalinism will crack up and perish in the process. The victory of the world revolution is henceforth assured. Such is the line of development projected in the resolution.

If it is really so, it will have to be recognized that we have entered upon a qualitatively different epoch in which all previous political values would have to be reevaluated. The political ideas, revolutionary strategy and organizational perspectives of the vanguard would have to be revised to bring them into line with the qualitatively transformed world reality and its main trends of development.

The resolution undertakes to do this in connection with Stalinism and draws some extremely far-reaching conclusions in respect to it. Let us summarize them.

II. Changes in Stalinism

The fundamental historical, world and national conditions for Stalinism have disappeared. It has irretrievably entered upon its period of decline.

1. The dynamic of the world relationship of forces evolving favourably to the revolution has now struck the Soviet Union, undermined the positions of the bureaucracy, upset its stability and already promoted the disintegration of Stalinism in a number of unforeseen ways.

2. 'The objective foundations of the dictatorship are in the process of rapidly disappearing.' The relationship of forces between the Bonapartist bureaucracy and the masses is shifting in favour of the latter. The pressures exerted by these changing conditions and by the demands of the masses is more and more determining the Kremlin's course and policies.

3. The post-Stalin regime is no longer able to rule as before; it is instead obliged to liberalize itself and make more and more concessions to save its rule. This tends toward the liquidation of the heritage of Stalinism.

4. These developments release centrifugal forces which differentiate and split up the ruling caste.

5. The changes in the Soviet Union since Stalin's death constitute the relaxation of the Kremlin's brake upon the Communist parties. Its tight hold over the buffer countries and upon the Communist parties in capitalist countries is being loosened. These are developing new relations with the Kremlin in the direction of greater independence from it while oppositional ideas and anti-Stalinist tendencies more and more manifest themselves.

6. 'Caught between the imperialist threat and the colonial revolution, the Soviet bureaucracy found itself obliged to ally itself with the second against the first.' This enforced alliance with the colonial revolution is mediated through Mao's regime with whom it must share direction of Asian Communism.

7. The Kremlin is less and less able to conclude deals with imperialism at the expense of the revolution. Its room for manoeuvres with imperialism and against the revolution is diminishing all the time. 'This new situation restricts more and more the capacity of counter-revolutionary manoeuvres by the bureaucracy.' Not only are its capacities for sell-outs decreasing, despite its intentions, but the practical effects of its diplomatic manoeuvres and Popular-Front experiments with certain sections of the colonial bourgeoisie are more and more restricted and ephemeral. Moreover, 'the revolutionary tide which the Soviet bureaucracy is no longer capable of smashing and arresting is even being nourished by the methods of self-defence applied by the bureaucracy. . . .'

8. The Kremlin's capacity for repressive measures likewise grows

more restricted. It is less able to proceed to repressions and purges at home, or to stamp out opposition in the buffer countries, because of the drastic shift in the relation of forces.

9. Just as the bureaucracy must liberalize its dictatorship, so the Communist parties, despite right oscillations here and there and now and then, tend to radicalize their policies. This is the dominant tendency. In countries where the CPs are a majority in the working class, they can under pressure of the masses be led to project a revolutionary orientation counter to the Kremlin's directives.

III. To What Degree Have the Fundamental Conditions for Stalinism Disappeared?

To arrive at these far-reaching conclusions on Stalinism the resolution has to present a picture of the world situation which is not in accord with reality and to take partial and limited changes for decisive and fundamental ones. Thus, the resolution states on Page 3: 'The fundamental conditions under which the Soviet bureaucracy and its tight hold over the Communist Parties developed, namely, the ebb of the revolution, the isolation of the Soviet Union, and the backward conditions of its economy — these conditions have disappeared.'

Let us examine the post-war world and see to what degree these sweeping assertions conform to the real state of affairs. We are here dealing with matters of fact. Let us analyze each one of these three fundamental conditions to see to what extent they have vanished.

1. The Development of the World Revolution

The international revolution has undoubtedly experienced a considerable resurgence since 1943. The Second World War generated a revolutionary wave of greater scope, intensity and persistence than the First World War. The Soviet victory over Nazism, the revolutionary victories in Yugoslavia and China, the extension of nationalized property into the buffer states by bureaucratic-military means, the spread of the colonial revolution have all dealt hard blows to world capitalism and enormously strengthened the anti-capitalist camp.

However, this trend in the world situation has been combined and criss-crossed with another. The immense revolutionary movement which has produced such transformations in Eastern and Central Europe and in Asia, came to grief in Western Europe during this very

same period. Through its alliance with the Allied imperialists, the Soviet bureaucracy was chiefly responsible for this reversal and betrayal of the European revolution.

This has generated a series of opposite effects in the unfoldment of the world revolution. The proletarian offensive was curbed, the working class became weaker, Western European capitalism was rescued, and became relatively stabilized for a period of years. This has enabled the imperialist counter-revolution directed by the US to take hold of these countries and use them as drill grounds and springboards for its war preparations and prospective attacks upon the anti-capitalist countries and revolutionary forces.

Thus the revolutionary process since World War II has experienced an uneven and contradictory development. While the revolution moved forward in a number of backward countries, triumphed in Yugoslavia and China, it has undergone set-backs in a number of the more advanced countries. The victories for the revolution represent gains for the working class and oppressed peoples. But they must be considered in connection with the recession of the revolution in Western Europe and its effects in order to arrive at a more balanced and accurate reckoning of the progress of the revolution.

Had the revolution succeeded in one or more of the highly developed industrial countries, from Germany to Italy, along with these victories in certain backward countries, that would have sealed the fate of capitalism in Europe and Asia and pressed the Soviet bureaucracy to the wall.

The Kremlin is well aware of the threat to its dominance implicit in the European revolution. That motivated its efforts to block and crush that development which continues up to this very day (French General Strike).

The prevention of an independent socialist workers power arising in Western Europe is an indispensable condition for preserving the rule of the Soviet bureaucracy. The Kremlin can, up to a certain point, tolerate and manoeuvre with revolutions in the colonies and the backward countries. But it dreads the extension of the proletarian revolution into Western Europe because that means the sentence of death for it.

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 great 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 its 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.

2. The Isolation of the Soviet Union

This first factor is directly connected with the second: the encirclement of the Soviet Union by world imperialism. The post-war developments certainly succeeded in loosening and unsettling the imperialist encirclement to a certain extent and breaking through the previous tight isolation of the Soviet Union. The linking together of the countries from the Elbe to the Pacific, however much they may be bureaucratically governed and oppressed, is a strong bulwark to the USSR. But here, too, it is necessary to preserve essential proportions.

The failure of the revolution to break through to victory in Western Europe, which would have radically altered the balance of class forces throughout Europe and Asia, has permitted imperialism to reassert its encirclement and intensify its pressures against the Soviet Union on all planes.

This isolation is felt in the economic, political, diplomatic and military fields in varying degrees.

Despite all their achievements, the industrial capacities of the states in the Soviet bloc is far below that of the capitalist states. This unfavourable balance could be rectified only with the inclusion of the industrial complex of Western Europe. But this is now cut off in large part by the economic blockade which is an element in the isolation of the SU.

The moves being made by the Kremlin to curry favour with the bourgeois governments of France and Italy, and its manoeuvres

around the German question, testify to its attempts to overcome its isolation.

Instead of attracting workers in the advanced countries, the Kremlin's policy helps to repel them and thus aggravates the social isolation of the SU from the class forces which alone can guarantee its defence.

Finally, the US is engaged in forging a military ring around the periphery of the Kremlin-dominated territories, and exerts unremitting pressures from all directions upon it.

The Soviet bureaucracy must reckon with this at all times both in its domestic and foreign policies. The looming menace of A-bomb attack determines its plan of production. This takes first place in the strategical plans of the Soviet General Staff. The menace of imperialist encirclement and aggression determines the policies of those Communist parties under the Kremlin's control.

How, then, can it be so unqualifiedly asserted in the resolution that the isolation of the SU 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 peoples. The Soviet workers, with memories still fresh of the last war, fear the outbreak of a new one. This is still a potent factor in restraining them from open conflict with the bureaucracy for fear of aiding imperialism. Thus, the very encirclement of the SU which the policies of the Kremlin serve to sustain, and even augment, remains one of the factors in maintaining its grip upon power.

There is still another factor to be considered. Before World War II the Soviet bureaucracy could and did manoeuvre between two opposing blocs of capitalist powers. Now it confronts a combine of imperialist powers being openly mobilized against the Soviet Union. While the Soviet people feel the greater power of numbers in the anti-capitalist states, this is partially offset by their fear of the centralization of forces in the opposing class camp.

3. The Development of Soviet Economy

Marked advances have been made in Soviet economy, especially since 1947. However these have been extremely uneven. Agriculture, as Khrushchev has just admitted, lags far behind industry, far behind the needs of the mass of the Soviet people.

Soviet advances have led to an improvement in the living conditions of its citizens, especially in urban centres. They have still greater

hopes and expectations of betterment in their material conditions, which the post-Stalin regime has had to take into account. The new rulers have made certain concessions in the sphere of consumption and promised still more.

But the question at issue is this: has there been so drastic a change in the Soviet economy as to eliminate the objective material basis for the bureaucracy? That would entail the production of consumers' goods and food in sufficient abundance to guarantee necessities to everyone, satisfy the demands of the working people, and thus eliminate any need for bureaucratic arbiters to decide the distribution of the available products.

Has Soviet economy, with all its indubitable successes, reached that point, or even approached it? The citing of general production figures and their global comparison with those of other countries will not help here. The decisive point is not how much more is being produced than before, but is enough being produced now to take care of the basic demands of the people?

The facts are that the rise in the economy has sufficed to provide a minimum for most workers, to eliminate famine conditions, and ease some economic tensions in the sphere of consumption. But side by side with the general improvement, there have been considerable increases in consumption for the more favoured layers. From the aristocrats of labour, up to the tops of the bureaucracy there is an inclination to grasp for more. Malenkov is compelled to give a bit more bread and other articles to the masses. But at the same time the Kremlin makes sure to provide more new cars, refrigerators, television sets, etc. which are exclusively within the reach of the upper layers of Soviet society.

All this accentuates the contradiction between the rulers and the ruled, heightens social inequalities, and makes the situation more intolerable to the workers. There is a sharpening conflict between the working class growing in numbers and skills and the bureaucratic guardians of privilege.

The economic and cultural backwardness is in the process of being overcome. But to assert that this has already taken place is to falsify the real state of Soviet economy today.

This does not at all mean that the bureaucracy can or will perpetuate itself in power indefinitely. That depends upon further developments of the world revolution which can definitively remove the hostile pressures of world imperialism, and not simply temporar-

ily ease them, and overcome the scarcity of consumers goods by placing the industrial resources of more advanced countries at the disposal of Soviet economy. It depends even more upon the development of the deepening conflict between the bureaucracy and the masses. The Soviet people need not wait for the elimination of the economic roots of the totalitarian bureaucracy in order to embark upon a mortal struggle against it. As Trotsky pointed out, the social conflict can explode into political revolution as a result of the intensification of antagonisms to the boiling point. 'Economic contradictions produce social antagonisms, which in turn develop their own logic, not awaiting the further growth of the productive forces.' (*Revolution Betrayed*, p.48).

Thus a sober analysis of the world situation and its development during the past decade discloses that the three major objective factors responsible for the rise of the Soviet bureaucracy have not been changed in a fundamental sense but only to a certain extent. The Kremlin bureaucracy has to operate today under new but not decisively different circumstances. Its further life-span will depend upon the struggle of the living forces in the world arena and in the Soviet Union over the next period in which the ideas and forces of Trotskyism will play their part.

IV. The New Relations and Role of the Soviet Bureaucracy

Proceeding from its wrong and one-sided estimation of the fundamental conditions in which the bureaucracy finds itself, the resolution says that the bureaucracy has acquired such new relations with imperialism, the world working class, the colonial revolution, the buffer countries and its own people that these substantially change its policies and activities and their results. The Soviet bureaucracy is objectively playing a different role than in its past.

a. The Kremlin, Imperialism and the World Revolution

This is purportedly to be seen in respect to imperialism. The resolution correctly affirms that 'the global balance of the Soviet bureaucracy's international policy is a reformist one, because the bureaucracy aims not to overthrow world capitalism, but simply to maintain the framework of the status quo.' It has played this role of an agency of imperialism not only from 1923 to 1943 but from 1943 to the

present. 'It is more correct than ever to say today that the domination of imperialism subsists over half of the globe only thanks to the role played by the bureaucracy and its agencies.'

However, the resolution contends, the victory of the Chinese revolution 'marked the opening of a new phase in the world situation in which the Soviet bureaucracy finds itself.' (p.10) This new situation has the following features. It 'restricts more and more the capacity of counter-revolutionary manoeuvres by the bureaucracy.' And 'the *practical effects* of these attempts (to utilize the inter-imperialist contradictions, to gain the support of certain bourgeoisies in colonial and semi-colonial countries, to arrive at a temporary and partial agreement with imperialism) become more and more limited and ephemeral ...'

The actual relations between the bureaucracy and imperialism are highly contradictory. On one hand, the Kremlin has to take the necessary measures to safeguard its own positions and domain from imperialist penetration, aggressions and attack.

But the policies and methods it employs to achieve this end serve to aid imperialism and weaken and discourage the working masses, thereby undermining the defence of the anti-capitalist countries and the Soviet Union.

Neither the counter-revolutionary imperialists nor the revolutionary forces fundamentally aim to preserve the existing state of affairs. Both of these irreconcilable antagonists, for opposing reasons, are driving toward a showdown which brings them into ever-sharper collision.

Moscow comes forward in this contest of class forces as the foremost defender of the international status quo, and therewith a key conservatizing factor in the world situation. It does not aim to aid the revolution or to overthrow imperialist rule. It is anxious to maintain the present division of the world between its own power and that of imperialism and to arrive at a new deal on that basis.

This is consciously formulated in the conception of 'peaceful co-existence between socialism and capitalism' repeated by the new Kremlin leaders and echoed by the Stalinist parties. This is more than a theory; it provides the main guiding line of an active policy which predominates the diplomacy of the Kremlin and the conduct of its agencies.

The Kremlin exerts its utmost influence to preserve even the prevailing cold war status quo as a lesser evil. It aims to uphold this by acting simultaneously on two fronts: against further aggressions by

imperialists on the one side and against any disruption of the present equilibrium by eruptions and expansion of the revolutionary movement. For fear of provoking retaliation from imperialism and becoming involved directly in war, the bureaucracy will hamstring revolutions and permit them to bleed to death. The cases of North Korea, Iran, and Malaya are instructive in this respect.

Moscow gave the North Koreans supplies enough to drag out the war but not enough to win, even when its armies were sweeping the invaders toward the sea. Whereas Washington did not hesitate to intervene with full force and openly in Korea, Moscow stayed discreetly within its own preserve. Then when MacArthur approached the Yalu, the Chinese were forced to enter the war even though they had just come out of a prolonged civil war. The narrow caste interests and protective fears of the Soviet rulers obliged the Asian revolutionists to bear the brunt of the anti-imperialist fight.

As the pressures from imperialism mount, the Kremlin's disposition is to gain time for itself at the expense of the world working class and the struggles of the colonial peoples. This explains the conduct of the Tudeh Party in Iran which refrained from launching a fight for power at the peak of its mass support and thereby permitted the military coup d'etat which overthrew Mossadegh and restored the Shah. The Kremlin's anxiety to prevent the upsetting of the equilibrium in this sensitive spot and avert the risk of precipitating war accounted for this triumph of the counter-revolution in Iran.

The supposition that the cold war between Western imperialism and the Soviet Union plus the mounting pressures of the mass movement restrains or prevents the bureaucracy from committing deadly treachery is not confirmed by recent events. Quite the contrary. The French CP's behaviour in the August 1953 General Strike shows how the Kremlin's agents will let a revolutionary opportunity pass by and ruin it. The Kremlin can stab the workers in the back, not only when it is in open alliance with the imperialists, but also when it is seeking an alliance with them. The treachery may be more devious but its effects are as real and disastrous.

The inevitable outcome of all this manoeuvring with imperialism and against the revolution will be the same as before the Second World War. The manoeuvres will not avert the war. But the imperialists will be helped to strengthen their positions and make advances while the revolution is crippled and the workers are thrust back and disoriented. Unless the workers in the advanced capitalist countries undertake a revolutionary offensive of powerful proportions, the

imperialists will be enabled to unleash the war at a time and under conditions most advantageous for them.

The bureaucracy hates and fears the world revolution and strives to head it off, restrict, control, subvert and strangle it. But it is not omnipotent. It cannot do what it wants, in the way it wants, when it wants.

But this does not mean that the Kremlin has abated its hostility toward the world revolution or altered its treacherous attitude toward it. This can be seen even in the victories of the revolution in Yugoslavia and China. These occurred against the Kremlin's advice and in defiance of it. The Kremlin was obliged to accommodate itself to the accomplished fact.

The limits to this accommodation depend upon how closely the development of the revolutions touches its most vital interests. The Kremlin went along with the Yugoslav revolution up to the point where Yugoslav influence over the Balkan countries threatened to create an alternative pole of attraction. Then the Kremlin turned mercilessly upon it.

To what degree can it be maintained, as the resolution does, that the Kremlin is now obliged to ally itself with the colonial revolution against imperialism? It has had to back up China and North Korea up to a point. The victories for the revolution in Asia have so far been no direct threat to the Kremlin's domination, even though it has had to acquiesce in the co-direction of the Asian Communist movement with Mao. On the whole they have worked to the immediate advantage of the Kremlin. China has broken the imperialist encirclement in the Far East and kept the US forces tangled in the Korean war. This drained China and tied up the United States at minimum cost to Moscow.

So long as the Kremlin can use this or that sector of the colonial movement for its own ends, it will do so. But it remains a very perfidious ally in the best circumstances. It has already been pointed out that it deliberately withheld military deliveries that could enable the North Koreans to win. The current seven-year civil war in Indo-China stems back to the Stalinist coalition politics in 1945-46 which handed French imperialism the positions for fighting the national independence movement. Most recently, the Kremlin sabotaged the revolution in Iran.

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 arrive at such agreements have much more than 'limited and ephemeral' practical effects. Although the maneuvers have not brought a deal, they 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. For example, the Kremlin's whole post-war policy toward Germany, the key country in Europe (its participation in the division, its regime over East Germany, its diplomatic maneuvers regarding West Germany), aid capitalist reaction and facilitate the imperialist objectives. Can the effects of its attitude toward this one country be classified as 'limited' and 'ephemeral' whether these are assessed from the angle of the European revolution, the German workers, the march toward war or the defence of the anti-capitalist states?

In any event, to minimize the results of the Kremlin's counter-revolutionary actions in this manner is no way to educate the vanguard and alert them to the perfidies of the Stalinists. It runs counter to our task of inducing the workers to break politically with Stalinism and discard their illusions about it.

The resolution says on page 20: 'the revolutionary tide which the Soviet bureaucracy is no longer capable of smashing and arresting is even being nourished by the methods of self-defense applied by the bureaucracy. . . .' Both parts of this statement are one-sided and misleading. 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 has succeeded in turning the revolutionary tide in the opposite direction. This has influenced the relationship of forces for an entire period.

Nor do its 'methods of self-defense' necessarily 'nourish' 'the revolutionary tide,' even where the revolution has come to power. The Kremlin's 'method of self-defense' drove Yugoslavia into the embrace of imperialism and has made China more and more dependent economically upon it. It is not clear just what is specifically meant by 'methods of self-defense' which can nourish the revolutionary tide. Does that refer to supplying arms to China and North Korea? Or to its action in defense of the Soviet Union in case of attack?

But even in these instances 'its methods of self-defense' do not in all respects coincide with the self-defense of the workers' movement and can even go counter to it.

We have always recognized that when the bureaucracy defends the Soviet Union against imperialist attack, it can under certain conditions give an impulse to revolutionary struggles in capitalist countries. It will be obliged to do this still more in the event of the Third World War. But now when it is seeking a modus vivendi with imperialism or trying to create rifts amongst the capitalist nations its 'methods of self-defense' do far more to drain than to swell the revolutionary wave.

In several places there is the implication that the bureaucracy, faced with the war danger, will have to be more tolerant of independent revolutionary developments and refrain from proceeding against them. For example, the resolution says that the Kremlin's preparation for World War II 'was accompanied by a halt of mass purges.' Actually the purges were part of Stalin's preparations for war. He aimed to eliminate all portentous centers of opposition to the regime. The beheading of the Soviet General Staff, which led to the military fiasco in Finland, showed to what lengths the bureaucracy can go in preventive measures against even potentially independent forces precisely when war loomed.

Later, the resolution attempts to explain the campaign against Yugoslavia on the ground that 'it was above all able to indulge in such a counter-revolutionary attitude because the preparations for the capitalist war were only in their preliminary stages . . .,' etc. This will not hold water. The break took place at a time of high tension between the USSR and the capitalist world. But the overriding caste interests of the Kremlin took precedence over the practical needs of defending the USSR although that meant alienating the one country with morale and armed forces reliable and powerful enough to furnish genuine aid for that purpose.

V. The Significance of the Events Since Stalin's Death

The Kremlin regime has been characterized by our movement as a regime of crisis. The parasitism of the bureaucratic caste continuously conflicts with the productive relations established by the October Revolution. As the product of a political counter-revolution arising from the delay of the world revolution and the backwardness of

Russian economy and culture, the totalitarian bureaucracy could maintain its power only by repressive measures directed against the Soviet masses. The extension of the Kremlin's rule over the buffer zone countries, the Yugoslav and Chinese revolutions, and the growth of Soviet economy and culture have confronted the bureaucracy with many new acute problems. As a result the objective factors for a mass uprising against the bureaucratic power are ripening in the Soviet Union. The working class especially, which has grown considerably in numbers, culture, skill, and social power, is becoming impatient with insistent demands for continual exertions and sacrifices, enforced by the bureaucratic apparatus and its agencies. The privileges of the bureaucracy appear ever more monstrous, unjustified and intolerable in their eyes.

The bureaucracy is extremely sensitive to this developing danger. The new rulers face on a higher level, and under different and more difficult circumstances, the resistance and resentment of the masses against the relentless pressures exerted upon them which Stalin periodically encountered. Stalin coped with these situations not by purges alone. He resorted also to temporary relaxations and propaganda campaigns centered around promises of concessions, improved living conditions, and a happier life. As Trotsky pointed out, 'Stalin is compelled from time to time to take the side of 'the people' against the bureaucracy — of course, with its tacit consent.' (*Revolution Betrayed*, p.271)

Stalin's death unquestionably released a flood of hope among the people that with the death of the dictator they would get a new deal. The bureaucracy had the twofold problem of reestablishing the hierarchy of the top command, while preventing the masses from intervening in the situation with their own demands and independent actions. The inheritors of power hastened to create the impression that the masses would get a genuine new deal as a gift from the top. They promised a series of political and economic concessions: a broad amnesty, the revision of the criminal code in 30 days, no more purges, more consumers' goods, etc.

It would seem that the political concessions would be easiest to make since, unlike improved living conditions, they do not require large-scale economic reorganizations. However, these have yet to materialize. There has been another large reduction in prices, the fifth since the war. But a genuine improvement in living standards first necessitates a drastic readjustment of the economy, and above all, a

tremendous increase in agricultural production, which has remained stagnant for many years.

The bureaucracy is aiming to do this by raising the incentives of the individual peasant and the well-to-do members of the collectives.

At the same time the bureaucracy had to decide quickly who would assume the role of principal arbiter and purger-in-chief to remove all ambiguity on that score and forestall any moves by the masses to take advantage of fissures in the bureaucratic apparatus. This was the meaning of Beria's downfall which has been followed by a purge of his associates in the various Republics.

These developments proved that the bureaucracy cannot devise new methods of rule. It may make concessions but must maintain intact at all times the mechanism of repression which guarantees its regime. Between the totalitarian methods of the bureaucracy and the democratic methods of working-class power there will be no intermediate methods of rule. A new power and new methods of rule can come into being only through forces outside the bureaucracy and in opposition to it, through the overthrow of Bonapartist rule by the masses.

The Trotskyists base their revolutionary perspectives upon the maturing contradictions between the bureaucratic set-up and the working masses which will lead the latter toward a forthright challenge to the totalitarian dictatorship. The East German events prefigure the developments within the Soviet Union in this respect. We must analyze the concessions in the light of the nature and position of the Stalinist bureaucracy and the developing contradictions within Soviet society.

The resolution, however, exaggerates the changes in the objective situation, endowing them with an automatic propulsion which obliges the bureaucracy to liberalize itself, introduce new methods of rule, liquidate the heritage of Stalinism, suppress its most hideous and characteristic features, and deliver more and more concessions.

The resolution states: 'That regime (Malenkov's) can now maintain itself only by suppressing — temporarily or definitively — the most hideous aspects, that is to say, the most characteristic ones of the regime.' It does not specify which one of these 'hideous aspects' has been eliminated or is about to be. The privileges? The police regime? The relentless squeeze on the workers in production? The national oppression? Concentration camps? Purges? The implication is that 'the terror of Stalin's epoch' is on its way out. But there were fluctua-

tions in the application of this terror during Stalin's day too. The difference now seems to be that the diminution of terror under the Malenkov era is a growing trend, the most distinctive feature of 'the decline of the Bonapartist dictatorship.'

The essential liberality of the new regime is only underscored by the next prognosis that 'It is not excluded that before falling, the Bonapartist dictatorship will suddenly once again have recourse to the bloodiest terror.' This signifies that terror has become not an essential but an exceptional episodic and incidental expression of the bureaucratic state.

To reinforce its contention that the post-Stalin regime is compelled not only to do away with the most terrible traits of Stalinism, but to placate the masses to an ever-increasing degree, the resolution exaggerates the scope of the concessions. It refers to a broad amnesty which seems to have died a-borning since it was not mentioned at the last session of the Supreme Soviet in the decrees submitted for approval. It speaks of the revision of the penal code which was promised within 30 days and still remains to be promulgated seven months after.

The liberation of the doctors was originally interpreted as an irreparable blow to the system of frameup trials and purges. But since then Beria's purge and trial has been announced. It takes the condemnations of police arbitrariness for good coin, setting aside the fact that verbal criticism of police excesses were not unknown under Stalin. Indeed, the GPU was purged several times during Stalin's regime.

It regards the stress upon collective decision as a definitive dismissal of the cult of the chief. But this is only a transitional stage between the demise of the former chief and the elevation of a prospective replacement. During his rise to power, Stalin likewise counterposed the collectivity of the Central Committee against the 'aristocrats,' that is, the Bolshevik leaders most popular amongst the masses.

As we have pointed out, this does not mean that no concessions have been made or that they amount to nothing. They are largely economic in character. What Malenkov has done is to dramatize the gradual improvement in living standards since 1947 and even expedite them. But even in the sphere of consumption the Kremlin will be unable to satisfy the demands of the masses. It will give to one section of the population at the expense of another. While offering new incentives to the peasants, it does not increase the general level of workers' wages, and it takes care to increase the privileges of the bureaucracy itself.

How should the concessions be judged? Concessions are of genuine value if they open opportunities to the masses for self-action which can then be used to further their own aims. The new regime has not yet offered the slightest opening of that kind and it is not difficult to understand why. The totalitarian government cannot tolerate the least freedom of action for the workers which would weaken its stranglehold upon them.

The resolution occupies itself with dubious speculations about the centrifugal forces which are cracking the monolithism of the ruling group and generating differentiations within the party and its leading circles. It says that the monolithism of the Bonapartist type is being ruptured beyond repair under pressure from other segments of the bureaucracy and the masses. The Beria purge is adduced as evidence of this growing disunity.

There is no doubt that the death of Stalin upset the regime's stability, set a swarm of centrifugal forces into motion, and provoked a crisis which has still to be overcome. The transfer of power in a tyranny is always a delicate operation containing dangers. Having lost its old personal centre, the bureaucracy as a whole is impelled to seek, create, and rally around a new one as the principal point of support to safeguard its privileges and regulate its internal conflicts. That is the principal reason for the elevation of Malenkov and the speedy removal of Beria.

The resolution makes much of the heterogeneity of interests amongst the various layers of the bureaucracy as the material groundwork for its growing differentiation and conflicts. It refers in addition to the ageing top layer of the bureaucracy as presumably not so much concerned with increasing privileges as conserving them. This overlooks the fact that even at the top the bureaucracy steadily renews its personnel and at all levels its appetite for privileges grows with eating, especially in a country which has far from reached the living standards of the Western world.

The bureaucracy as a social layer is stratified according to its conditions of life, its positions of power, scope of privileges, etc. which give rise to jealousies, rivalries and clique contests of many kinds. But as the sole commanding and favoured stratum, it is united against the bulk of the population by common bonds of material interest. It is the sole force in the Soviet Union and buffer countries which is armed and organized.

The bureaucratic caste cannot tolerate any deep divisions of policy within its ruling circles for any length of time or permit any crack in its

repressive apparatus which the masses may utilize for their own purposes. It hides them and hastens to cement them as promptly as possible. Since it has no constitutional or democratic ways of resolving internal conflicts, it resorts to the method of purges. The purge is a weapon directed against the bureaucracy itself from on high as well as against the people. It is an indispensable mechanism of Bonapartist rule.

Will the purge method be more and more shelved as the liquidation of Stalinism proceeds, as the resolution implies? Apart from a vague reference to the changing relationship of forces, the resolution brings forward no evidence for this. In fact, the opposite would be indicated. If antagonisms within the bureaucracy deepen, it would seem that purges to resolve them would be in order. If opposition is growing among the people, it would seem that the commanding caste would be obliged to resort to its time-honoured methods of repression. Trotsky observed that 'the more the course of development goes against it, the more ruthless it becomes toward the advanced elements of the population.' (*Revolution Betrayed*, p.277.)

Now it appears, according to the resolution, that the more the course of development goes against it, the more lenient and conciliatory the regime must become.

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 struggles, not to look for and even less to bank upon any breaks in the bureaucracy.

In its whole treatment of the events since Stalin's death and the new course of the Malenkov regime, the resolution lays down the political premises for a reappraisal of the nature of the Stalinist bureaucracy and the kind of action the workers must take to overthrow it. While it does not spell out these revisions, it opens the door for others to do so, as we shall see later.

b. The Kremlin and the Communist Parties

The resolution states that the Kremlin's rigid grip on the mass Communist parties is weakening. It gives three reasons for this deduction: the growing power of the mass movement exerted on these

parties, the loosening of their relations with Moscow, and uncertainty about the Kremlin's authority and policy in recent months. No specific evidence is cited to substantiate this speculation, although the development cannot be ruled out in advance in specific cases. Such has certainly been the case with the Yugoslav and Chinese CPs. But there are no overt signs of a similar occurrence elsewhere yet.

To buttress this point the resolution cites the Kremlin's inability to re-establish any International since 1943. Actually Moscow finds any International more of a liability than an asset. It wishes to keep the CPs separated and to control them by other means.

This alleged relaxation of Kremlin control is associated with 'the penetration of ideas opposed to the interests of the Kremlin bureaucracy within these organizations; and a process of modification in the hierarchical, bureaucratic relations previously established.' That is how the disintegration of Stalinism is beginning. Vague as these observations of tendencies are, they seem to point to the growth of new ideological currents and organizational relations within the shell of the CPs which will apparently continue inside them until the reformed and rebellious parties become strong and independent enough to throw off the Kremlin's stranglehold. Does this not project the perspective of such reformed Stalinist parties escaping the Kremlin's clutches and proceeding on the road to revolution?

This conclusion receives reinforcement from the assertion that the mass Communist parties are forced to radicalize their policies more and more. This is the fundamental and inescapable course of their policies.

The resolution grudgingly admits 'the possibility of the mass Communist parties to carry through temporary turns to the right within given conditions, so long as the mass pressure has not reached its culminating point.' (p.35.) The direction of Stalinist policy in such parties is thus made to depend in the last analysis on the degree of mass pressure exerted upon them.

Up to now there has been no such direct correlation. The history of the French CP is instructive. From 1929-1933 when the workers were not yet energetic it pursued an ultra-left line. In 1936 when the mass movement reached its height the CP took a People's Front line. In 1944-47 at the crest of the revolutionary wave generated by the war the Stalinist leaders disarmed the workers and helped de Gaulle restore the capitalist regime. In 1952, when the workers had relapsed into passivity thanks in large measure to the previous gyrations of Stalinist

policy, it summoned the Paris workers into the adventure of the anti-Ridgway demonstrations. Finally, in August 1953 during the General Strike the CP remained passive and maintained its 'National Front' mixture of opportunism and sectarianism without radicalizing its policy an iota.

This record shows that, far from co-ordinating their line with the rise in mass pressure, this mass CP ran counter to it. The diplomatic needs of the Kremlin got the upper hand over the demands of the masses. This does not mean that the CP can get away with anything at any time. It too must adjust itself, like other mass parties, to the radicalization of the masses, more in words than in deeds. But in and of itself the pressure of the masses does not suffice to push the CP closer to the revolutionary road.

The conception that a mass CP will take the road to power if only sufficient mass pressure is brought to bear is false. It shifts the responsibility for revolutionary setbacks from the leadership to the mass, according to the following reasoning: if only there had been more pressure, the CP could have been forced to drive for power. The interaction between the insurgent masses and the leadership is thus reduced to the simple equation: maximum mass pressure equals revolutionary performance, however inadequate, from the CP leadership.

Actually, the pressure of the workers in the 1953 French General Strike was formidable enough to start the offensive for power. But it was precisely the momentum of this mass power and its implications that caused the CP leadership to leap away in fright from it and prevent its organization. In this not unimportant case, instead of radicalizing Stalinist policy, the heightened mass pressure had a different effect. Obviously, there is not a direct but a dialectical relationship between the two factors.

Yugoslavia and China show that under certain exceptional conditions the leadership of a Stalinist party, caught between extermination by the counter-revolution and an extremely powerful revolutionary offensive of the masses, can push forward to power. This can be repeated elsewhere under comparable conditions, especially in the event of a new world war.

But it would be unwarranted to generalize too broadly and hastily on this point. It should be remembered that while the Yugoslavs marched to power, the CPs in other countries remained subordinate to the Kremlin and facilitated the work of the counter-revolution.

Two Communist Parties, the Yugoslav and Chinese, met the test in one way; the others in a directly opposite manner.

The specific conditions which forced the Yugoslav and Chinese CPs onto the revolutionary road must be analyzed and understood. Both parties had been in conflict with the existing regimes and operated illegally for long years. Both fought prolonged civil wars during which the leadership and cadres were selected, tested and hardened and their forces organized. The Chinese CP had armed forces of its own for years before launching the struggle for power. The domestic capitalist regimes were exceptionally weak and imperialism was unable to intervene with any effectiveness.

In any case, as the Manifesto issued by the Third World Congress declared: 'The transformations which the Stalinist parties might undergo in the course of the most acute revolutionary crises may oblige the Leninist vanguard to readjust its tactics toward these parties. But this in no way relieves the proletariat from the task of building a new revolutionary leadership. What is on the agenda today is not so much the question of a projection of a struggle for power under exceptional conditions in this or that isolated country, but the overthrow of imperialism in all countries as rapidly as possible. Stalinism remains obstacle number one, within the international labour movement, to the successful conclusion of that task.'

c. The Kremlin and the Buffer Zone

The exposition of the contradictions inherent in the postwar expansion of Stalinist domination over the buffer zone countries: the resistance of the native CP's which have acquired their own state interest and material base against the dictates of the Kremlin; the clash between the regime and the peasants; the conflict between the regime and the workers is in general correctly delineated.

There are, however, three main points of difference to be noted.

1. The National Question

First is the neglect of any treatment of the national question in the resolution, although this is one of the most explosive issues in the Kremlin-subjugated domains. There has long been bitter resistance to the autocratic Russification of the Ukrainians and other minorities. The extension of Moscow's rule, its plundering, overlordship and Russification has provoked no less intense national feelings in the buffer zone.

The political revolution against the Moscow despotism can not be visualized without the rekindling of the national independence movement in these areas. This demand will be one of the keenest weapons against the Kremlin overlords. Yugoslavia has already shown how powerful a factor of rebellion this national pride can be.

The programme for the political revolution must therefore include slogans for a free and independent Socialist Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, etc., just as we continue to call for an independent Socialist Ukraine. In East Germany, split by joint agreement of the Big Three, this demand takes the form of the reunification of the German nation on a Socialist basis. The unity of the German people, and above all its working class, is indispensable for the promotion of the European revolution. Even though this demand was raised by the demonstrators themselves and was called for by the entire situation, it was missing from the IS declaration on the East German events.

The omission of such a slogan in both the resolution and the IS statement requires explanation. Is the present bloc of anti-capitalist states under Kremlin dictatorship to be regarded as a solid and untouchable entity which the demand for independence disintegrates? Actually the struggle for socialist independence undermines the grip of the Kremlin, helps unify the revolutionary forces, increasing their striking power against imperialism.

This omission is all the more glaring in the light of its inclusion in the Third World Congress Manifesto. 'Long live the independent Socialist Republics of Poland, of Czechoslovakia, of Hungary, of Rumania, of Bulgaria and of the Ukraine! Down with the Stalinist dictatorship.'

2. The East German Events

Second, in place of the dubious hypotheses advanced in the resolution on possible variants of development, the revolutionary perspectives for the buffer zone countries should be based upon concrete events from which lessons can be drawn and applied. This means that the treatment of the overthrow of the Kremlin autocracy and the disintegration of Stalinism must take the East German uprising as its point of departure.

This uprising demonstrated in life how the political revolution against Stalinism originates and unfolds. A correct appraisal of the East German events has the utmost importance for our movement because it provides the opportunity to check our programme with the

actual events and see whether and in what respects it was verified and wherein it requires correction and amplification. Important divergences in appraisal are equally significant.

Briefly, what did the East German uprising reveal?

1. It showed that the working class was the initiating and decisive force in leading the people to revolt.

2. It disclosed the colossal power and potentialities of the workers' movement which united all currents of labour opinion in massive protest. Virtually the entire working class opposed itself to the regime and all its agencies, beginning with the SED.

3. The unpopular government was sprung into mid air without any support amongst the people. Its main props, the party, the police and the top bureaucracy, crumbled and collapsed under the impact of the uprising.

4. The advanced workers broke in action with the government party, the SED.

5. They evinced determination to overthrow the regime, not to reform it. This repudiation and rejection was implicit in the demand for 'a metal-workers government.' The sum total of the other demands were incompatible with the continuance of the dictatorship.

6. The general mass political strike, sparked by immediate economic demands and directed against the government, became the means for mobilizing the masses and pitting them against the regime.

7. The Trotskyist programme of the necessity of political revolution against Stalinism by a mass uprising was vindicated and adopted in action by the insurgent workers.

8. The unarmed and unsupported masses had to fall back. They felt the need for the formation of a revolutionary leadership and a party to organize the next stages and link it up with the struggles in the West and the buffer zone countries.

9. The events exposed and underscored the utterly counter-revolutionary nature of Stalinism.

a. It required a series of repressive measures, mixed with minor concessions, to save and prop up the battered regime. Armed force and police actions against the most militant and conscious elements had to be used to subdue the insurgents.

b. The occupying Soviet troops rescued the regime and pushed back the revolution.

c. The Stalinists launched a despicable slander campaign against the workers as 'fascists.'

d. The SED undertook a purge of its personnel who proved weak and conciliatory.

Contrast the above appraisal with the aspects stressed in the IS resolution written after the East German uprising. The resolution singles out three points.

a. Special economic conditions caused the resistance of the masses to culminate in open revolt. (Actually, they touched off the rebellion which had profounder causes.)

b. This revolt accentuated 'the new course' which includes an improvement in economic conditions for all layers of the people and a softening of the atmosphere of extreme tension in the mass organizations.

c. This new course is designed to strengthen the grip of the Stalinist parties by making it more flexible, less rigid.

These are the sum total of the principal lessons drawn by the resolution from the East German uprising!

3. *Entrism into the CP in the Buffer Zone Countries*

Third, the resolution recommends an application of the entrism tactic toward the Communist Parties in the buffer zone countries. In these countries, 'our forces must seek to realize their tasks, which are in general similar to those we have in the Soviet Union, through an entrism tactic toward the CP, while remaining prepared to join quickly any other mass organization which may appear at the beginning of the upsurge.'

The question naturally arises why the resolution does not make a specific entrism proposal for the CP of the Soviet Union, if the tasks are 'in general similar.' This becomes still more puzzling when we are given as one of the motivations for entrism in the buffer zone countries, that 'the more the outbreak the revolutionary rise is retarded, the more will the young generation awaken to political life. This generation will have known no form of political organization other than the CP and the latter will tend to become the national arena in which the leadership of the new revolutionary rise will develop.'

Several young generations have already awakened to political life in the SU knowing no other party than the CP. If this becomes a decisive criterion, the entrism tactic should be applied there above all places. Why doesn't the resolution call for it? Why is such a glaring contradiction permitted?

Can it be because the Transitional Programme opens no door for an entrism tactic toward the CP USSR? It insists on the contrary that the

Soviet masses will rise up against the bureaucracy under the leadership of the Soviet section of the Fourth International.

But the way is being paved to get around this in stages. In quoting the Transitional Programme the resolution drops out the above clearly-stated programmatic conclusions. It substitutes the vague proposition that 'the conditions are being created for the reconstitution and the upsurge of the Bolshevik-Leninist Party.' There is no explicit reference to entry but it is not excluded.

In addition, the resolution prescribes an entryist tactic for the buffer zone countries which is so motivated as to apply with greater force to the USSR. Such an entryist proposal is fundamentally different from any other adopted by our movement in the past.

Up to now the Trotskyist movement has practiced three types of entry. The first involved reformist or centrist parties which, under the impact of events, gave rise to a significant leftward-moving tendency. A Trotskyist grouping or party may temporarily give up its organizational independence to enter such a movement to promote the crystallization of a principled revolutionary tendency and augment its own forces in the process. The size of the party is not of decisive consideration in an entry of this kind, which is a temporary detour on the road to the construction of the revolutionary party. It serves the twofold purpose of gathering forces and if possible, disposing of a centrist rival on the arena of the class struggle. This was the sort of entry that Trotskyists carried through in the Socialist Party in the United States in 1936.

The second type of entry involves parties enjoying the allegiance of the working class in its entirety, like the British Labour Party. Unless they have a viable party of their own, Trotskyists will enter such a movement because within it is concentrated the political life and development of the decisive elements of the class. Basing themselves in their activity on the contradiction between the socialist aspirations of the working class and the capitalist-minded party bureaucracy, the Trotskyists articulate the fundamental interests of the ranks, give them leadership and programmatic expression and collect the forces for the revolutionary party in subsequent stages of struggle for socialism.

The third type of entry has been developed since the Third World Congress. It essentially represents an extension of the second type to the Stalinist parties enjoying a considerable mass base in the capitalist countries, such as France or Italy, or fighting a civil war for power as in Indo-China.

Here the Trotskyists base themselves upon the contradiction between the urge of the masses for the conquest of power and a fundamental social change and the politics of the CP bureaucracies subservient to the Kremlin, with the aim of directing the movement into revolutionary channels. Because of the monolithic character and bureaucratic regime of these parties which does not permit opposition tendencies to operate, this entrism encounters great difficulties and complications and must be of a special kind. This tactic remains in the experimental stage and must be carefully checked at every point to assess the results.

The entrism proposal so lightly introduced to the resolution for the buffer zone countries is of an altogether different type. It involves entering a party that holds state power and is the direct and principal oppressor of the working masses. The fundamental antagonism within these countries, as in the Soviet Union, is between the organized and armed bureaucracy, ruling through the CP, and the unorganized and disarmed working class. To go into the CP is not to acquire closer contact with the best elements of the working class but to become identified with the bureaucracy in the eyes of the most militant workers. A party member is forced to become an instrument of oppression in the day-to-day friction between the bureaucratic regime and the working class.

A revolutionary worker would seek to make contact with the discontented workers repelled by and from the CP in as prudent a manner as possible.

The resolution does not proceed from the existing antagonisms between the workers and the Stalinist regime and the revolutionary impact the development of these antagonisms is bound to have, proposing organizational forms in preparation for that day. Instead it bases itself on the static concept that Stalinist workers will continue to remain in the CP while the Social Democrats will remain in the Social Democracy. Or on the conservative concept that the youth will flock into the sole party they see at hand. The revolutionary wave which, according to the resolution, is spreading from country to country and continent to continent will evidently engulf everything except the traditional parties. It will engulf Stalinism, but leave the CPs intact. There is something wrong here. One effect of powerful revolutionary uprisings is to break the ties of the workers to their traditional organizations, disrupt the old parties, and lift up from obscurity the most revolutionary elements.

The East German uprising did not reinforce the SED or bring

workers closer to it. It dug an unbridgeable gulf between the rebellious advanced workers and the SED. It prepared the conditions for creating a new leadership and bringing forth a new party which alone could guarantee the victory in the succeeding stages.

The question of entrism forms part and parcel of the revolutionary perspectives envisaged and is designed to serve them. If the leadership of the workers' uprising can be expected to come out of a split in the CP apparatus then it is understandable, even if not justifiable, to prescribe entrism in the buffer zone CPs. But if the revolutionary movement and its leadership is expected to arise in a struggle against the CP then a different tactic is in order.

It should be noted that the Third Congress Manifesto explicitly calls for the formation of new parties in the USSR and the 'Peoples' Democracies.' 'At the same time the Fourth International resolutely supports all proletarian movements of opposition to the police dictatorship of the Soviet bureaucracy and fights for the constitution of new Bolshevik-Leninist parties in these countries, parties which will take the leadership of the necessary political revolution for freeing socialist development from its bureaucratic shell.' *There is no such call in the present resolution.* A shift in position has been introduced without explanation.

An entrism tactic may be dictated in regard to the Yugoslav and Chinese CPs which led revolutions. To this day the leaderships have to lean to some extent upon the masses and appeal to their self-action, to undertake some of the uncompleted tasks of the revolution. The bureaucratic stratum is not yet petrified and is not regarded by the workers as an instrument of foreign domination. They still believe the CPs can be the vehicle for their revolutionary aspirations.

VI. How the Line Is Being Applied

How the line of the resolution is being applied, how it distorts the real situation, disarms the FI and would disorient its ranks can be seen in the recent writings by Pablo and Clarke on the East German uprising and the events in the Soviet Union since Stalin's death.

a. Pablo and Clarke on the East German Uprising

As the first proletarian revolt directed at the overthrow of the Stalinist bureaucracy and its agents, the East German uprising possesses immense significance for the entire world working class, and

specially for its Trotskyist vanguard which alone heralded and worked for this line of action. What does the declaration issued by the IS during this gigantic mass movement do and propose?

1. Instead of exposing and denouncing the Kremlin and East German Stalinist leaders as mortal foes of the workers and heads of the counter-revolution, the IS statement plays up their concessions and assures that these will continue. 'They have been obliged to continue along the road of still more ample and genuine concessions to avoid risking alienating themselves forever from support by the masses and from provoking still stronger explosions. From now on they will not be able to stop half-way . . . They will be obliged to dole out more concessions . . .' This is tantamount to telling the workers that they can expect ever-greater concessions from their oppressors, not that these will be limited to the minimum and withdrawn unless the workers exert their full powers of resistance and follow through to the end.

2. Instead of warning that the Stalinist apparatus will inflict repression and stop at nothing to defend their dictatorship, the IS statement promises a general and growing attitude of appeasement of the masses by the Stalinists.

3. There is no clear call for the overthrow of the Stalinist bureaucracy through the organization, strengthening and consummation of the uprising.

4. Instead of a programme specifically adapted to the conditions and needs of the East German workers, a general programme for the political revolution in the Soviet Union and all the 'Peoples' Democracies' is put forward.

5. This programme raises the slogan for 'real democratization of the Communist Parties' as though these organs of the police regime could and should be transformed into vehicles for the revolutionary actions and aspirations of the masses. At the very time they are breaking in action with this party, the Stalinist workers are directed to seek its reform.

6. By implication, since this programme is presented as applying to the Soviet Union as well, the slogan to democratize the Communist Party would be on the order of the day for the CP USSR too. This is a direct break with the established position calling for the formation of a Trotskyist Party in the Soviet Union.

7. On the other hand, while there is a demand for the legalization of

other working class parties, there is none for the formation of a new revolutionary party around the Trotskyist programme.

8. There is no call for the withdrawal of the Soviet occupying troops which shot down workers and served as the ultimate prop of the shattered regime.

9. Although demonstrators themselves put forward the demand, there is no slogan for the reunification of Germany on a Socialist basis. The need for unity is concentrated instead upon the solidarity of the Soviet Union and the 'Peoples' Democracies' as a bloc. The resolution concludes with acclamation for 'the socialist rebirth of the Soviet Union, the 'Peoples' Democracies' and the international working class movement.' Wouldn't the German workers also care to hear acclamation for the socialist reunification of their own divided country?

10. While the Stalinists slander the workers as 'fascist hirelings,' the statement cavalierly observes: 'The Soviet leaders and those of the various "Peoples' Democracies" and the CP could no longer falsify or ignore the profound meaning of these events.'

Where is the revolutionary spirit of irreconcilable combat to topple a powerful and perfidious enemy in such a line? It is not designed to focus the attention of the masses upon the need for a new revolutionary leadership. At the very time when the workers are in revolt, it is permeated with a conciliatory attitude toward the bureaucracy.

Clarke's article on the East German events in the March-April FI displays equally conciliatory features. He plays down the counter-revolutionary intervention of the Kremlin as well as of its puppet regime. He takes careful note of the moderate conduct of the occupying forces but fails to point out their counter-revolutionary function in rescuing the regime and blocking the workers' bid for power. He does not bring forward the inescapable necessity for the mass uprising to get rid of the Stalinist bureaucracy. Nor does he assert the need of a revolutionary party in order to lead such a mass uprising to victory.

Much is made of the split in the bureaucracy, although no definite conclusions are drawn from this development. It is clear that the SED bureaucracy became panic stricken and differences set in on how best to handle the situation and that the movement found sympathy and support among certain elements in its lower ranks. This happens in every revolutionary uprising and it would be wrong to deny or ignore such developments.

But the question is: what place and significance do they have in the

process of the revolution? They are not and cannot be the decisive factor or the central line of the struggle. The IS preoccupation with these subordinate aspects of the struggle tends to shift the axis of revolutionary strategy from the mobilization of the workers as an independent class force relying on their own strength and organs toward reliance for leadership from elements within the bureaucracy. The excessive attention given to the differentiations and splits within the bureaucracy, the embellishment of their concessions, the failure to stress their repressive and counter-revolutionary role, can be explained only by illusions that, under pressure from below, a section of the Stalinist leadership will head the movement for the liquidation of Stalinism, at least in its earlier stages.

There is a sharp break with the traditional Trotskyist concept of the decisive role of the independent mass movement under its own revolutionary leadership.

b. Pablo and Clarke on the Post-Stalin Developments

Pablo's article on 'The Post-Stalin New Course' in the March-April FI proceeds along similar lines. He grossly exaggerates the scope and significance of the Malenkov concessions. He says that in addition to measures effecting an improvement of working conditions there has likewise been an extension of 'the democratic rights of the masses,' with less labour discipline and speed-up for the workers under the dictatorship.

He does not prescribe any limits to the concessions. On the contrary, the bureaucracy will have to quicken and extend them. 'In reality events will oblige them, as is being demonstrated in Eastern Germany, and partly in Czechoslovakia, to quicken and extend the concessions to keep the impatient masses in the other buffer zone countries and in the USSR itself, from taking the road of action.'

This is leading to the liquidation of the entire Stalinist heritage. 'The dynamic of their concessions is in reality liquidatory of the entire Stalinist heritage in the USSR itself, as well as in its relations with the satellite countries, with China and the Communist Parties. It will no longer be easy to turn back . . . once the concessions are broadened, the march toward a real liquidation of the Stalinist regime threatens to become irresistible.'

He thereupon raises the question: 'what form will it (the march toward a real liquidation of the Stalinist regime) then take?' 'Will it be

that of an acute crisis and of violent inter-bureaucratic struggles between the elements who will fight for the status quo, if not for turning back, and the more and more numerous elements drawn by the powerful pressure of the masses?’

He does not answer the question but the very posing of the question in this tendentious manner implies the answer.

In his article in the January-February FI, Clarke introduces other variants. Among them he projects the possibility of the bureaucracy’s sharing power with the masses.

Pablo and Clarke see in both the German uprising and the post-Stalinist developments the emergence of a deepening conflict between the stand-patters and a leftward-moving wing within the bureaucracy which tends to tear it apart into contending factions. In the showdown the reformists appeal to and lean upon the masses; the masses in turn, it is implied, should back them up and look to them for leadership. This is presumably the beginning of the path to socialist regeneration, which is already discernible in ‘the New Course.’

This shifts the axis of the development of the political revolution away from the self-action of the masses and focuses it upon the rifts inside the bureaucracy. Thereby the Trotskyist concept that the extension of the world revolution will inspire the Russian workers to rise up on their own account and overthrow the Stalinist bureaucracy gives way to a different concept. The changed international and internal situation, coupled with mounting pressure from the masses, unlooses forces within the bureaucracy itself which work toward the liquidation of Stalinism. The transformations emanate from on top as an outcome of the mass pressures from below.

The working class is transformed into a pressure group, and the Trotskyists into a pressure grouping along with it which pushes a section of the bureaucracy leftward toward the revolution. In this way, the bureaucracy is transformed from a bloc and a betrayer of the revolution into an auxiliary motor force of it.

c. What Must Such Conclusions Point To?

Such sweeping conclusions on the changing characteristics of the Kremlin dictatorship and the dissolution of world Stalinism have a logic which is bound to assert itself. If the objective processes are marching along so fast and so far, then an equivalent reorientation must be effected by the revolutionary vanguard if it is to be on top of

the unfolding events. A general turn would have to be made toward the Communist parties and into the Communist parties to help along the disintegration already proceeding at an accelerated rate and take full advantage of the transformation and impending break-up of Stalinism.

The conclusion of Pablo's article on 'The Post-Stalin New Course' envisages such a perspective for the immediate future. Pablo writes: 'What is now clear is that the decline of Stalinism in the form of the iron grip of the Soviet bureaucracy over the Soviet masses, the buffer zone countries, the Communist parties, is henceforth speeded up, and that the renovation of socialist democracy in all these countries, as in China, as well as the renaissance of the international workers' movement is now on the order of the day.' How is this to be accomplished? 'In the years visible ahead, the junction of the ideas and forces of the Fourth International with the revolutionary elements until now organized or influenced by Stalinism will realize in part this first stage of this renovation.'

Isn't this a signpost toward a general entry into the Stalinist movement?

The recent writings of Comrades Pablo and Clarke go beyond the stated positions of the resolution on 'The Rise and Decline of Stalinism.' But the point to be emphasized is that the resolution contains, or at least indicates, the political premises for their more extreme conclusions. These premises are not clearly and fully expressed in all respects. But they are there.

Recently tendencies conciliatory toward Stalinism have begun to emerge in several Trotskyist organizations. A resolution on Stalinism must take cognizance of this dangerous development and guard against any ambiguities from which it can draw sustenance. For example, the question of the political revolution against the Kremlin bureaucracy, is now in dispute. How does the resolution treat this problem?

In citing the Transitional Programme for the political revolution in the Soviet Union, the resolution stops short of the following: 'Only the victorious revolutionary uprising of the oppressed masses can revive the Soviet regime and guarantee its further development toward socialism. There is but one party capable of leading the Soviet masses to insurrection — the party of the Fourth International!'

These categorical statements leave no room whatsoever for different interpretations of what is meant. However, they are replaced in

the text of the resolution by two vaguer propositions that: '*The conditions are being created for the reconstitution and the upsurge of the Bolshevick-Leninist party in the Soviet Union*' and later on: 'The task of smashing the dictatorship and the privileges of the bureaucracy, the task of *a new political revolution in the Soviet Union* remains more burning than ever.'

This may well have gone unnoticed and uncriticized if an attempt had not already been made, by Clarke for one, to substitute new concepts of the political revolution for the established positions. The ambiguities in the resolution lend themselves to such revisions whereas the clear and unmistakable terms of the Transitional Programme preclude them.

Complete clarity and precision on all these questions are indispensable to arm the movement for effective revolutionary intervention in the mounting crisis of world Stalinism.

DOCUMENT 12a

Statement of Daniel Roberts to the Seattle Branch of the SWP, July 23, 1953

All political discussions such as we are engaged in at the present time have their critical moments.

In my opinion — judging from all that I have heard and seen — we have come to the cross roads with two comrades in the party — namely, Sylvia and Roger. That is a critical point and should be taken notice of in the party. The comrades are disagreeing with us on the most fundamental question of all: namely, which party do we build.

These comrades have indicated in branch discussions, minority caucus discussions and in private conversations that they believe that the party to build is the Communist Party; that it is the revolutionary party. They say: Abandon the building of the Socialist Workers Party and build the Communist Party instead. In a discussion in the branch executive committee Sylvia stated that she believed that the two positions that are going to crystallize out of the national discussion are Stalinophobia on the one hand and conciliationism to Stalinism on the other.

I take that to mean that Sylvia believes that only a Stalinophobic programme can now sustain the independent existence of the Socialist Workers Party.

Is Sylvia's and Roger's viewpoint compatible with membership in the Socialist Workers Party? We of the majority say 'No!' How can it be? The key question of revolutionary politics turns around the question of the party. All principles, all theories, all slogans become realized through the party. When Sylvia and Roger assert: Build the CP and not the SWP — they are disagreeing with us on the most fundamental question of revolutionary politics today.

Let us make no mistake. Sylvia is not proposing an entry into the

CP, which would be another way of building the Socialist Workers Party, assuming that such a tactic were indicated by the relationship of forces between the SWP and the CP, which it definitely is not. What Sylvia proposes is the outright liquidation of the SWP in favour of the Communist Party.

But we say that a river of blood separates us from Stalinism. There is the murder of Trotsky and innumerable other murders. That is not a small matter. What is more, in all of its politics Stalinism has demonstrated itself to be a completely counter-revolutionary tendency in the labour movement just as much as the Social Democracy. That is why it shed our blood. Our movement drew the conclusion in 1933 that it was necessary to build the Fourth International and to build the independent parties of Trotskyism in every country. Where we have entered a Communist Party — as in France today — the purpose of that entry is to destroy Stalinism and to build a mass party for Trotskyism, for the Fourth International.

In the USA we say: Build the Socialist Workers Party as an independent party. War to the death against Stalinism, against the American Communist Party — as well as against the Shachtmanites and other Social Democratic formations. Thus the proposal: Build the Communist Party, which is the essence of the point of view put forward by Sylvia and Roger, is not compatible with the programme of building the Socialist Workers Party, and we must face the fact squarely that these two comrades will soon act on their conclusions to the benefit of the CP, unless we can prevail upon them in time to stop and turn around.

Furthermore, the experience of the discussion nationally demonstrates to us that theirs may not remain isolated cases. There may be other comrades who will be moving towards the same conclusions. And any such trend — even if it involves only a handful of individuals — must be combatted and defeated. We have to put this problem on the top of the agenda of the national discussion. Our party can't survive with an indifferent attitude toward a fundamental question of this nature.

How about it, then, comrades of the Cochranite and Marcyite tendencies? Will you make common cause with the majority and can we maintain our discussion within the framework of a common line of building the Socialist Workers Party? Will you join with us in a fight against a pro-Stalinist position? Or are you afraid, perhaps, that by making common cause with the majority you will be aiding the

Shachtmanites, who are also our enemies? If so I wish to say a few words of reassurance to you on that score.

The Socialist Workers Party has, as you know, a consistent record of intransigent battle against the Shachtmanites. We have never permitted any haziness to develop in the party in the outlook of its members or its leaders towards the Shachtmanites, just as we have never permitted haziness in the party's outlook towards the Stalinists. Nor do we propose any changes in this respect now.

I look back a few years ago to the debate I conducted against Albert Gates of the Shachtmanites. Everything that I said then in opposition to Gates has been confirmed by the events. I told Gates that he and his cohorts had lost confidence in the revolutionary potential of the working class, and that that was why the Shachtmanites magnified the power of Stalinism to the nth degree and choose American Imperialism as a lesser evil. I told him that the SWP believed that the working class would destroy Stalinism and American Imperialism and that we based our programme squarely upon that perspective. I said we want no truck with the Shachtmanite programme of reconciliation with American Imperialism.

The events have confirmed us. Aren't the masses moving to destroy American Imperialism throughout the world, and aren't they breaking from and rising against Stalinism at the same time? Is not the very anti-imperialist action of the colonial masses, which we support wholeheartedly, irrespective of who is the leadership of the moment, beginning to put the squeeze of death upon Stalinism? Will not this death squeeze culminate in the revolutionary overthrow of Stalinism? The prospects for the building of the authentic revolutionary party — the Trotskyist parties — look very bright indeed. We have no cause to move toward reconciliation with the Shachtmanites when the events have proved us right and them wrong. We are maintaining our course of building the Trotskyist party, and it is on that ground that we wish to come to an agreement with the Cochranites and the Marcyites against a pro-Stalinist position.

What does the majority propose to do concretely about comrades Sylvia and Roger? We want to discuss with them. Our aim is to win them back to the party if that is possible. We want to win them back to the idea that they held before the faction fight began — namely, that it is correct to build the Socialist Workers Party and to wage irreconcilable war against the CP. Sylvia and Roger have developed their partial positions of a few months ago to logical conclusions. Thus all the

subordinate issues which divided us heretofore can be removed from the discussion and we can proceed to fundamentals: SWP or CP. Of course, should these comrades commit an openly disloyal act then our attitude of 'let's discuss' will automatically cease.

We call on Sylvia and Roger to submit their ideas in writing, and I am glad to hear that they plan to do so. We propose that they submit them for the entire party, so that the party nationally, the national leaders of the party and the national leaders of the faction, can reply if they so wish.

If someone with Sylvia's and Roger's ideas were to apply for membership in the SWP, we of the majority would oppose admission. But that is not the issue with them. These comrades joined us in good faith on the basis of agreement with our programme and have participated in the building of the SWP. Furthermore, their present ideas flow out of the national discussion and are an integral part of it. We can't brush them aside — either to cast them out summarily or to ignore them on the plea that there are only two of them, that their ideas are 'extreme' and that hence they don't count. On the contrary, we think that discussion with them should be given a high place on the agenda.

In discussing the problem posed by Sylvia and Roger's evolution, a few of the comrades in the majority caucus asked: 'Why don't we propose to them that, if these are their ideas, they simply leave us and join the Communist Party.' We all concluded, however, that before we advise anybody to join the Communist Party we would first advise him to drop dead. That is how strongly we feel about the matter.

As far as we are concerned, anybody who leaves for the Communist Party from our party does not leave in friendship or in peace, but departs with the brand of renegade upon him. That is why we propose to exhaust the possibility by means of discussion to win Roger and Sylvia back to the movement.

To sum up: We propose to the Marcyites and the Cochranites that we engage in a discussion with Sylvia and Roger and that we close ranks on the question that the party to build as the revolutionary party in the US is the SWP. We call upon Sylvia and Roger to enter into a discussion with us on that fundamental question. How about it, comrades of the Cochranites and the Marcyites? How about it, comrades Sylvia and Roger?

there had been, it is now clear to me, merely shadow boxing motivated, insofar as Burns was concerned, by his preoccupation with the complex problem of the future of the hitherto very fruitful practical work. That is understandable, but it has only resulted in creating embarrassment for him, and political problems. I think he realizes this now.

Here is how matters stood. Burns had requested B. [Burton — Sam Gordon] for an article on Stalin for the review. This was written and Burns presented it to a board meeting, after indicating agreement with its general line. J. L. [John Lawrence] counter-posed the Clarke article, but later retreated to counter-posing the draft on post-Stalin developments which has since been incorporated in the larger document. Apparently Burns agreed, but proposed another meeting with B. present. At this second meeting, J. L. renewed his second proposition. This was attacked as an impossible proposition since what was involved was a draft up for discussion which avowedly makes a break with important traditional concepts and cannot be regarded as official position. Under pressure of argument which seemed to get general concurrence, J. L. withdrew, but not before he had reminded Burns that he had voted for the general line of the draft and had recorded no reservations. (This was a surprise to me, because I had assumed things to be otherwise, and embarrassing to Burns, who was now pushing the B. article with some modifications.) In the shuffle a proposition was made to write instead a review of Deutscher's book. J. L. quickly took advantage of this to nominate someone else, who has only been evolving to our common position lately, to do the review. Under the circumstances this had to be accepted.

There was the beginning of a political discussion, but only a beginning, and J. L. made very clear that he was on the Pablo line and working for him. With unusual determination and vigour he pushed for his proposition. My impression was that he was pressing for haste in making the Pablo position our public position — which seems to coincide with Clarke's actions. This is something which must now be taken into account as possibly part of a strategy and a plan. It must be probed for significance and there must be preparations for necessary counter-actions.

In view of the possibility that the B. article, of which a number of copies were made and distributed, may now become an element in the struggle, a copy will be forwarded to you. It should be remembered that this article was a draft written, although with political bias, not with the idea that it would be contentious, at least locally. And, that

Pablo, Burns tells me, remarked to him recently that Deutscher has done more than anyone to popularize 'our' ideas before a broad public. D. is certainly no mean popularizer, but not of *our* ideas, that is the Trotskyists — although most everything of substance and truth in his presentation is borrowed from this source. His new book, which purports to analyze Stalinism and to present forecasts from a vaguely 'Marxist' point of view, has a few flaws in it in this respect: It leaves out of account entirely a sociological, historical evaluation of the Soviet bureaucracy; it describes Stalinism as a continuation of Leninism (it is its fusion with the barbaric Russian heritage, according to his description) it passes off the physical destruction of Lenin's party as something of moral rather than political significance; it justifies Stalinism as historically necessary and in its end result progressive. And — on that basis — projects the theory of the Malenkov 'self-reform' movement. That is, on the basis of a distortion of the Trotskyist analysis, it presents a complete negation of the Trotskyist line of struggle against Stalinism.

Our new revisionists have so far only half-borrowed from his conclusions and tried to smuggle them in piece-meal as our line. It should not be forgotten, however, that Pablo's views on the reality of the transition epoch — in which of necessity deformed revolutions and workers states become the norm deviating from the ideal of the Marxist classics — touches some points in the Deutscher analysis as well. Nothing has been heard of these views lately, and for good reason: they need some adjustment to the newer reality so to speak. But has the concept, the trend of thought, behind them been dropped? All evidence is to the contrary.

I have been thinking that perhaps an amendment specifically condemning all these views (that is, rejecting them and explaining why) as well as Deutscherism by name might be a good idea. Perhaps, a separate document in this respect might be more advisable. I cling to the thought of amendments because, for whatever reasons, the general conception of the document-draft on Stalinism and most of the historical presentation has been so put forward by the authors as appears to me quite acceptable. Clarifying amendments, if this is the case, can better bring out the real differences than a separate draft.

* * *

The political dispute was brought out into the open here last night at a more or less informal editorial meeting on the review. Before that

DOCUMENT 13a**Letter from Sam Gordon to friends in the SWP,
August 23, 1953**

Dear Friends:

I have received copy of Aug. 5 letter on discussion with Marcy as well as mimeoed LA-NY correspondence up to the end of July, but no acknowledgement as yet of my own first August letter.

Glad to note progress of thinking on the problems posed by the new documents. Also, appreciated very much the lead editorial and the article by Murry in the last issue of the paper which, I presume, was a warm-up for the Trotsky memorial issue. 'We can do no greater honour to his memory, thirteen years after his assassination, than to continue his work *In Defence of Marxism*, and to complete it under the heading "In Defence of Trotskyism" against the new revisionists who are attempting to defile it and — by the same token — to blur the guilt and the reactionary role in history of his assassins.'

Enclosed are a few suggested amendments I have drawn up and discussed with Burns. I take it that you have been working on some of your own, including one restoring the deleted conclusions in the quotation from the transitional programme, since this point has been mentioned by you.

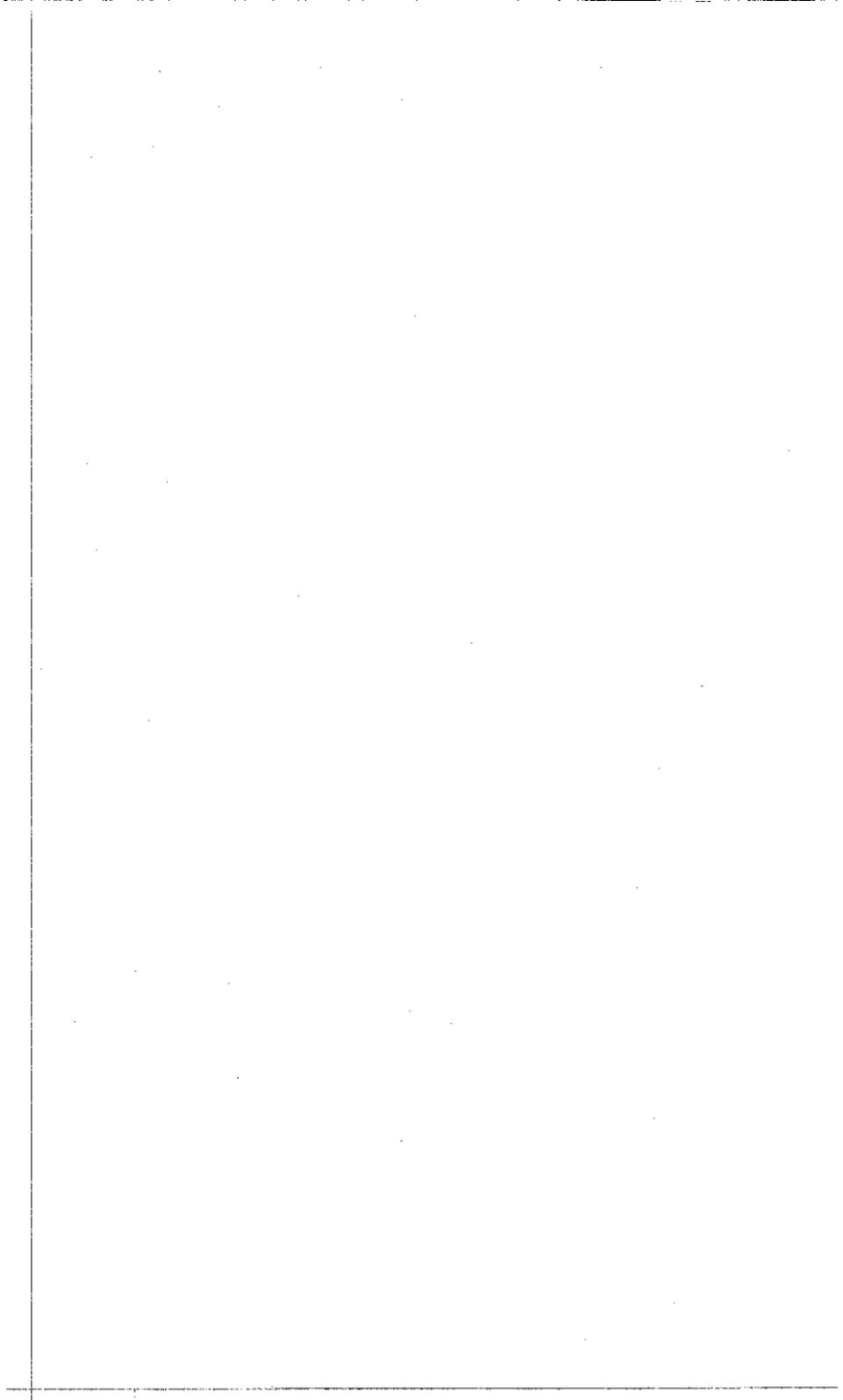
Has everyone read Deutscher's new book? It should be made required reading for the present struggle. This man, as is well known, has passed through our international movement on his way to the fleshpots of Fleet Street. He is not someone moving towards us but someone who has moved away from us. And direction, as Trotsky taught us, is a very important element in judging the specific position taken by the political animal at any given time. He is acclaimed not only by Clarke and his friends, but by the British bourgeois press as well (which for reasons of its own, as I believe Jim once said of Churchill, engages in quite a bit of wishful thinking these days of insoluble predicaments).

Chapter Six

Unity against Pabloite revisionism

It was above all the events in Eastern Germany which hastened the break with Pablo. Precisely when the working class was fighting to break the stranglehold of its Stalinist leadership, the Pabloites sought to reinforce this hold. In refusing to call for the overthrow of the bureaucracy, they abandoned the Trotskyist position on the political revolution in the degenerated workers' states. This is the fight which underlay all the developments in the factional struggle — now extending into the British section — which are recorded in this chapter.

'The Rise and Decline of Stalinism', Pablo's draft resolution for the intended Fourth World Congress, made the revisionist position quite explicit. It was to prevent the liquidation of the International that the Trotskyist forces now joined to form the International Committee.



Roger were no longer in the Cochranite faction. Bud, however, was; he still called himself a Cochranite. To his knowledge, as of Monday night he still hadn't been dropped.

Comradely,

George Flint

P.S. Dan left the day after the meeting for L. A. Frank, Clara and Betty are already there. When they come back, I believe Clara is planning an article which will describe in more detail the development of the four from an allegiance to Trotskyism, then to Cochranism, now to Stalinism.

In answer to a question at the meeting Sylvia said she considered the murder of the Left Oppositionists in the Soviet Union progressive and necessary because it served the needs of defence of the Soviet Union.

At the conclusion of each statement they announced their resignation from the party. Dan spoke, pointing to the miserable role they played. He made a motion that they be dropped from membership and be considered as enemies of the party. This motion passed.

I reported at the branch meeting the gist of their opinions as I got them from a discussion I had with them the Monday (Aug. 3) before the meeting. They first tried to deny strikebreaking by the Stalinists during the war, but when confronted with the facts they justified it. Support of the Second World War they justified. Working of Stalinists together with the FBI they tried to deny, but when confronted with the facts they tried to squirm out of it. Finally Roger said we do more harm with our criticism of Stalinism than they do by working with the FBI.

Murder of Trotskyists in the Soviet Union they considered progressive.

I pointed out the difference between these people and Stalinist rank and file workers. The Stalinist misguided workers are worth while talking to. They blame the openly counter-revolutionary politics of Stalinism during the war on Browderism. In the case of some individuals if we could show that these counter-revolutionary acts were inherent in Stalinism we have a chance to win them over. However, these people know better.

To all this Bud mumbled something about us calling him counter-revolutionary but they, in going to Stalinism, were probably going to end up in a concentration camp.

In my opinion the underlying cause for the complete change of opinions on the part of Bud and Sylvia lies in their spinelessness in whatever milieu they happened to be. Sylvia on Monday night told me that she first realized how ridiculous Trotskyism was when we urged her, when she was on the grievance committee in her shop, to talk to workers in the shop about socialism and the party. We didn't urge her to this everywhere and indiscriminately, but to single out those who would be more receptive and break down their prejudices against socialism and against the party. This she never did. She enthusiastically supported the Cochranite line of directing our propaganda to the politicals (that is, the Stalinists) and within that milieu didn't want to be 'ridiculous' either.

Incidentally, when I came back from New York in July Sylvia and

DOCUMENT 12b**Report from Seattle to the Majority Caucus, by
George Flint, September 7, 1953**

(The following report from Seattle relates the concluding chapter in the pro-Stalinist degeneration of four comrades who started out as Cochranites in the internal party struggle. The circumstances of their departure from the party, with the crassest declarations of support to Stalinism and the most despicable attacks on the SWP, are without precedent in our movement. As the report indicates, a review of the history of their degeneration and a political evaluation of this development will be prepared soon.)

Sept. 7, 1953

Dear Farrell:

Sylvia, Bud, Roger and Jim O. finished neck and neck at our Thursday night's branch meeting, in their race to leave the party of revolutionary socialism and enter the party or the milieu of counter-revolutionary Stalinism.

Sylvia in her statement said that she repudiated all concepts of Trotskyism and considered the CP a historically revolutionary party.

Roger said that he was never fully integrated in the Trotskyist movement because he never considered the CP to be a counter-revolutionary tendency.

Bud said that after six years in the SWP he decided he must take himself out of the movement that is unreal with wishful thinking about the world today. Our party, he said, feeds on anti-communist sentiments of the masses.

They announced that they were also speaking for Jim O. He came in later after they had left and confirmed this.

he author made it clear that he does not stand on every formulation but is prepared to re-formulate on the basis of common agreement on general line.

* * *

What I wrote regarding Burns sizing up a situation and taking a stand was not meant at all in a derogatory sense, I hope you will understand. I know the man, his capacities, and appreciate him and am aware that he has great responsibilities and problems. But we must understand what we are up against as a result, although we proceed with great patience. From this letter you may get an inkling of what I have meant.

Best regards,
Harry

Amendments to 'Rise and Fall of Stalinism'

In introduction, p. 2, under b. add:

'after the counter-suppression of all tendencies to mass uprisings in many of these countries in the wake of the Red Army advances, and after an attempt by the Kremlin to share the rulership with the native bourgeoisies.'

Under c. add:

'despite every effort of Moscow to thwart this development in favour of a coalition controlled by Chiang Kai-shek and, in a measure despite at least formal agreement with this line by the Mao Tse-tung leadership.'

Under c. after 'Resistance Movements' add:

'In France and in Italy genuine possibilities of successful proletarian revolutions, for the establishment of workers' states existed, which were consciously dissipated under Kremlin direction by the nefarious coalition policy. In Greece a mass uprising heading for workers' power was knifed in the back directly by the Stalinist bureaucracy.'

p.3, after the fourth paragraph ending with 'expression' add:

'While in general a transformation of those mass CPs in this sense

seems indicated, splits cannot be excluded — particularly with sharpening of the crisis in the CPUSSR.’

In *section X*, at the end of 5 b. add:

‘In the last analysis, the social, historical role of this caste is reactionary and its entire existence thus depends upon a compromise with imperialism. Consciously this is expressed by the bureaucracy in its “co-existence” theory.’

Under 15, p.13, after the sentence ‘The entire domestic evolution of the SU also speaks in the same sense’ strike the rest of the paragraph and add:

‘While the victory of the Soviet proletariat over the bureaucracy is historically assured by the continuing world upsurge as well as by the growth of its own internal power, this is not an automatic process. The prospect of losing power must induce in the Soviet bureaucracy, as in every obsolescent social force before it departs from the historic scene, a ferocious struggle for self-preservation. Within the context of the international class struggle, this can mean only alliance in one form or another with the imperialist forces as the showdown approaches, up to and including reflexes of capitulation and passage into the bourgeois camp.

‘The rising tide of proletarian struggle will undoubtedly break off a section of the bureaucracy, a “Reiss tendency,” which will rally to the working class for the defence of the social bases of the USSR and the reestablishment of Soviet democracy. But this will only be a *byproduct* of the whole development and *not* a dominant characteristic.

‘It follows that the unfolding of the *political* revolution against the bureaucracy in the USSR will thus be linked internationally with the *social* revolution to overthrow capitalism and imperialism. That is, the class character of the struggle against the Soviet bureaucracy will clearly come to light.’

On par. 17 and 18, section I, reservations on assumption of conflict between ‘economic’ bureaucracy and Bonapartist summits — insufficiently grounded and unclear as to political import.

Par. 20 obviously has to be re-written in view of Beria purge; the concluding reference to the 12th Plenum report will similarly have to be revised in view of the Korean truce and the development of the

'peace' manoeuvres. With crisis sharpening within both camps, tendency to seek a compromise is reinforced.

In par. 21, p. 17, at bottom of page, re-write sentence to read: 'The socialist regeneration of the Soviet Union can give an impulse toward the decisive world victory of socialism almost to the same extent as the socialist revolution in the USA itself.'

In par. 23, drop the last sentence, gives rise to misconceptions of automatic advance.

In par. 33, reservations on question of new parties. *WHY* no new parties *there?* (China, Yugoslavia)

Par. 37 obviously needs reformulation in light of East German events. CP appears finished as an instrument of upsurge.

Par. 44, p. 34, point (c) in second paragraph has to be expanded in light of E. German events. In this connection a paragraph dealing with the current pacifist moods among the masses in connection with possibilities of Stalinist betrayal is required.

DOCUMENT 13b

Letter from Sam Gordon to friends in the SWP,
August 30, 1953

Dear Friends:

Following the editorial board meeting last week, Burns has told me, there was a blow-up at the executive meeting on Wednesday. J. L. appeared there with an organized faction and wanted to put him 'under IS discipline.' He proposed an NC meeting at which he would report on the draft documents, Burns would keep quiet and go along, and a favourable vote would be taken. Just like that. Furthermore they wanted no 'American agents' there, and there was to be no discussion of Clarke's views or anything 'American.' There were protests from the others and nothing conclusive was agreed on except to hold a meeting late in September. But there were threats about what the IS would do.

After this meeting Burns was approached by several others who indicated they now understood what was going on quite thoroughly, were prepared to discuss a common political line and a grouping. Burns expects a slim majority in the present small committee (EC) but a very comfortable one in the broader NC, which will then re-organize the EC accordingly.

J. L.'s attempt to 'discipline' Burns indicates a line of action no doubt inspired in Paris. The premise for it is that Burns voted for the drafts under discussion. There was an understanding on my part that Burns was to record reservations on these ever since May. Apparently, for reasons I tried to explain previously, he did not do so formally, although he raised the issues; and in each case voted *for* with the vague understanding that there would be editorial revisions. Now they think they have him over a barrel. But of course they have another think coming.

I don't know of any precedent for attempted gag-laws of this type, and I don't think anybody serious here will go for that.

Since then there has arrived a copy of the August 10 letter to you signed by MP, EG and PF. Following this there was an August 21 letter by the latter summoning Burns for September 2 to discuss 'a very serious situation' for which it is desired to adopt a 'common line.' Burns believes the matter of the letter to Tom is involved. He is probably right. After talking it over in a group, it was decided that the best thing to do is to ask for two weeks' postponement and to request particulars (agenda, drafts, proposals, etc.) before going. A letter to this effect has gone out.

We are waiting to hear what action you took on the August 10 letter. And, of course, we want to know what suggestions you have on procedure, which may quickly be forced to a head.

Politically, opinion here is developing along the lines of the suggested amendments sent to you in the caucus of the majority which is the majority which is taking shape.

You will probably hear soon from Burns at greater length on some of these matters.

All the best,

Harry

DOCUMENT 13c

Letter from G. Healy to James P. Cannon,
August 31, 1953

Dear Jim,

Last night the struggle broke out here in earnest. Our EC was confronted with an organized faction of four. Lawrence, Lane, Brown and Emmett. The combination represents more the character of a clique than anything else especially to those who know the people concerned and their past record. Emmett is the most uncertain, and may yet be detached. The others work for Pablo.

The fight broke out over the report to the NC about the IS document 'The Rise and Fall of Stalinism.' Lawrence stated that since he agreed with it wholeheartedly, he should move it. I didn't object, but said that I wished to comment on certain aspects of the document and make propositions to strengthen it. This brought forth a howl — I was described as 'the American agent' working against the International. In reply I said that as a member of the IS I would of course lay any suggestions I had before this body, but this did not satisfy the faction. They said that the IS may instruct me not to raise points in my own section until they got around to answering them before the international. Meanwhile I would have to remain quiet while Lawrence gave his report. The whole plan was along the lines of gagging me whilst an effort was made to stampede our people. There is little doubt but it comes from Paris. Well, I said that this would be an international scandal and that I would proceed to make my case before my own party.

On Friday 28th I received an urgent instruction from Pablo to attend an international meeting on Sept. 2nd. He also sends me a copy of a letter to the NC majority. (Copies of his letter and my reply are enclosed.) I don't see why we must be pushed around like little boys into meetings where no one knows what is coming up. I had some experience of this once in the RCP and WIL — I will not have it again.

Despite all the blurb in the 'good relations' letter to the SWP majority, the fact is that the fight has broken out with renewed ferocity here. We now have to contend with a Pablo manipulated faction, and there is no doubt but they will give us trouble until we get them under control. Of course we work under disadvantages inside the LP, but it cannot be helped. They are running wild already and we will first have to stop them. Thanks to your advice we have already been anticipating this, and some long term arrangements were in hand to curb them.

I would like a reply either from you or Morris on the following:

a) What lines if any do your ideas for amendments to the 'Rise and Fall of Stalinism' take?

b) How am I to handle your letter to Tom? It seems that they are preparing to rush us into something in order to get away on a scandal.

An immediate reply (if you can) would be of great assistance.

Under separate cover an article by Tom is being sent. What are the opinions on his amendments?

Warmest regards

J.

DOCUMENT 13d**Letter from James P. Cannon to George
Novack, September 2, 1953**

Dear Warde:

I received yours of Aug. 31 with enclosure of the Paris letter of August 10. This letter is in essence a threat designed to intimidate the leadership of the SWP with the hope of splitting it up. It is obviously designed, at the same time, to prepare the 'record' for an open attack later on. The form of the letter, a compound of misrepresentation, duplicity and doubletalk, is apparently an expression of the political method of the author.

1. 'We have just received documents coming from leaders of your tendency, indicating, among other things that you believe that the IS or members of the IS have fomented or encouraged the struggle tendencies in your party, and that they are capable of making it start up again.

'We have been extremely surprised and shocked by such an accusation which has no basis whatsoever.'

This is sent to the wrong address. It was not we, but the Cochranites, who originated the 'accusation' by claiming to speak for and represent the author of this letter. They were informed of this in my letter of May 22, 1953, and answered with dissimulation which only tended to confirm the claim of the Cochranites. The accusation will be withdrawn and the surprise and shock can be alleviated if and when this claim is clearly and openly repudiated. If there is a 'misunderstanding' on our part, that is the way — and the only way — to clear it up. The author of the Paris letter knows this very well. But this clear, open repudiation is precisely what is lacking. That is what makes all the protestations worthless as far as we are concerned.

There is no possible ground for misunderstanding our position, for we are in the habit of saying exactly what we mean, in private letters as

well as in public statements. The 'documents' referred to in the Paris letter of Aug. 10, in which the position of the SWP leadership is stated, show clearly that we were not seeking a conflict with the Paris leaders, and did not intend to take the initiative in such a conflict. But it shows no less clearly that we are 'ready to react to the first *openly* hostile move against us.' That's the way it stands also today. We will not take the initiative to publish these documents, but if they are published by others, we are fully prepared to defend them.

2. 'You appear to have wanted to make contacts for the constitution of an international tendency in the absence of any formulated political divergence with the leadership of the International.'

This method of accusing others of the very things which one is doing or planning to do himself, has a tradition, but it is not the Trotskyist tradition. The 'constitution of an international tendency in the absence of any formulated political divergence' sounds like a political crime, and that is what it is. And that is precisely what the international combination against the leadership of the SWP, 'in the absence of any formulated political divergence' with this leadership, has been.

The policy of the SWP is no secret; it has been expounded every week in our press. Since the Third Congress the authors of this letter have never once indicated any disagreement with this policy. On the other hand, a revisionist faction in our party attacks this policy — and the whole tradition of our party — on almost every point. Being internationalists — and not since yesterday — we certainly have 'wanted contacts' with orthodox Trotskyists on the international field to ask their fraternal help to repel this revisionist attack, and we do not think any orthodox Trotskyist will refuse it.

This procedure is not new for us. We always 'wanted contacts' and collaboration on the international field to defend the orthodox Trotskyist line. We never asked anybody's permission to establish such contacts and collaboration in the past, and don't intend to do so in the future. Far from considering such procedure an offence, the 'exposure' of which is to be feared, we consider it a virtue — the essence of true internationalism as Trotsky taught it to us. We began this kind of international collaboration while we were still in the Comintern, and have continued it ever since. We always supported the progressive and revolutionary elements in the Fourth International, and in its prior formative period, and sought their support in return. The habit is firmly fixed and will not be changed. We never made any alliances *with* anybody anywhere on any other basis than agreement on the

most important questions of principle, clearly stated. We never made any combinations *against* anybody anywhere 'in the absence of any formulated political divergences.'

3. The patronizing 'appeal to our sense of responsibility,' and the hypocritical injunction against 'factional struggles whose political content cannot at all be seen' might be profitably studied by its author. We have no need of it. For a whole year we had to contend with a faction which refused to disclose its aims. When they were finally smoked out, they proclaimed themselves 'Pablists' and claimed his support. No such faction, in this country or in any other country, ever claimed our support without being promptly repudiated. That's why possible misunderstandings about our position never lasted very long. We have always dispelled suspicions by stating clearly and openly where we stood. The example is worth following by those who complain in private letters that they are misunderstood.

4. The statement that 'the entire international is not witnessing any struggle at the present time,' must have been written from the point of view that the SWP is a colony whose statistics are not registered. The fact of the matter is, as the whole international movement knows by this time, that the internal life of the SWP has been disturbed for nearly two years by a revisionist faction which has proclaimed as its slogan, 'Junk the old Trotskyism'; which has rallied in one combination all the disgruntled, weak and capitulatory elements who express their personal demoralization in a revolt against the Party, its principles and its traditions; which signed a peace agreement at the Plenum to abandon the factional struggle in favour of an orderly discussion, only to violate the agreement by renewing the factional struggle in intensified form almost immediately afterwards; a faction which has openly discarded the basic Trotskyist analysis of the character and role of Stalinism, proclaimed the theory of its self-reform, and announced their determination to fight on this line under the banner of 'Pablism'; a faction which in recent weeks has gone to the point of organized sabotage of party work and party finances.

Such are the facts about the situation in the SWP, which up till now has been considered, in one way or another, as a part of the International movement, even though not affiliated — that same international movement which allegedly is 'not witnessing any struggle at the present time'. Being orthodox Trotskyists, we have no alternative but to defend the party against this new eruption of destructive and unprincipled factionalism.

The question of whether the struggle in the SWP can be isolated and localized in one party depends not on suspicions, misunderstandings, 'exposures of documents', etc., but on a far more important and fundamental question: Does this American brand of revisionist factionalism have any supporters in other parties, or in other sections of the international movement?

If so, they will be obliged to make their position known in the next stage of the forthcoming international discussion, and we will recognize them as political opponents, just as we have recognized similar tendencies in the past. On the other hand, if the claims of the Cochranite faction in this respect are unfounded, and the liquidationist tendency finds no support in other sections of the movement, that also will soon be made clear. In that case any misunderstandings or suspicions on our part, which may prove in fact and not in mere words to have been unfounded, will be promptly corrected. We haven't the slightest desire to pick quarrels with anybody over trifles.

All obscurities will have to be cleared up in the next period. The question will stand politically, so that nobody can misunderstand it and so that there can be no possibility of barren 'factional struggle whose political content cannot at all be seen'. We have had more than enough of that already, and we are more than anxious to clear the air and get down to the real issue.

5. The precondition for clearing the atmosphere in the international movement, and eliminating all possible misunderstandings, suspicions and obscure manoeuvres, is to formulate the documents for the Fourth World Congress in such a way that there can be no possible misunderstanding as to what they really mean. The movement needs documents which leave no room for special interpretations or conflicting interpretations. This is the way it was in the movement of the Fourth International in Trotsky's lifetime, and we think it is the only correct system.

The leadership of the SWP, for its part, will study all material presented in the international discussion and formulate its own point of view on every question, either in special documents or in amendments to documents presented by others, and will insist this time that its point of view be published and considered before any decisions are taken. We expect all other leading people in the international movement to do the same. This may or may not result in the eventual consolidation of firm agreement on basic documents which mean what they say and say what they mean. But in any case, it is the only way to clear away the poisonous fog of misunderstanding and suspi-

cions generated by special interpretations and allegedly secret meanings.

7. It is precisely this state of affairs — entirely new in the history of international Trotskyism — which has disrupted the 'relations of confidence and co-operation' between the leadership of the SWP and some others. The Paris letter of Aug. 10, says — not without a certain justification — that these relations 'since 1945 have been at the basis of the reconstruction and reinforcement of the international Trotskyist movement.' It is worth recalling that in 1945 the eruption of all kinds of revisionist tendencies had brought us into conflict with numerous people with whom we had previously collaborated — Natalia, Logan, Munis, Morrow-Goldman, the IKD retrogressionists, the French majority, the British majority, etc., etc.

We took a stand then for orthodox Trotskyism, and sought to 'make contact' and establish collaboration with others on that basis. It was on that basis that we eventually got together to reconstruct the international Trotskyist movement and make possible the Second World Congress and all subsequent fruitful work. We have not changed our position on this basic question of principle and do not intend to change.

We recognize that post-war developments necessitate broad scale tactical, and even to a certain extent strategical, adjustments. But we are firmly convinced that basic Trotskyist principles, particularly on the nature and role of Stalinism and the role of the Trotskyist parties and the Fourth International, retain their validity. They must be maintained if the Fourth International is to survive and accomplish its historic mission. The proposal to 'Junk the Old Trotskyism' and to envisage the self-reform of criminal Stalinism must be categorically rejected.

In the forthcoming discussion we will strive for agreement with international comrades on that basis. Meantime we will do all in our power to keep the SWP what it has always been — a fortress of orthodox Trotskyism.

Fraternally,
J. P. Cannon

DOCUMENT 13e**Letter from James P. Cannon to George
Novack, September 3, 1953**

Dear Warde:

1. Yesterday I sent you some comments on the Paris letter of August 10. These remarks were not meant as a draft of our formal reply to this provocative threat and insult — that is the last thing we have to worry about — but for the information of our own people. This is by far the most important thing right now. We should move at every step with a fully informed party.

* * *

2. Today I received Harry's letter of August 30, and took particular note of (1) the report that J. L. appeared at the Executive meeting with an organized faction and, (2) that he proposed to put Burns 'under IS discipline' before the discussion starts. Some of you no doubt will raise your hands in holy horror and say, 'I never heard of such a thing.' But I have not only heard of it, I have seen it and felt it in my bones, in the Stalinized Comintern.

This little device of putting leaders under committee discipline (national and international) *inside the party* was one of the principal methods of stifling the internal life of the Comintern and its parties; of depriving the membership of any real opportunity for the consideration and informed discussion of different opinions among the leaders; and eventually of guaranteeing the complete degeneration of the parties.

The transformation of the parties of the Comintern from the vanguard of the revolution into instruments of counter-revolution and betrayal was not accomplished at one step. It took a long time and a long continued process, which couldn't really begin without stifling the internal life of the movement.

3. I am particularly sensitive to any manifestation of this disease of Cominternism. Some of you will remember how violently I reacted to Clarke's attempt to impose 'discipline' on NC members in discussion of the decisions of the Third World Congress *after the Congress*. I stated then, in the meeting of the Political Committee, that I had had one Comintern and I didn't want another. These words came from the heart, and I still feel the same way about it.

I don't know what I would have said if I had been present at the reported Executive Committee meeting, when it was proposed to invoke 'discipline' *before the discussion* of documents pertaining to a Congress, which is yet to be held. But if I hadn't been incapacitated by a fit of apoplexy, induced by uncontrollable rage, I am sure would have denounced this monstrous attempt to foreclose the discussion before it has really begun. I would have called this proposal by its right name and told its sponsor that he is talking to the wrong party.

* * *

4. Secondly, if I were in England, I would recognize the reality of an opposition faction aiming to discredit and disqualify the leadership and to transform the British party into a lifeless puppet. I would recognize further, as all experience has shown, that organized factionalism cannot be outwitted by constructive non-factional work, but must be met on its own ground. In all such cases, constructive work requires the protection of a counter-faction. I would proceed to the organization of a militant counter-faction without delay.

Harry's reference to 'the caucus of the majority which is taking shape' is the best news we could hope to hear for the prospects of a favourable outcome in Britain. I would suggest to our friends there to make this caucus as broad as possible, and *to keep its members fully informed of everything*.

* * *

5. I don't think you should rush to get out a formal reply to the Paris letter. We are under no pressure unless we put it on ourselves through unnecessary nervousness. They may not know it, but the issue between them and us is not going to be settled in Paris — not even with the help of Clarke in person. Our first and foremost task is the consolidation of informed opinion in our own party. The same holds true in England.

Thomas is due in town today and Vincent will arrive tomorrow. I will consult with them and other NC members in the next few days, and we will probably work out a draft of an answer to the Paris letter. I suggest that you do the same, and wait until we have exchanged drafts, and heard any suggestions which other out-of-town NC members might make, before committing the answer to final form. We have plenty of time.

We have to bear in mind that communications between them and us in the present circumstances have a purely formal character. It is not a matter of misunderstanding or a slight difference of opinion, which could be straightened out by explanatory communications back and forth. We are fighting a revisionist opposition in the SWP, and they are lined up against us. Their communication is not meant to explain and convince, but to threaten and intimidate. It is also written for the 'record.' This is the explanation of its hypocritically innocent form. In our reply — when we get around to it — we can dispense with threats, but we must also write for the record.

* * *

6. The essence of the August 10 letter is a declaration of war on us, and a warning of the 'gravest crisis' which can follow if we fail to roll over and play dead. Their conduct does indeed precipitate a grave crisis in the world movement; but it is not the first one, and it is not the gravest — and eventually it will be solved easier than some of the others.

It is not as grave, for example, as the criminal split of the Molinier-Frank faction at the time of the French sit-down strikes. It is not as grave as the crisis of 1939, which split the international movement at the beginning of the war, and kept it in a state of suspended animation for a period of five years, with the reinforced assistance of Logan, Munis, Morrow-Goldman, the German IKD-ists and others.

I have confidence that this international crisis will be overcome, primarily because I am convinced that the crisis in the SWP — which is the most decisive sector of the present battle line and the place where the whole thing started — is already under control. We should bear in mind all the time, and never forget, that the value of our contributions to a progressive solution of the crisis on the international field will depend directly on how firm our control of the SWP is; on how consciously the party supports us. Our words will carry

weight if we speak on the international field, not as clever individuals contributing to a discussion — in the French tradition — but as representatives of a party taking sides in a struggle — in the American tradition.

* * *

7. I gather that opinion in New York is tending toward the conception of the crisis as an all-out political fight in which the sides will be delineated by conflicting documents. I am not so sure of that. It may come to that in the end; but I don't think we should anticipate it or run ahead to meet it. It remains yet to be demonstrated whether or not agreement can be reached on common documents. We should not take the more drastic course until this possibility has been thoroughly tested.

We don't want to fight over what may be in somebody's head. Our concern is over what is written in official documents. We know that the authors of the Paris letter are hostile to us for reasons which have not yet been explained; and it is reasonable to assume that there is some kind of a political motivation at the bottom of it. This political motivation may be implied in some ambiguous formulations and omissions in the drafts of the two documents presented for discussion, but it is not clearly stated there. We should be careful not to read things into the drafts which are not written there in plain terms.

As in nearly all documents coming from this source, there are formulations which lend themselves to double interpretations; and other formulations which, while more or less correct in themselves, lack necessary qualifications which only a very critical reader might notice. The question is: Do these documents mean what a casual reader, taking everything in good faith, thinks they mean? Or do they mean what the Cochranites will say they mean, in justification of their own less-disguised revisionism?

I think the best way to test this out, *in the preliminary stages of the discussion*, is to formulate clarifying amendments on every point which appears to be wrong or ambiguous. From this point of view I incline to agree with Harry and Burns. In cooperation with them we should work out the necessary amendments, submit them and see how they are received. Then we can decide whether or not it is necessary to present our views in separate documents.

If we are resolutely determined not to be rushed, crowded or

“disciplined” into formal agreement on a hodge-podge, this procedure will work out best in the long run. But in any case, we should take our time in this important matter, and proceed slowly and deliberately, with the aim of getting absolute clarity one way or another. However it turns out, we must lock the door against any more double games of “interpretation.”

Yours fraternally,
J. P. Cannon

DOCUMENT 13f**Letter from James P. Cannon to G. Healy,
September 5, 1953**

Dear Jerry:

I just received your letter of August 31. I had already commented on the occurrence at your last Executive Committee meeting in a letter written to New York yesterday. I enclosed a copy for Harry and he should have received it by this time.

The attempt to impose hierarchical committee discipline at the beginning of an important discussion is unheard of in our movement. It is the most reprehensible practice imaginable. It is right out of the Stalinist book. I realize that this is a harsh expression, but it is the plain and simple truth and the sooner it is said out loud the better. The system which would impose IS discipline on you in the discussion of new documents before your own national committee presupposes the imposition of National Committee discipline on all its members in the discussion before the membership. This is a sure way to deprive the rank and file of any real opportunity to weigh and consider possibly different opinions, or shadings of difference, and thereby to deprive them of any real opportunity to form their own deliberate opinions before taking a vote.

For you to tolerate such procedure on any pretext whatever would be to betray your duty as a leader of the British movement. It would be a criminal offence against the members who have trusted you to teach them and help them to learn how to think for themselves on the basis of full information on the questions under consideration.

Trotsky once said, 'Honest information is the first prerequisite for democratic discussion.' One of the most important elements of honest

information in a discussion by the party membership consists of the opinions of all the leaders who are more familiar with the questions under consideration. To suppress these opinions at the start of a discussion, especially a discussion which may be fateful for the whole future of our movement, would be a crime and a betrayal.

* * *

You are at a decisive turning point in your whole lifetime activity as a revolutionist *right now*. All the fruits of all your previous work and struggle to consolidate a principled cadre are threatened by this disloyal attempt to intimidate you by pointing the pistol of an opposition faction at your head. You know that the same thing was tried in the SWP, and you know how we responded to it. I most earnestly recommend to you the same procedure, and I assure you that there is no other way.

I know very well that constructive workers, eager to build a movement in open struggle against the class enemy, are always strongly tempted to hope that in the internal situation things will work out for the best; that good faith and good work will prevail; and that factionalism will somehow or other disappear of itself, without taking time out to meet it on its own ground and knock it down. But that is a terrible mistake.

I have given much time and thought, during my past year's residence in California, to a review of the whole past experience of our movement and of my part in it, as well as to the prospects of its future. I truly believe that the best service I ever rendered to our party, to help prepare it for its great future, was rendered during this past year. And the essence of this service, as I see it, was my determined and unceasing effort to make the party members in general and the leading cadre in particular, understand the mortal danger of permitting an unprincipled faction to grow and develop without forcing it into the open, calling it by its right name, and declaring uncompromising war on it.

The hardest part of all my struggle during this past year, and as I judge it in retrospect the most important part, was my insistent warnings to the constructive elements in the party, in the leadership as well as in the ranks, against the fatal illusion that factional brawlers can be overcome by good works in the class struggle alone. In this connection I earnestly recommend to you and your friends a careful reading of my letter to the Chicago party trade unionists on 'Mass

Work and Factional Struggle,' which begins on page 49 of Internal Bulletin No. 12, May, 1953; and my letter to Ted Grant on 'Perspectives of the Struggle,' which begins on page 21 of the same bulletin.

The English comrades, who have in recent times enjoyed such a long period of constructive work in an ascending mass movement of labour radicalism, and who have witnessed the rich fruits of their labour, may well be impatient with any diversion of energy toward internal disputes and factionalism. It is your foremost duty to convince them, at the cost of no matter how much time and effort, that precisely this illusion can bring all their work to nothing, and in a very short time at that.

It is particularly necessary now for the members of your movement, the newly recruited ones as well as those who come from the past, to recognize that the organization through which they did this work did not fall from the sky. The conditions for all their *constructive work* in recent times, in an atmosphere of internal unity and harmony, were prepared by your long-drawn-out, exhausting and at times discouraging, *factional struggle* against the Hastons and others who were not much better than the Hastons. You have a fight on your hands now again. And you will not have internal peace and the possibility to develop another long period of constructive work, unhindered by factionalism, until you have settled accounts with this new faction which has risen up to challenge you.

This faction is a challenge to the leadership of the cadre consolidated by historic struggles. Even more than that, it is a challenge to the right of the British party to select out of its own ranks leaders of its own choosing; leaders who are known to the rank and file members and subject to their constant observation and control. Your friends in the leading circles will have to face this problem squarely, as the leading cadre of the SWP eventually faced it. That, for us, was the beginning of the solution of the crisis. Everything followed from that.

If we can say now with absolute assurance that the crisis which threatened the existence of the SWP during the past year has been overcome; and that it is no longer within the power of anyone to wreck the party by a serious split, or even to paralyze its work by further factional struggle — it is due, first of all, to the fact that the leading people recognized the reality of the situation and its necessities, and then resolutely set to work to mobilize the party membership on that basis. I have no doubt that the same results will be recorded in England, if the leading people of your group recognize the realities of

the situation in time, and then proceed with a full knowledge of what they want and where they are going.

* * *

It is not at all a question of a struggle of a national section 'against the International.' The question is formulated that way by people who have — to speak plainly — a Stalinist conception of the International as something outside of ourselves, as a power giving orders which loyal people have only to obey. The International as we conceive it — as we were taught by Trotsky — is all of us, is all the parties, and all the members of all the parties. When questions are up for discussion, nobody represents *the International*: all members have equal rights. In the last analysis, every individual member of every party has the right and the *duty* to form his own opinion and make it known, and in that way to contribute to the collective judgment of the whole movement. This collective judgment, as experience has shown, is far better, and far more reliable, than the arbitrary judgement of a few individuals who may want to give orders and to recognize no control.

It is not a question of a struggle 'against the leadership' of the International, as the devotees of the new leader cult represent. What is involved is a difference of opinion *within the leadership*.

For the leadership of international Trotskyism, rightly considered, is broader than a small exclusive circle. It includes the leading people who have distinguished themselves in the work of the different parties and given serious proofs of their capacities and their loyalty.

* * *

We don't know yet how serious the present differences will turn out to be, for the discussion is only now really beginning. We do know that on the plane of *organizational system and method*, as exemplified first in the experience of the SWP, and now beginning in England, the differences are very serious indeed and must be fought out to a definite conclusion. I, for my part, am against the authoritarian system and method and will openly fight against it, regardless of any agreements or disagreements which might obtain among ourselves on other questions.

I know, and have even tried to explain to others more than once,

that organizational questions and procedures are subordinate to political considerations, and *in the long run* can only serve them. But it is no less true that, in certain situations and to a certain extent, organizational conceptions, methods and practices have an independent character and must be dealt with as such.

A shining example of this exception to the general rule was the notorious Haston group itself. Its organizational methods were so false, so incompatible with the functioning of a democratic organization of revolutionary workers, that agreement on this or that political policy at one time or another made no real difference. The whole Haston system had to be blown up before a genuine Trotskyist organization could get started in England. The saddest part, which is to be regretted to this day, is that the recognition of this simple necessity was so long delayed. If one were to undertake to write the real history of British Trotskyism, he would have to set *the starting point* as the day and date on which your group finally tore itself loose from the Haston regime and started its own independent work. What happened before that is nothing but a series of squandered opportunities, material for the pre-history of British Trotskyism.

* * *

In my opinion, it would be a mistake to over-simplify matters by passing off the organizational methods employed in the present dispute as simply the instrument of a false political line. No, in this case the authoritarian concept of leadership, and the obscene personal cultism, are wrong in themselves, and would have no justification no matter what political line they may serve at the moment. Democratic centralism is not an empty phrase.

The Trotskyist movement, internationally, could be stifled and eventually smothered to death simply by some of the conceptions and methods of organization and leadership which some people are now trying to force upon it. If I don't think there is any real danger of that, it is precisely because these attempts are going to meet the determined resistance of the SWP, of the British Trotskyists, and of other parties when the issue becomes clear.

We are not so apprehensive about a possible 'crisis' over this question in the International movement, and we are not even thinking of a split. We are thinking, rather, in terms of heading off a crisis over this question, and of making any talk of a split absurd, by preventing

and refusing to tolerate the encroachments of a system of organization and leadership which could do nothing but guarantee permanent crisis and chronic disruption and unending splits.

* * *

On the side of political differences, we have no way yet of knowing how serious they will be. Judgment on this score can rest only on the basis of written documents when they take definitive form. I indicated in yesterday's letter to New York that I think the extent of the differences should first be probed and tested by amendments to the present drafts.

The attempt to head off the presentation of any amendments, and thereby prevent a serious and honest discussion by invoking an authoritarian 'committee discipline,' is a rather ominous sign. But this attempt obviously will not work. The SWP will pay no attention whatever to it, and I assume that the same course will be taken by you and the others in England. Then we will get down to the amendments and reformulations themselves and see how they are received.

A discussion is now going on in the ranks of our leading cadre on the nature of these amendments and reformulations. I must admit that I have not studied the documents yet with sufficient line-by-line attentiveness. We do not want to reject any of the basic lines laid down by the Third World Congress. But this time, in view of all the confusion and disruption that has been created over conflicting 'interpretations,' the documents for the Fourth Congress must be amended and reformulated on every point where there is the slightest possibility of ambiguity, double meaning or error.

I personally am inclined to agree with the general line of the amendments drawn up by Tom. But I think the opinion of the SWP leadership will be crystallized in favour of more thorough and extensive amendments and reformulations, without changing or throwing out any basic lines we have supported up to now.

In your place, I would present such amendments as have been clearly formulated already, and reserve the right to add others after further consideration and discussion. Why all this rush and pressure to force a vote and then shut people up? That game is not going to work with the SWP.

One of the most important things to bear in mind in this connection is that we must take time. We must take all the time we need for

thorough study and consideration of everything designed to formulate the position of our international movement. We must make it clear that we don't intend to be hustled into quick decisions which foreclose our right to further consideration and to the formulation of new amendments in the course of the discussion. We must take time for a really thorough and democratic discussion, free from any intimidations, threats or resorts to 'discipline.' The SWP leadership will surely insist on this, and I presume you will do the same.

* * *

If the purpose of the emergency meeting in Paris is to launch the crucial international discussion with a scandal, we can leave the initiative to them. You are certainly not called upon to take any responsibility for the letter to Tom, the speech on 'Internationalism and the SWP,' or any other 'document' which may be introduced in evidence against us. Those documents represent the deliberate opinion of the leadership of the SWP, and we are fully prepared to take all responsibility for them. We are not engaged in any conspiracy, and we have nothing to conceal, and no 'exposures' to fear.

The most important point involved in the way this 'scandal' was presented by the Cochranites in the New York City Convention, and by implication in the Paris letter of August 10, is the assumption that certain *personages* are immune from all criticism, and that all such criticism is a scandal regardless of its merits. Therefore, we have *no right* to object to procedures which we consider to be wrong, and to 'make contact' with other comrades in other parties and inform them of our opinions.

From all that has been said above on the question of organization, it follows that these Cominternist pretensions must be flatly rejected. The right of anybody in the International movement to criticize another, and to consult anyone else he pleases, must be defended in principle. We, for our part, not only intend to defend this right for others, but also to exercise it freely ourselves to the fullest extent we consider necessary, and without bothering to ask anybody's permission beforehand.

I have no doubt that your position on this aspect of the question — the only one that has any real importance — will be the same as ours. If the 'scandal' of these documents is launched in England, in an attempt to stampede the membership — as was tried in the US without success

— that is the way to meet it. Your struggle will not be decided in Paris, but in England. If this 'scandal' is introduced there, it can become a boomerang, if you meet it squarely and take the offensive along the lines suggested above.

Fraternally,

PS. Since writing the above I just received a copy of W's Sept. 4 letter to you. The line is virtually the same. Some of the suggestions in W's letter, regarding your course in Paris, are more specific and perhaps better than mine. You can use your own judgment. We can discuss among ourselves the one point of difference — amendments or a separate resolution — and come to an agreement one way or another before acting. I agree with the suggestion in W's letter to defer decision until we get your report on the forthcoming Paris meeting.

The most important field of action for you — let me repeat once again — is England. If you succeed with your task there everything else will fall into place.

DOCUMENT 13g**Letter from G. Healy to James P. Cannon,
September 7, 1953**

Dear Jim

Yesterday I met Pablo and Frank in Paris.

They started out with a 'get tough' policy by demanding we put all our cards on the table. I replied by requesting an explanation of their decisions. These are the following:

a. A letter to Tom (copy enclosed) with an instruction to me that I place it before my N.C.

b. A letter to our EC attacking me for asking for a postponement of the IS. (I did this in order to study the documents, etc. They say that it is a matter of discipline.)

c. A letter to the NC SWP following up the August 10 letter. This must have reached you by now.

d. An instruction that I was to read your letter to Tom before my EC and NC.

Pablo viciously attacked me, Tom, and yourself. He said he would fight Cannon to the end. He and Frank declared they were going to proceed at once to reply to your speech, 'Internationalism and the SWP.' They are also going to reply and attack the majority Plenum Resolution on American Stalinism.

The strategy is to launch the discussion with a scandal — your letter to Tom, the speech on Internationalism, the NC minutes (your questions to Clarke), etc. They also have your letter to Warde in which you comment on their draft. They plan to do the same thing in our section. This has been arranged through their agent Lawrence, already.

Following their opening attempt to intimidate me by the question and answer method, they got 'soft' in their approach. They asked me what was my comment on your letter to Tom and I replied that this would be conveyed when I had seen your reply. They then began to

tell me what a fool I was to join with you and they promised to withdraw all attacks against me and to restrain Lawrence provided I had a discussion with them politically and came out against you, etc. I was sickened at the whole business which amounted to nothing more than intimidation.

However, I countered by proposing that they should call off all discussion on organizational matters until we could discuss the documents on the Russian question — but nothing doing. They proceed as all their prototypes before them have proceeded! — muddy up the political discussion and stampede weak people as much as possible.

We then had some political discussion. Frank is very enthusiastic about Deutscher's book — the only error he can see is that Deutscher does not visualize sufficiently the intervention of the masses and struggles with the bureaucracy (Clarke's line). Both he and Pablo disagreed violently with Wright's article in *The Militant* on Malenkov's speech. They say that Malenkov has begun to tolerate some Trotskyist statements of the past and has modified the traditional violence and hostility toward us. They believe that in East Germany large sections of the CP bureaucracy went with the workers. Right down the line, the whole thing amounts to a complete break with our traditional conceptions, leaving the way open for revisionism on all matters. This is the real root of the situation. There is no question but we have to prepare a counter document to their one on Stalinism. The more I read it and dissect the formulations, the more I am convinced that the nub of the whole struggle is contained there.

I tried to see Clarke, as I thought it was as well whilst I was at it to have a real day out. However, he was not at his hotel. He is now the guiding man in Paris, especially on organizational matters. He also influences a lot politically. I was struck when speaking to the others and also to Lawrence here, how close they all keep to the same political formulations. Your minority have now the backing of Pablo on the recent Plenum decisions. I asked him a point blank question, if this were so, and he evaded replying by saying he hadn't read the documents. In the same breath he carried on a most violent attack on the position of the majority.

From all these events there is but one conclusion — we are engaged in the greatest struggle in the whole history of our movement to defend our basic principles. It will be a stiff vicious struggle. Our opponents are capable of all sorts of things. It will be up to us to fight it as one and in the end we shall defeat them — of that I am confident.

Pablo attacked your conception of our international with great bitterness. This man proceeds with all the old cominternist vices. His methods sickened me to the point that it almost made me physically unwell. Many things flashed before my mind whilst we talked. They hate the old cadres of our movement. They want an international of spineless creatures who will accept revisionism to the point where they become the left cover for Stalinism. These are hard words, but if you went through what I did, you would, I know, agree.

Please write us here, as we must have an up to the minute contact. As you will appreciate, great care must be taken of this letter.

Warmest regards,
J.

DOCUMENT 13h**Letter from Sam Gordon to friends in the SWP,
September 7, 1953**

Dear friends:

This is to acknowledge your letters of August 30 and September 2. A full report from Burns should be under way on his latest trip. I will confine myself only to comments.

It is obvious from the fact that they could not wait for your reply to their August 10 letter and from their liberal citation of statutes all around they are moving, under Livingstone's prodding, to precipitate organizational action. In the best case, this is simply mad on their part; in the worst, there may be some hitherto unsuspected treachery. Assuming the first alternative to be the case, it might be worthwhile to explore their request for a 'direct, oral exchange of views' and to make the best propositions in this respect that the circumstances permit. In case of the second alternative, it is my opinion that we will not have very long to wait, but must be prepared with a public statement of a clear-cut political nature which can be signed by various organizations and perhaps issued jointly. I believe that modalities for either alternative must be worked out by you. If some time can be gained, it is to our advantage, of course. In this regard, assuming that they are just rushing ahead madly but not deliberately — and are really looking over their shoulder now and again — a proposition for *joint* organization of a representative gathering two or three months hence to settle the crisis on the basis of the true relationship of forces might be advisable. I am for my part convinced that the cadres everywhere will rally overwhelmingly to the defence of the tested programme.

The action taken with regard to Tom is really a bit of brazen arrogance which hits a new low. For a year they show no interest in the American at all. Then, suddenly, with unabashed factional brass, they discover that he is not living up to statutes, although they know

very well that it is not a matter of free choice with him that is involved at all. It is just another scandalous example of their utter lack of responsibility — there are plenty of others believe me. Why did they pick on him? Apparently because they believe that he is isolated and that they can thus bring pressure on him of the type they seem to be trying all around. In what school did they learn these methods?

In this connection, it seems to me that if the correspondence Bob had with Livingstone prior to the French split over the Yugo affair is available, it would be a good thing to publish it at this time, to shed some light on these methods alien to our movement and to the fact that they did not begin yesterday.

Practically, T. will probably reply with a protest but, in order to see what they have up their sleeve, agree to ask his organization for a transfer as per regular procedure. Meantime, let them think that he is isolated. They are making much of an alleged unprincipled combination, but of course the reply to the letter to Tom would reveal along with the rest of the recent correspondence — copies of which are at hand — that there was no more principled behavior anywhere at any time. However, this would not be made public here without your agreement and, if you agree, you can do it yourselves. It is entirely in your hands. (By the way, I notice that Jerome does not offer to make any of his correspondence public.)

The article on Frankel should have been sent to you some time ago in the rough form it has been in since last May, but Burns has been using it educationally. It should reach you soon, so you will have an idea of how thoughts have been running here, and it will be worked on some more. Otherwise, things are moving along smoothly towards the end of the month gathering.

Best regards,
Harry

DOCUMENT 13i**Report from Britain for the SWP National Committee majority, September 1953**

Our faction fight came to a head here over the September 19 weekend. The NC by 11 to 6 carried a decision to amend the document on the Russian Question. It also reorganized the Editorial Board of the paper to place it formally under majority control.

We utilized to clean up our Editorial Board an article in the paper containing the following paragraph: 'And now in Korea, we have seen the shape of things to come. Any future war will be an openly-declared war of ideologies, Communism against capitalism, with the world split into two warring camps. On the side of capitalism will be arrayed all the latest destructive techniques. On the side of Communism above all else will be the power of the idea.'

The fight was extremely sharp and fought out to a finish. In fourteen days we decisively wiped up the Pablo faction amongst the leadership. Now it goes to the ranks. We think that we shall also win here eventually.

This is a blow for Pablo. In spite of their surprise factional element we moved much quicker than they thought and conquered the situation politically. The fight will develop from now on very rapidly. We intend moving it into Pablo territory as soon as possible.

We have been threatened with a big struggle and the International intervention on the question of the removal of F. E. [Fred Emmett] from the Editorial Board. F. E. was employed as circulation organizer and not for editorial work as such. Since his appointment, without any consultation with appropriate bodies, he has been unofficially brought on to editorial work as industrial correspondent.

When the NC took the decision to strengthen the Board it was entirely for political reasons. It had every right to do so, and for individuals or minorities to scream 'political victimization' is in effect

to intimidate the party. There are no 'special rights' for employment on our staff.

F. E. has announced that he is going to Paris to see 'what his position was' now that he has been relinquished from the post of circulation manager, for industrial work in the factory.

F. E. is employed in London, not in Paris. Does this mean that all our officials are subject to recall by the IS? This would indeed be extraordinary. If that is the case then we are certainly going to fight it to the end, and we shall appeal to every section in the International in doing this.

The fight is so sharp here now that you would think we were at the end of a struggle instead of at the beginning. It cannot go on like this much longer. Already there are differences emerging all along the line — on Britain as well. The whole Pablo crew are capitulatory from top to bottom and there is no use beating around the bush about it.

DOCUMENT 13j

Letter from G. Healy to Farrell Dobbs,
October 9, 1953

Dear Farrell,

I notice that the draft resolutions for the World Congress have now been sent out. The statement 'unanimous' approval by the IS is misleading and I would be glad if you would immediately see to it that the following enclosed statement by me as a member of the IS is sent to all those who received copies of these documents.

With best wishes,
Gerry

Also enclosed translation of Supplement to La Vérité des Travailleurs and letter to NC members.

DOCUMENT 13k**Statement by G. Healy on *The Rise and Fall of Stalinism*, October 6, 1953**

1. This document was never formally voted unanimously at the IS. The real position is as follows:

a. The draft in French was read over to me in English by E. Germain prior to the IS meeting on June 20. It was impossible to take a decision on such a basis; and the IS agreed to send it out to all IEC members and call a further meeting towards the end of July.

b. Because of technical difficulties in translation, it was only possible to obtain a rough draft in English before this second meeting, but it seemed to me that the document should not be held up any longer (from going out to the sections, even though I had not completed a thorough study of it). Accordingly, I indicated that there was no opposition to the document going out under the name of the IS provided it was understood that amendments could still be moved right up to the Congress. This was agreed and *no formal* vote was taken.

2. Upon returning to my section I received a complete translation of the document and gave it the serious study it deserves. Arising from this, I want to declare that I cannot support this document in its present state, and I am taking steps to prepare a written intervention for the IEC accordingly.

Consequently, as a member of the IS I want it to be understood that I do not support this line.

DOCUMENT 14a**Letter from James P. Cannon to Farrell Dobbs,
September 18, 1953**

Dear Farrell:

I received your letter of September 16, reporting on the discussion in the New York group. Your thinking seems to have paralleled ours on every point, including the next steps to be taken. Vincent and I have been talking about the question a great deal and had come to identical conclusions as to what to do next.

These proposed steps presuppose a fundamental decision by the party leadership, to be taken with a full comprehension of all the implications. It must be clearly understood, before we start, that the new actions do not signify simply a continuation of the struggle with the Cochranite minority. They require a new decision on a new plane. It is a far more serious decision than the one we took in launching the open struggle against the Cochranites, and it is not the same kind of a decision.

The open break with the Cochranites did not signify a break-up of a previously existing coalition or alliance in the leadership. Contrary to what some may have thought at the time, the Cochranites never played any really essential, to say nothing of any indispensable part, in *the actual leadership* of the movement. This has been demonstrated to the hilt by the course of the leadership since the open break with the Cochranites last January.

There was a little change from previous times, but as far as the making of political decisions and the direction of party work are concerned, the change was something like the 'click' one hears when a railroad car passes from one rail to another. Moreover, the Cochranites never played any indispensable role in *the division of labour* among the leadership, or even in the general work of the party, as some may have thought. That has been demonstrated to the hilt too, especially since the organized campaign of sabotage proved its futility.

The situation on the international field is quite different. There we have had an actual alliance in the most important political work, and a

division of labour too. From this point of view an open break with the Paris leaders will be comparable to the big shake-up in 1940. The split with the Shachtmanites disrupted a long-standing coalition as well as a division of labour, and required a complete reorganization. We have to see clearly that there can be no other possible outcome of an open break with Pablo and Co.

I am not citing these consequences as an argument against the steps you propose to take. On the contrary, I am more and more convinced that this course is unavoidable. But before we start, all concerned should weigh the full consequences of the actions, as the Paris leaders apparently have already done for their part. All doubts and hesitations must be left behind them when the open warfare begins.

I doubt very much whether a *modus vivendi* can be re-established on the old basis, once the fight gets out into the open. The barest possibility of this will depend upon the relation of forces established in the open fight. As far as the SWP is concerned, the fight is practically over in this respect. The most favourable relation of forces we can expect in the next period has already been established. If the same success is recorded in England, the international battle will have already turned in favour of orthodox Trotskyism.

Vincent and I fully agree with the three proposals:

1. An appeal to all sections for solidarity with the SWP Majority in our fight against the Cochranite revisionists.
2. Preparation of a separate document on the international questions.
3. A Plenum of the Majority NC members soon after the drafts are ready to ratify the basic decision.

I think we can have this special gathering without too much expense. Since all the NC members on the West Coast have already discussed the whole problem fully during the past week at the L. A. Summer Camp, it would probably be agreeable if I came alone to represent the whole group. Since Vincent has participated in all the discussions here, and is already in agreement with all the decisions contemplated, I might also act as proxy for him — if the matter of expense is important.

We are having a full meeting of the L.A. NC group with Vincent next Sunday. I will write you further after this meeting.

Fraternally,
J. P. Cannon

DOCUMENT 14b**Agreements reached at London meeting,
October 3-4, 1953**

1. The delegates declare their political agreement on the international perspective on the character of the Soviet bureaucracy and Stalinism. They decide to undertake together the defence of Trotskyism against Pablist revisionism and the struggle against the liquidation of the Fourth International.

2. The English comrades will prepare a counter-document to the resolutions for the Fourth World Congress, which will have to be ready before the tendency conference.

3. The French comrades will edit a history of the struggle of the PCI against Pablist revisionism and the conditions of their exclusion.

b. A study on the development of Pablist revisionism since the Third World Congress by means of documents.

4. The different participants will make a public criticism as far as possible in the press of the practice of Pablist revisionism, taking account of the specific situation.

5. A meeting of the international tendency will take place at the end of October, in reality at a further date of the meeting on November 1 of the Provisional Committee.

6. A provisional committee is designated for co-ordination composed of the English, Swiss and French sections. Each section will have two members. Its headquarters will be in Paris.

7. Regular international contributions will be sent to the provisional committee.

8. All parties supporting the provisional committee will give a contribution to be fixed by the committee.

9. Immediate organization of contacts: Germany, Australia, Italy, Bolivia, Ceylon.

10. The struggle ought to come to a conclusion for the IEC in order to impose the changing of the agenda and the changing of the leadership.

11. The English will prepare a draft of the modification of the statutes.

Signed:

For France — *Renard, Bleibtreu*

For England — *Jerry*

For the Swiss — *Emile*

Individually — *Jo*

DOCUMENT 14c**Letter from George Breitman to James P.
Cannon, October 7, 1953**

Dear Jim:

There is some information available that I regard as significant, which I'd like to pass on to you. (You may already have it, but I got it so tardily and accidentally that you may not; I am not sure if all the other comrades attach the same significance to it that I do. We discussed it for the first time last night, and I'm telling you about it on the chance that it may be lost in the rush of other news passing back and forth.)

Some time ago (during the last month, I assume) a 'naive' rank and filer was holding a discussion with Sid Winn, a leading Cochranite (formerly on the City Committee). This comrade assumed that a majority of the International was with us, and said so. Winn's reply was approximately as follows (and remember I have this fourth-or fifth-hand): Yes, it's true you have a mechanical majority of the International, but we have a majority of the ideological leadership, and so on. He also said, in passing, that because of the peculiarities of the voting there, we (the majority) have the West German party with us.

Dave Weiss got a report about this discussion. About two weeks ago, or maybe less, Monroe, the Flint Cochranite, came to town and Dave ran into him. In the discussion Dave decided to use the approach of the 'naive' rank and filer and boldly told Monroe that of course we have a decisive majority of the International with us. Monroe's reply was very much like that of Winn's.

Was Winn expressing ideas of his own? It's hardly likely. Was Monroe's reply like Winn's merely because of coincidence? That's even less likely. The minority is a very tight caucus. Its members would not have such ideas unless they had received them from their

leaders, whom they surely have been asking questions about the international relation of forces. Also, the minority, I am sorry to say, is better informed about these matters than we are, if only because Pablo is in a better position to know where the different parties tend to stand.

Thus, with what you call my customary restraint, I have come to certain conclusions: The minority does not think it has the support of a majority of the International. Its estimate must be supported by information that we do not have available (the news about West Germany certainly falls into that category). Perhaps some of us have been unduly pessimistic about the outcome of an international showdown — with less cause than the minority has to be pessimistic.

At the meeting last night it was also reported that Bartell, in his discussion with Steve Roberts, had spoken in a derogatory manner about the size and influence of the International (the same kind of thing he started doing about our own party after he saw they were in a hopeless minority here). This is not the way he would talk about the International if he thought they had the majority; on the contrary. Also, it was reported that at a social last week members of the minority were speaking in a belittling manner about the Ceylon party.

Doesn't this tend to explain the hysterical and almost desperate tone of Pablo's recent letters and statements? Would he write that way unless there was a good psychological-political reason for it?

Also: we have been talking about the behaviour of the Pabloists, which to some has seemed possibly motivated by a desire to force some kind of showdown *before* the Congress takes place. Can it be for the aforementioned reason? Why should they risk a possible split before the Congress if they thought they'd have a majority there?

Then there is the argument about 'why don't you accept the same discipline in the International that you want the American minority to accept in the American party?' It seemed for a time that this was going to be a big pitch on their part, but it has been muted for the most part; certainly not put forward full-scale. Myra observed that she noted Pablo's answer to you on internationalism placed this argument within the framework of the past and present, rather than the future; there was no bold statement about letting the Congress decide. (I haven't checked this point myself yet.) This too fits in with the premise that they don't have a majority, and know it. And isn't it possible also that this premise has something to do with Pablo's repeated requests for a 'face-to-face' talk?

I won't go on further along this line. But it seems obvious to me that we ought to reflect on it carefully. It not only throws light on their tactics, I believe, but it must be weighed in formulating our own tactics. I will not enter into that myself, because I am not much of a tactician, but I believe it will have to condition our attitude to the Congress and our statements about the Congress. (Of course we can probe the thing further if that seems necessary.)

Comradely,
George Breitman

P.S. Have you noticed that Pablo, in his article of Sept. 9, answering your speech on internationalism, finds it necessary for some reason to say in his opening line that he did not see the text of your speech until Sept. 5? What in the world is the reason for that, or the significance he places on it? The IS letter of Sept. 3 makes clear reference to the speech in its sixth paragraph, even using quotation marks around certain words. How could they quote from it without having seen it? Furthermore, what is he trying to say by pretending that he hadn't seen the speech before Sept. 5 — that Clarke didn't show him the speech when he arrived in August, or mail it to him even earlier when he got it (in July, and possibly even in June)? Has he trapped himself through some over-use of duplicity? (These are rhetorical questions, and I don't want any answers; I just call it to your attention as a 16th rate matter that may possibly be of interest to you.)

DOCUMENT 14d

Letter from Farrell Dobbs to G. Healy,
October 25, 1953

Dear Jerry:

We have received your letter of October 12 and the discussion article by Tom, which we are putting in the bulletin. We are still awaiting your view on the memorandum on the 'Rise and Decline of Stalinism.' It seems best that this document not be circulated beyond the leading people of your own group until after our Plenum.

Since Jim's arrival in New York, we have been reviewing the trend of the international struggle and assessing the latest developments. We have read attentively all of your letters and they have had a profound influence on our thinking on the international question.

Most sinister of all is Pablo's ultimatum to you signifying his intention to move in and help the revisionist minority overthrow the majority in your party. We note that while launching this vicious attack on you, he remains much more cautious in his attitude toward us. There is a reason for that. He wants to keep us immobilized on the international arena and preoccupied with the struggle against our own revisionists to whom he has given only clandestine support, while he tries to cut to pieces, one at a time, your group and other orthodox Trotskyist groups.

We think the best service we can render the international movement is to cut through the whole web of Pabloite intrigue with an open challenge of their revisionist-liquidationist line. We think the time has come for an open appeal to the orthodox Trotskyists of the world to rally to save the Fourth International and throw out this usurping revisionist clique. The movement must be put on guard against the Pablo tactic of splits and expulsions, against his abuse of administrative control in an effort to repeat on an international scale their trick in France of overthrowing a majority with a minority.

In line with this decision to pass over from the defensive to the offensive, we are changing the whole character of the draft appeal we sent you. That draft limited itself to a description of revisionism in our party and Pablo's support of the revisionists, with an appeal for the aid of world orthodox Trotskyism in *our* fight. We now intend to issue from our Plenum an open manifesto to the world movement sounding a call to arms against the Pabloites on the *international* field.

The manifesto will take as its point of departure the criminal policies of Pabloism with regard to the revolutionary events in East Germany, France, Iran, and the new developments in the Soviet Union. We will demonstrate that the lines of political cleavage have become so deep and the Pabloite organizational methods so alien to our movement that a *modus vivendi* is no longer possible. The conduct of the Pabloites shows they disdain the real relationship of forces in the movement. They act as though Pablo and his coterie own the international. The orthodox Trotskyists must kick out Pablo and the whole clique around him who leave no room for a *modus vivendi* apart from complete submission to their criminal line.

It is necessary to recognize that a showdown cannot wait until the next Congress, as many had previously expected. The Pabloites have already shown by their actions in France and their movements and threats against you in Britain that they will not permit a democratic Congress. Their plan is to get rid of the orthodox Trotskyists before the Congress ever convenes. We must act now and act decisively. This means we must launch a counter-attack without delay. We can have no illusions that there can be a peaceful settlement or compromise with this gang.

This change in tactics, which has been unanimously decided on here, has arisen particularly from our deliberations of how we can best help you in your fight. As matters now stand, you are caught in a web of slanders and trumped-up legalisms that keep you on the defensive. You are compelled to fight on Pablo's ground with inexperienced comrades who can be taken in by his sowing of political confusion and his use of organizational intrigue.

A direct and open political challenge of Pablo by our Plenum turns everything around, cuts through his confusionist strategy and provides an excellent basis for you to pass over from the defensive to the offensive in support of our manifesto. You can thus quickly mobilize and arm for battle all the orthodox Trotskyists.

The fight we are now up against is no less vital and decisive for the future than the great battles waged 25 years ago, in which the original

Trotskyist cadres were assembled. In the face of these political imperatives, petty scandals and organizational manoeuvres pale into insignificance. Through an uncompromising political challenge you will quickly weld your forces together in a faction which will become the future movement in England.

If we permit the fight to be conducted much further on the present level, you run the unavoidable risk of having demoralization and confusion disrupt your movement. And that is what we fear most at the present time.

We had a preliminary test of the effectiveness of this change of tactics at an internal debate on the French general strike here in New York last Thursday night. In this discussion for the first time we opened up on the sacred cow, Pablo. The Cochranites seemed surprised and shocked that we dared to do so, while our own forces were elated that the war with Pablo is finally out in the open. The Cochranite surprise at our slashing attack on Pablo tends to confirm our estimate that he thought we were afraid to join open battle with him. He thought that by playing a crafty double game with us, he could keep us immobilized in the international fight until he had finished doing a French job on the British party.

The most decisive factor about the debate was the eagerness with which our rank and file responded to the signal that we are opening war on Pabloite revisionism and liquidationism in the world movement. We think this healthy reaction will be duplicated everywhere in the movement among those who have not forgotten what Trotsky taught them and who, as you have mentioned several times, have been waiting for the SWP to speak. Our movement everywhere was brought up on the teachings of Trotsky. As Morris said in our discussion yesterday, they have all read the same books as we have read and they know just as much as we do. As you indicated in your recent letter, there are manifold signs of uneasiness throughout the movement over the revisionist line of Pablo.

For all these reasons, we are absolutely confident that once the open challenge is made we will rapidly mobilize a decisive majority in the world movement for the defence of our orthodox principles. But to do so, the time has come to call everything by its right name, to speak out openly and that without delay.

By adopting an open manifesto against Pablo at our Plenum, we will be putting the gun to the head of his Cochranite supporters in our party. This means that the de-facto near-split that has existed in our party for the last several weeks will quickly be transformed into an

open break. For our part, we have absolutely nothing to lose from it and everything to gain. We do not contemplate any future reconciliation with these people.

A number of actions will naturally flow from this basic decision that is going to be made by our Plenum. We will work these out as we go along. The main line of them is already clear. The gist of it is that we are not going to be trapped in any legalisms by this usurping clique. We are going to have an open fight for control of the world movement.

Immediately after the Plenum, we must establish close organizational and consultative relations with orthodox Trotskyists everywhere, including those who have been unjustly expelled. We think a co-ordinating committee must be set up without unnecessary delay. We will send someone right after our Plenum to discuss this problem with you directly.

Comradely yours,
Farrell Dobbs

P.S. There is going to be a lot of material in our paper which will be most useful to you in your fight. If you will send us a list of all your people whom you want to get our press — either single copies or bundles — we will put them on our mailing list.

DOCUMENT 14e

Letter from Farrell Dobbs to G. Healy,
November 3, 1953

Dear Jerry:

We have your letters of October 25, 26 and 28.

From the Ceylon report it would appear that they are fighting along our general line and that we can expect support from that quarter in defence of orthodox Trotskyism.

There is a new situation here. As you will see from the enclosed letter, the Pablo-Cochran faction organized a complete boycott of the 25th Anniversary Celebration in New York. In our opinion this definitively consummates the split this disloyal faction has long been preparing. At the Plenum we intend to suspend from membership all of the Pablo-Cochran faction leaders and members who participated in the organized boycott of the New York meeting, or who refuse to repudiate in good faith this strikebreaking action. An immediate reorganization of all party branches will be carried out accordingly. The Marcy tendency has manifested a party-loyal attitude in opposition to the splitters.

The Pablo-Cochran faction claim they have a majority internationally, your party included, and are demanding to know if we will abide by majority rule as laid down by the 13th Plenum. It is clear that the Pablo clique would rather end up claiming their minority is the International than to be a minority within the International.

We think it would be a tactical mistake to attend their rigged IEC meeting which is obviously intended to further their tactic of splits and expulsions. We think the correct tactic to follow is to by-pass the IEC meeting and set up an International Committee of the Fourth International (Trotskyist) as against the IS Pablo clique.

The struggle should no longer be waged within a Pablo-rigged common centre, but as a battle between two centres for the allegiance

of the sections. We will come out in support of the orthodox Trotskyist centre in our press and hammer away at the Pabloites. There should be no more common publications or internal bulletins with them. On the contrary, we should have our own internal bulletins, nationally and internationally, for discussion among genuine Trotskyists. What we have to say to the Pabloites should not be placed in an internal bulletin but published in our press in the form of public attacks.

We urge that the contact committee you have already established constitute itself as the International Committee and proceed to function as the centre of the Fourth International (Trotskyist). This committee should not wait for the sanction of any broader meeting before establishing itself as the formal leadership of the orthodox Trotskyist centre. The International Committee is itself the result of an emergency gathering which has already changed the leadership. It should announce as one of its plans the organization of an honest discussion among genuine Trotskyists to prepare for an honest and democratic congress.

This tactical course would exclude any idea of presenting a counter-resolution at the Pablo-rigged IEC meeting. Instead our document attacking the IS resolutions could serve as a counter-political declaration against the Pabloites by the orthodox Trotskyists who will rally around the centre established by the International Committee.

We will strengthen the attack on Paragraph 15 of the IS resolution, as you suggest. In our view, it is not in order at this juncture to speculate about different wings in the Soviet bureaucracy in our polemic with the Pabloites. The restorationist tendency is determined sociologically. That is, the bureaucracy in its rise and in defence of its privileges has overthrown all conquests of October, except that of changed production and property relations. Accumulation of wealth in the hands of individual members of the bureaucratic caste imposes upon the bureaucracy a tendency to safeguard that wealth. They have thus introduced an inheritance law into the Soviet constitution, permitting wealth to be passed on. Ultimately the only safeguard for them would be the overthrow of property relations. But they have stopped short of that because of the resistance of the working class within the Soviet Union, the pressure of world revolutionary developments, and the decay of world capitalism.

This, in brief, is our point of view with regard to the question of the

restorationist tendency. We are, of course, open to discussion on the subject among orthodox Trotskyists as to how different sections of the bureaucracy will line up in a crisis. But the polemic against the Pabloites we think goes much deeper. At the heart of their line lies their falsification of the world objective situation, attributing to it an automatism which allegedly transforms the bureaucracy and even creates within it an ever-growing section with revolutionary potentialities. Their paragraph 15 is in our opinion a derivative of this general proposition rather than the theoretical keystone of their position.

It is our intention to send someone to consult with you as quickly as possible after our Plenum. However, we note by the latest Labour Action that Shachtman has been refused a passport after months of delay. This tightening up of the regulations may make it difficult or even impossible for us to send someone as quickly as we would like. In any case, bear in mind that Joe is fully authorized to represent us in all respects. His own inability to travel may necessitate holding important meetings at a place where he can be present. Or if you find it impossible to meet at a place where Joe can attend, he can designate a proxy to act with full authority. This procedure should reassure the comrades involved that they can count on our support.

We are taking steps to provide you all possible financial aid. If you are at present hardpressed, we suggest you arrange to borrow temporarily what funds you may need for emergency purposes.

Best regards
Farrell

DOCUMENT 14f**Resolution of the 25th Anniversary Plenum of
the SWP, November 7-8, 1953**

On Friday, October 30, the New York Local of the Socialist Workers Party held a public meeting to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the founding of the party, and combined this celebration with a wind-up rally in the New York municipal election campaign. A minority faction in the party, which had been carrying on a disloyal programme of sabotaging party work and party finances for several months, culminated this disloyal course with an organized boycott of the 25th Anniversary celebration in New York.

This treacherous, strike-breaking action constituted, in effect, an organized demonstration against the 25-year struggle of American Trotskyism, and at the same time, an act of objective aid to the Stalinists who expelled the initiating nucleus of American Trotskyism in October 1928.

The organized boycott of this meeting was, in effect, a demonstration against the campaign of the Socialist Workers Party in the New York municipal election.

All who participated in this treacherous, anti-party action have obviously consummated the split which they have long been preparing and have forfeited all right to membership in our party. Formally recording this fact, the 25th Anniversary Plenum of the Socialist Workers Party therefore resolves as follows:

1. The minority members of the National Committee who organized the boycott of our 25th Anniversary celebration in New York, namely: Cochran, Bartell, Frankel and Andrews, together with National Control Commission member Gold, are hereby suspended from the party.

2. All other minority members and alternates of the National Committee who fail to disavow and condemn the strikebreaking

boycott of our 25th Anniversary celebration, are likewise suspended from the party.

3. The Local Executive Committee of Local New York is instructed to reorganize and re-register all members of the New York Local individually, excluding from membership all those who participated in the boycott of the 25th Anniversary meeting, unless they individually disavow and condemn it.

4. All other branches of the party containing members of the minority faction are instructed to take similar action. In any case where the majority of the branch refuses to do so, the loyal party members are instructed to withdraw and reorganize themselves as a loyal branch of the party.

DOCUMENT 14g

Letter from Farrell Dobbs to G. Healy,
November 10, 1953

Dear Burns:

We have your letters of November 9, 12 and 13. We realize that you are now engaged in a fast-moving showdown struggle in which you will need all the help you can get. We have not yet broken through the legal entanglements in our efforts to send someone to consult with you, but be assured we will keep working at it. In the meantime, we will do the best we can by mail.

You seem to think that our tactical proposals set forth in my letter of November 3 would speed up things too much in regard to your internal situation. You state you are not yet in a position to come out openly for a rival centre to challenge Pablo's Comintern-like centre, but you will work in that direction across a period of time. You agree with our proposal not to attend the Pablo-rigged IEC and urge that we join you in issuing a call for an early Emergency Conference of all who participated in the Third Congress, including the French. By projecting such an Emergency Conference at which you say the political line would be decisive, you seem to feel that we would avoid organizational snares and place ourselves on the offensive with a positive proposal.

Although we agree with the broad tactical objectives you obviously have in mind in making this proposal, our analysis of the present situation leads us to the conclusion that a call for an Emergency Conference at the present time would enable Pablo to lay a new trap for us of the same kind he had planned for the IEC. The lines of division are not yet clearly drawn internationally; not everybody knows the score. Too many people are still susceptible to being duped by Pablo. The open confrontation of orthodox Trotskyism against Pablo's revisionist-liquidationist line is only just beginning. It has not yet reached a point where fundamental political issues can fully and

clearly break through the web of Pablo's intrigue. Thus, if an Emergency Conference were held at the present stage, Pablo would be in a good position to rig it like he has done with the IEC, keeping his grip on the administration and continuing the stab-in-the-back policy he has been using against orthodox Trotskyists, at least since 1951.

We are, therefore, of the opinion that it would be wrong to call for an Emergency Conference or an early Congress. What is needed above all right now is to expose Pablo's politics and organization methods while we carry on an honest discussion among genuine Trotskyists. In this way we can prepare for an honest and democratic international gathering under the aegis of genuine Trotskyists and out of which a genuine Trotskyist international leadership will be created, a leadership that will defend and apply the orthodox Trotskyist principles of the movement. To achieve this objective an orthodox Trotskyist centre must be openly created to contest the Pablo faction for allegiance of the sections. Although this has to be done soon, we do not insist it be done at one stroke. It can be done in stages. You don't have to call it a centre. The name International Committee of the Fourth International (Trotskyist) should be adequate for the creation of an actual centre without formally proclaiming it as such.

It could be developed, for example, something like the CIO developed from within the AFL. The CIO did not immediately proclaim itself a rival organization to the AFL. It fought from within the AFL for a policy of organizing industrial unions in the basic industries. However, the CIO did not hesitate to organize its own centre inside the AFL in opposition to the craft union centre of the old-line bureaucrats; and the CIO openly contended for the allegiance of international unions and even launched an organizational drive in basic industry, remaining all the time within the AFL and fighting for the adoption of an industrial-union policy by that organization. The question of who would split or be expelled was not at all settled in advance. By pursuing this policy, the CIO gathered around itself most of the viable forces within the AFL got a good start in organizing the unorganized before the break came, and in the end the AFL craft union bureaucrats were branded the splitters of the union movement.

This method is similar to the tactics we recommend in the present fight. We do not propose that orthodox Trotskyists break with the Fourth International. On the contrary, the task is to remove the revisionist-liquidationist Pabloite administration and replace it with an orthodox Trotskyist administration. The declared objective should

be to preserve the orthodox Trotskyist programme of the International and continue a true revolutionary course in the present complex world situation. To do so, it is necessary for the orthodox Trotskyists to move systematically and decisively toward the creation of their own centre, with the same boldness that the CIO moved against the AFL craft union bureaucrats. Our battle cry should be: No concessions to Cominternism! We intend to organize a democratic discussion among genuine Trotskyists in order to prepare an honest and democratic Congress, and in order to restore a genuine Trotskyist administration to the International. This cannot be done without an International Committee publishing its own bulletin.

As we see it, the problem for you within your party is not so much to find an organizational device with reference to the international battle but rather to make a concerted attack on Pablo's political and organizational methods. The Pabloite scandal-mongering and their organizational manoeuvres pale into insignificance before the vital and decisive political issues involved in the present great international controversy. We want to do everything we can to help you convey this understanding to your membership in order to harden and prepare them for the split that is bound to come in your party just as it came in ours.

You will have received by now the full text of our Open Letter to the Trotskyists of the World. Let us know what you think of it. We believe you will find helpful its restatement of Trotskyist fundamentals and its attack on Pablo's revisionism as manifested on East Germany, France, etc. In addition, the final draft of our criticism of 'The Rise and Decline of Stalinism' is now being mimeographed and will be forwarded to you within a day or two. An article by us on East Germany in the issue of Fourth International now on the press should also be an aid to you.

We realize the Open Letter will come as a shock to many comrades in your organization. But that is not at all negative. It will compel every comrade to ask himself what is happening to the International under Pablo's leadership. Each comrade will be compelled to raise himself above the low level of Pabloite chatter, gossip and scandal-mongering, and ask himself some very serious questions. Has the 25-year record of the SWP leadership shown them to be lightminded with regard to the world movement? Or have they been firm and consistent supporters of the world movement, sensitive to its needs and problems? Does not the 25-year record of the SWP leadership

make it objectively necessary for the comrades to carefully study the questions raised in the Open Letter before they permit themselves to be influenced by the Pabloite school for scandal? We think that a strong statement in this vein by yourself and other leading comrades as to why our Open Letter should be supported would be helpful.

You and other leading comrades are no doubt already telling your own story as to why you have broken with Pablo and what you think should now be done to prevent his unprincipled faction from breaking up the International.

We think it would also be a help to you if you would see Peng as soon as you can and get from him the whole story of the Pabloite intrigue against the Chinese. The appeal from Shanghai and Peng's open letter to the Chinese CP, which we recently printed in the paper, had been bottled up by Pablo since last spring. We learned of the existence of these documents only when we received them from Peng last month. The Pabloites over here are trying to defend the shameful suppression of the Shanghai appeal on the ground that it was 'poorly written.' The whole brutal tale of Pablo's treatment of Peng and the Chinese should be told to your membership. It will be most revealing to them. All indications are that Peng is completely with the orthodox Trotskyists as against the Pabloite revisionists and liquidators. We think close collaboration with him should be established.

In addition to the bill of indictment contained in our Open Letter, you might also tell the British comrades about Pablo's attempts to gag our press and impose his false line upon us. In his letters to us, Pablo has attacked the articles in our paper and magazine on the Beria purge, East Germany, etc. as 'based on schemas and old reminiscences.' He has demanded that the line set forth in 'The Rise and Decline of Stalinism' be followed in our press. We have been told that any objections we may have to his line should be confined to internal discussion.

Pablo thus tries to set himself up as the fount of all wisdom in interpreting events and determining the policy of the movement on a day-to-day basis. If anybody disagrees, he says, put it in the internal bulletin, but follow my line in your press. Then he tries to put a gag on the leading comrades in the internal discussion by means of the 'IS discipline' trick that he tried to pull on you and with which you are entirely familiar.

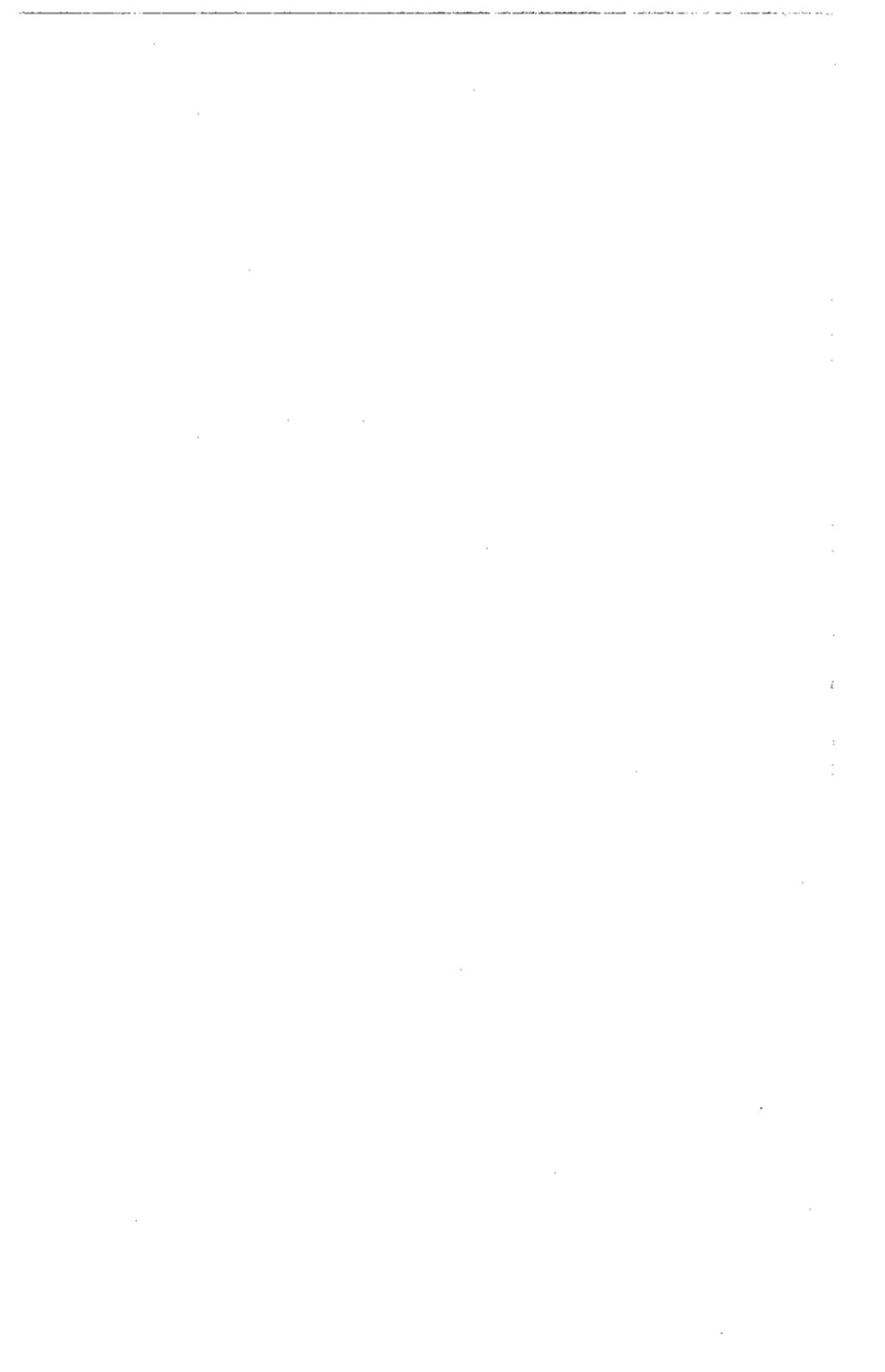
We read with interest the letter from Germain which you seem to think indicates he is wobbling. We are more inclined to the view that he is still straddling or trying to straddle. But it is too late for that. He

has to make up his mind one way or the other, just as everyone else must now do. If you talk with him, we believe you should make that unmistakably clear to him. However, if you can't succeed in getting him to join us now, you may be able at least to neutralize him. This is Pablo's battle, not Germain's. If he is not prepared to join us, he should stand aside.

In the final analysis, Germain and Pablo must come to a break. Germain's tendency is toward orthodoxy. His spirit, however, was broken by Pablo and Clarke in 1951. Joe can tell you about this. It was in January of 1951 when Clarke informed us that he and Pablo were preparing a break with the French and Germain. We protested against this and stopped it for the moment. Later Germain became taken in by them. The real problem for Germain is to regain his equilibrium. If he fails to do it now, he may do it later. He sought to arrange a talk with us during his recent trip. We indicated our readiness to see him and even offered to help finance his trip, but apparently Pablo succeeded in short-circuiting the project.

There is little for me to add concerning our Plenum which you do not already know from my previous report, from the information in the paper, and from the criticism of 'The Rise and Decline of Stalinism,' which will be sent to you soon. Right now we are in the process of ironing out, branch by branch, a few minor problems created by the split. Our ranks have taken the break in their stride and are everywhere manifesting an eagerness to go forward with party-building work.

Yours in solidarity,
Smith



Chapter Seven

The forming of the International Committee

In the 'Open Letter' of November 1953 (Document 15), Cannon and the SWP leadership declared the necessity of an irreversible break with Pabloite revisionism. Rarely referred to by them since the 're-unification' with the Pabloites in 1963, it did represent an important rallying point for the world forces of Trotskyism.

The differences within the International Committee which can in retrospect be seen to have existed even before the split, could only be brought out in the later struggles documented in the subsequent three volumes of this collection. The stand against revisionism in 1953 was essential to the development of Marxism and the fight for revolutionary leadership in the working class being made by the International Committee of the Fourth International today.

DOCUMENT 15**The *Open Letter* of the Socialist Workers Party,
November 16, 1953**

Dear Comrades,

On the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Trotskyist movement in the United States, the Plenum of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party sends its revolutionary socialist greetings to orthodox Trotskyists throughout the world.

Although the Socialist Workers Party, because of undemocratic laws passed by the Democrats and the Republicans, is no longer affiliated to the Fourth International — the World Party of Socialist Revolution founded by Leon Trotsky to carry on and fulfil the programme betrayed by the Second International of the Social Democrats and the Third International of the Stalinists — we take interest in the welfare of the world-wide organization created under the guidance of our martyred leader.

As is well known, the pioneer American Trotskyists 25 years ago brought the programme of Trotsky, suppressed by the Kremlin, to the attention of world public opinion. This act proved decisive in breaching the isolation imposed by the Stalinist bureaucracy on Trotsky and in laying the foundation for the Fourth International. With his exile shortly thereafter, Trotsky began an intimate and trusted collaboration with the leadership of the SWP that lasted to the day of his death.

The collaboration included joint efforts to organize revolutionary socialist parties in a number of countries. This culminated, as you know, in the launching of the Fourth International in 1938. The Transitional Programme, which remains the keystone of today's programme of the world Trotskyist movement, was written by Trotsky in collaboration with the leaders of the SWP and at his request was submitted by them for adoption at the Founding Congress.

The intimacy and thoroughness of the collaboration between Trotsky and the leadership of the SWP can be judged from the record of the struggle in defence of orthodox Trotskyist principles in 1939-40

against the Petty-Bourgeois Opposition headed by Burnham and Schachtman. That record has had a profound influence in shaping the Fourth International in the past 13 years.

After the murder of Trotsky by an agent of Stalin's secret police, the SWP took the lead in defending and advocating his teachings. We took the lead not from choice, but from necessity — the second world war forced the orthodox Trotskyists underground in many countries, especially in Europe under the Nazis. Together with Trotskyists in Latin America, Canada, England, Ceylon, India, Australia and elsewhere we did what we could to uphold the banner of orthodox Trotskyism through the difficult war years.

With the end of the war, we were gratified at the appearance in Europe of Trotskyists from the underground who undertook the organizational re-constitution of the Fourth International. Since we were barred from belonging to the Fourth International by reactionary laws, we placed all the greater hope in the emergence of a leadership capable of continuing the great tradition bequeathed to our world movement by Trotsky. We felt that the young, new leadership of the Fourth International in Europe must be given full confidence and support. When self-corrections of serious errors were made on the initiative of the comrades themselves, we felt that our course was proving justified.

However, we must now admit that the very freedom from sharp criticism which we together with others accorded this leadership helped open the way for the consolidation of an uncontrolled, secret, personal faction in the administration of the Fourth International which has abandoned the basic programme of Trotskyism.

This faction, centred around Pablo, is now working consciously and deliberately to disrupt, split, and break up the historically created cadres of Trotskyism in the various countries and to liquidate the Fourth International.

The Programme of Trotskyism

To show precisely what is involved, let us restate the fundamental principles on which the world Trotskyist movement is built:

- 1) The death agony of the capitalist system threatens the destruction of civilization through worsening depressions, world wars and barbaric manifestations like fascism. The development of atomic weapons today underlines the danger in the gravest possible way.

2) The descent into the abyss can be avoided only by replacing capitalism with the planned economy of socialism on a world scale and thus resuming the spiral of progress opened up by capitalism in its early days.

3) This can be accomplished only under the leadership of the working class in society. But the working class itself faces a crisis in leadership although the world relationship of social forces was never so favourable as today for the workers to take the road to power.

4) To organize itself for carrying out this world-historic aim, the working class in each country must construct a revolutionary socialist party in the pattern developed by Lenin; that is, a combat party capable of dialectically combining democracy and centralism — democracy in arriving at decisions, centralism in carrying them out; a leadership controlled by the ranks, ranks able to carry forward under fire in disciplined fashion.

5) The main obstacle to this is Stalinism, which attracts workers through exploiting the prestige of the October 1917 Revolution in Russia, only later, as it betrays their confidence, to hurl them either into the arms of the Social Democracy, into apathy, or back into illusions in capitalism. The penalty for these betrayals is paid by the working people in the form of consolidation of fascist or monarchist forces, and new outbreaks of war fostered and prepared by capitalism. From its inception, the Fourth International set as one of its major tasks the revolutionary overthrow of Stalinism inside and outside the USSR.

6) The need for flexible tactics facing many sections of the Fourth International, and parties or groups sympathetic to its programme, makes it all the more imperative that they know how to fight imperialism and all its petty-bourgeois agencies (such as nationalist formations or trade union bureaucracies) without capitulation to Stalinism; and, conversely, know how to fight Stalinism (which in the final analysis is a petty-bourgeois agency of imperialism) without capitulating to imperialism.

These fundamental principles established by Leon Trotsky retain full validity in the increasingly complex and fluid politics of the world today. In fact the revolutionary situations opening up on every hand as Trotsky foresaw, have only now brought full concreteness to what at one time may have appeared to be somewhat remote abstractions not intimately bound up with the living reality of the time. The truth

is that these principles now hold with increasing force both in political analysis and in the determination of the course of practical action.

Pablo's Revisionism

These principles have been abandoned by Pablo. In place of emphasizing the danger of a new barbarism, he sees the drive towards socialism as 'irreversible'; yet he does not see socialism coming within our generation or some generations to come. Instead he has advanced the concept of an 'engulfing' wave of revolutions that give birth to nothing but 'deformed', that is, Stalin-type workers' states which are to last for 'centuries'.

This reveals the utmost pessimism about the capacities of the working class, which is wholly in keeping with the ridicule he has lately voiced of the struggle to build independent revolutionary socialist parties. In place of holding to the main course of building independent revolutionary socialist parties by all tactical means, he looks to the Stalinist bureaucracy, or a decisive section of it, to so change itself under mass pressure as to accept the 'ideas' and 'programme' of Trotskyism. Under guise of the diplomacy required in tactical manoeuvres needed to approach workers in the camp of Stalinism in such countries as France, he now covers up the betrayals of Stalinism.

This course has already led to serious defections from the ranks of Trotskyism to the camp of Stalinism. The pro-Stalinist split in the Ceylon party is a warning to all Trotskyists everywhere of the tragic consequences of the illusions about Stalinism which Pabloism fosters.

In another document, we are submitting a detailed analysis of Pablo's revisionism. In this letter we will confine ourselves to some recent tests that show in the decisive field of action how far Pablo has gone in conciliation to Stalinism and how grave the danger is to the existence of the Fourth International.

With the death of Stalin, the Kremlin announced a series of concessions in the USSR, none of them political in character. In place of characterizing these as nothing but part of a manoeuvre aimed at further retrenchment of the usurping bureaucracy and part of the preparation for a leading bureaucrat to assume the mantle of Stalin, the Pabloite faction took the concessions as good coin, painted them up as political concessions, and even projected the possibility of the 'sharing of power' by the Stalinist bureaucracy with the workers (*Fourth International*, January-February, 1953, p. 13).

The 'sharing of power' concept, promulgated most bluntly by Clarke, a high priest of the Pablo cult, was indirectly sanctioned as dogma by Pablo himself in an unanswered but obviously leading question: Will the liquidation of the Stalinist regime take the form, Pablo asks, 'of violent inter-bureaucratic struggles between elements who will fight for the status quo, if not for turning back, and the more and more numerous elements drawn by the powerful pressure of the masses?' (*Fourth International*, March-April, 1953, p. 39).

This line fills the orthodox Trotskyist programme of political revolution against the Kremlin bureaucracy with a new content; namely, the revisionist position that the 'ideas' and 'programme' of Trotskyism will filter into and permeate the bureaucracy, or a decisive section of it, thus 'overthrowing' Stalinism in an unforeseen way.

In East Germany in June the workers rose against the Stalinist dominated government in one of the greatest demonstrations in the history of Germany. This was the first proletarian mass uprising against Stalinism since it usurped and consolidated power in the Soviet Union. How did Pablo respond to this epochal event?

Instead of clearly voicing the revolutionary political aspirations of the insurgent East German workers, Pablo covered up the counter-revolutionary Stalinist satraps who mobilized Soviet troops to put down the uprising. '... the Soviet leaders and those of the various "People's Democracies" and the Communist Parties could no longer falsify or ignore the profound meaning of these events. They have been obliged to continue along the road of still more ample and genuine concessions to avoid risking alienating themselves forever from support by the masses and from provoking still stronger explosions. From now on they will not be able to stop half-way. They will be obliged to dole out concessions to avoid more serious explosions in the immediate future and if possible to effect a transition "in a cold fashion" from the present situation to a situation more tolerable for the masses'. (*Statement of the IS of the Fourth International*. Published in the *Militant*, July 6).

Instead of demanding the withdrawal of Soviet troops — the sole force upholding the Stalinist government — Pablo fostered the illusion that 'more ample and genuine concessions' would be forthcoming from the Kremlin's gauleiters. Could Moscow have asked for better assistance as it proceeded to monstrously falsify the profound meaning of those events, branding the workers in revolt as 'fascists' and

'agents of American imperialism', and opening a wave of savage repression against them?

The French General Strike

In France, in August the greatest general strike in the history of the country broke out. Put in motion by the workers themselves against the will of their official leadership, it presented one of the most favourable openings in working class history for the development of a real struggle for power. Besides the workers, the farmers of France followed with demonstrations, indicating their strong dissatisfaction with the capitalist government.

The official leadership, both Social Democrats and Stalinists, betrayed this movement, doing their utmost to restrain it and avert the danger to French capitalism. In the history of betrayals it would be difficult to find a more abominable one if it is measured against the opportunity that was present.

How did the Pablo faction respond to this colossal event? They labelled the action of the Social Democrats a betrayal — but for the wrong reasons. The betrayal, they said, consisted of negotiating with the government behind the backs of the Stalinists. This betrayal, however, was a secondary one, deriving from their main crime, the refusal to set out on the road to taking power.

As for the Stalinists, the Pabloites covered up their betrayal. By that action they shared in the Stalinist betrayal. The sharpest criticism they found themselves capable of uttering against the counter-revolutionary course of the Stalinists, was to accuse them of 'lack' of policy.

This was a lie. The Stalinists had no 'lack' of policy. Their policy was to maintain the status quo in the interests of Kremlin foreign policy and thereby to help bolster tottering French capitalism.

But this was not all. Even for the internal party education of the French Trotskyists Pablo refused to characterize the Stalinist role as a betrayal. He noted 'the role of brake played, to one degree or another, by the leadership of the traditional organizations' — a betrayal is a mere 'brake'! — 'but also their capacity — especially of the Stalinist leadership — to yield to the pressure of the masses when this pressure becomes powerful as was the case during these strikes'. (*Political Note No. 1*).

One might expect this to be sufficient conciliation to Stalinism from

a leader who has abandoned orthodox Trotskyism but still seeks the cover of the Fourth International. However, Pablo went still further.

The Infamous Leaflet

A leaflet of his followers addressed to the workers at the Renault plant in Paris declared that in the general strike the Stalinist leadership of the CGT (main French trade union federation) 'was correct in not introducing demands other than those wanted by the workers'. This in face of the fact that the workers *by their actions* were demanding a Workers and Farmers Government.

Arbitrarily separating the Stalinist-headed unions from the Communist Party — evidence of the most mechanical thinking or evidence of deliberate design in covering up the Stalinists? — the Pabloites declared in their leaflet that so far as the significance of the strike and its perspectives were concerned 'this point only concerned the trade union secondarily. The criticism to make on this point does not apply to the CGT which is a trade union organization, which must first and foremost act as such, but to the parties whose role it was to point out the deep political significance of this movement and its consequences'. (Leaflet '*To the Workers' Organizations and to the Workers of Renault*', dated September 3, 1953. Signed by Frank, Mestre and Privas).

In these statements we see the complete abandonment of everything Trotsky taught us about the role and the responsibilities of the trade unions in the epoch of the death agony of capitalism.

Then the Pabloite leaflet 'criticizes' the French Communist Party for its 'absence of line', for simply placing itself 'on the level of the trade union movement instead of explaining to the workers that this strike was an important stage (!) in the crisis of French society, the prelude (!) to a vast class struggle, where the problem of workers power would be posed in order to save the country from capitalist swindling and open the way to socialism'.

If the Renault workers were to believe the Pabloites, all that the perfidious French Stalinist bureaucrats were guilty of was a trace of syndicalism instead of a deliberate betrayal of the biggest general strike in the history of France.

Pablo's approval of the policy of the CGT leadership seems scarcely credible, yet there is the inescapable fact staring one in the face. In the biggest general strike ever seen in France, Pablo blandly puts as

correct', a French version of Gompers' bourgeois policy of keeping the unions out of politics. And this in 1953!

If it is incorrect for the CGT leadership to advance political demands in consonance with objective needs including formation of a Workers and Farmers Government, then why is the Socialist Workers Party demanding of the present-day Gompers of the American trade union movement that they organize a Labour Party? A Labour Party that would aim at putting a Workers and Farmers Government in power in the United States?

Pablo's rubber-stamp OK appears in a still stranger light when we remind ourselves that the CGT leadership happens to be highly political. At the slightest gesture from the Kremlin, it is prepared to throw all the workers out on no matter what wild political adventure. Recall, for instance, its role in the events initiated by the anti-Ridgway demonstrations last year. These Stalinist trade union figures did not hesitate to call for strikes to protest the arrest of Duclos, a leader of the Communist Party.

The fact is that the CGT leadership revealed its highly political character once again in the general strikes. With all the skill of years of perfidy and double dealing, it deliberately tried to head off the workers, to stifle their initiative, to prevent the workers' political demands from breaking through. The Stalinist trade union leadership consciously betrayed. And it is this course of betrayal that Pablo calls 'correct'.

But even this does not complete the account. One of the principal aims of the Pabloite leaflet is to denounce French Trotskyists who conducted themselves in the Renault plant during the strike as genuine revolutionists. It specifically names two comrades who have been expelled from the Fourth International and its French Section for more than a year'. It states that this 'group has been expelled for reasons of indiscipline; and the orientation which it has followed, especially in the course of the last strike movement, is opposed to that actually defended by the PCI (French Section of the Fourth International)'. The reference to the 'group' is actually to the majority of the French Section of the Fourth International which was arbitrarily and unjustly expelled by Pablo.

Has the world Trotskyist movement ever before heard of such a scandal as officially denouncing Trotskyist militants to Stalinists and providing rationalizations to the workers for an abominable Stalinist betrayal?

It should be noted that the Pabloite denunciation of these comrades before the Stalinists follows the verdict of a workers' tribunal acquitting the Trotskyists in the Renault plant of slanders levelled at them by the Stalinists.

The American Pabloites

The test of these world events is sufficient, in our opinion, to indicate the depth of Pabloite conciliationism towards Stalinism. But we would like to submit for public inspection of the world Trotskyist movement some additional facts.

For over a year and a half, the Socialist Workers Party has been engaged in a struggle against a revisionist tendency headed by Cochran and Clarke. The struggle with this tendency has been one of the most severe in the history of our party. At bottom it is over the same fundamental questions that divided us from the Burnham-Schachtman group and the Morrow-Goldman group at the beginning and end of World War II. It is another attempt to revise and abandon our basic programme. It has involved the perspective of the American revolution, the character and role of the revolutionary party and its methods of organization, and the perspectives for the world Trotskyist movement.

During the post-war period a powerful bureaucracy consolidated itself in the American labour movement. This bureaucracy rests on a large layer of privileged, conservative workers who have been 'softened' by the conditions of war prosperity. This new privileged layer was recruited in large measure from the ranks of former militant sectors of the working class, from the same generation that founded the CIO.

The relative security and stability of their living conditions have temporarily paralysed the initiative and fighting spirit of those workers who previously were in the forefront of all militant class actions.

Cochranism is the manifestation of the pressure of this new labour aristocracy, with its petty-bourgeois ideology, upon the proletarian vanguard. The moods and tendencies of the passive, relatively satisfied layer of workers act as a powerful mechanism transmitting alien pressures into our own movement. The slogan of the Cochranites, 'Junk the old Trotskyism', expresses this mood.

The Cochranite tendency sees the powerful revolutionary potential of the American working class as some far-off prospect. They

lenounce as 'sectarian' the Marxist analysis which reveals the molecular processes creating new fighting regiments in the American proletariat.

Insofar as there are any progressive tendencies within the working class of the United States they see them only in the ranks or periphery of Stalinism and among 'sophisticated' union politicians — the rest of the class they consider so hopelessly dormant that they can be awakened only by the impact of atomic war.

Briefly, their position reveals: Loss of confidence in the perspective of the American revolution; loss of confidence in the role of the evolutionary party in general and the Socialist Workers Party in particular.

Features of Cochranism

As all the sections of the world movement well know from their own hard and difficult experiences, pressures exist far greater than prolonged war prosperity and the sweep of reaction such as has been bearing down upon us in the United States. But the factor that sustains cadres under the most difficult circumstances is the burning conviction of the theoretical correctness of our movement, the knowledge that they are the living means for advancing the historic mission of the working class, the understanding that to one degree or another the fate of humanity depends on what they do, the firm belief that whatever the momentary circumstances may be, the main line of historic development demands the creation of Leninist combat parties that will resolve the crisis of humanity through a victorious socialist revolution.

Cochranism is the substitution of scepticism and theoretical improvisations and journalist speculations for this orthodox Trotskyist world outlook. It is this that has made the struggle in the SWP irreconcilable in the same sense that the struggle with the Petty-Bourgeois Opposition in 1939-40 was irreconcilable.

The Cochranites have manifested the following features in the course of the struggle:

- 1) Disrespect for party tradition and the historic mission of the party. Hardly an opportunity is lost by the Cochranites to denigrate, ridicule and preach contempt for the 25-year tradition of American Trotskyism.

2) A tendency to replace principled Marxist politics with unprincipled combinations against the party 'regime'. Thus the Cochranite faction is composed of a bloc of contradictory elements. One group, centred mainly in New York, favours a kind of 'entry' tactic in the American Stalinist movement.

Another group, composed of conservatized union elements, centred primarily in Detroit, sees little to be gained by turning to the Stalinists. It bases its revisionist outlook on an overestimation of the stability and lasting power of the new labour bureaucracy.

Also attracted to Cochranism are individuals grown tired, who can no longer stand the pressures of the present adverse conditions and who are looking for a plausible rationalization with which to retire into inactivity.

The cement binding this unprincipled bloc is common hostility to orthodox Trotskyism.

3) A tendency to shift the party away from what our main arena must be in America, the politically unawakened workers of the mass production industries. The Cochranites, in effect, dropped the programme of transitional slogans and demands which the SWP has used as a bridge toward these workers and argued that the majority in continuing this course was adapting itself to the backwardness of the workers.

4) A conviction that all possibility of the American working class coming forward in radical opposition to American imperialism before the Third World War is ruled out.

5) Gross experimental theorizing with 'left' Stalinism that boils down to the extravagant belief that the Stalinists 'can no longer betray', that Stalinism includes a revolutionary side which makes it possible for the Stalinists to lead a revolution in the United States, in the process of which they would absorb Trotskyist 'ideas' so that the revolution would eventually 'right itself'.

6) Adaptation to Stalinism in the face of the new events. They support and defend the conciliation to Stalinism found in Pablo's interpretation of the downfall of Beria and the subsequent sweeping purges in the USSR. They repeat all the Pabloite arguments covering the counter-revolutionary role of Stalinism in the great uprising of the East German workers and the French general strike. They even interpret the turn of American Stalinism toward the Democratic Party as a mere 'right oscillation' within a 'left turn'.

7) Contempt for the traditions of Leninism in questions of organization. For a time they attempted to set up 'dual-power' in the party. When they were rebuffed by the overwhelming majority of the party at the May 1953 Plenum, they agreed in writing to abide by the rule of the majority and the political line as decided by the Plenum. Subsequently, they broke their agreement, renewing their factional sabotage of party activities on a more feverish and hysterical basis than ever.

Cochranism, whose main features we have indicated above, was never more than a weak minority in the party. It would never have amounted to more than the most feeble and sickly expression of pessimism had it not been for the aid and encouragement it received from Pablo behind the backs of the party leadership.

Pablo's secret encouragement and support was exposed soon after our May Plenum, and since then Pablo has been openly collaborating with the revisionist faction in our party and inspiring them in their campaign of sabotage of party finances, disruption of party work and preparations for a split.

The Pablo-Cochran faction finally culminated this disloyal course with an organized boycott in New York of the Twenty-fifth Anniversary Celebration of the party which was combined with a wind-up rally in the New York municipal election campaign.

This treacherous, strike-breaking action constituted, in effect, an organized demonstration against the 25-year struggle of American Trotskyism, and, at the same time, an act of objective aid to the Stalinists who expelled the initiating nucleus of American Trotskyism in October 1928.

The organized boycott of this meeting was, in effect, a demonstration against the campaign of the Socialist Workers Party in the New York municipal election.

All who participated in this treacherous, anti-party action obviously consummated the split which they had long been preparing and forfeited all right to membership in our party.

Formally recording this fact, the Twenty-fifth Anniversary Plenum of the SWP suspended the National Committee members who organized the boycott and declared that all members of the Pablo-Cochran faction who participated in this treacherous, strike-breaking action or who refuse to disavow it have by that fact placed themselves outside the ranks of the SWP.

Methods of the Comintern

Pablo's duplicity in presenting one face to the leadership of the SWP while secretly collaborating with the revisionist Cochranite tendency is a method that is alien to the tradition of Trotskyism. But there is a tradition to which it does belong — Stalinism. Such devices used by the Kremlin, were instrumental in corrupting the Communist International. Many of us had personal experience with all this in the 1923-28 period.

The evidence is now decisive that this way of operating is not an isolated aberration on the part of Pablo. A consistent pattern is apparent.

For instance, in one of the leading European sections of the Fourth International, an outstanding party leader received an order from Pablo, directing him to conduct himself as one 'who defends until the Fourth World Congress the majority line and the discipline of the International'. Along with the ultimatum Pablo threatened reprisals if his orders were not obeyed.

The 'majority' to which Pablo refers here is simply the modest label he places on himself and the small minority hypnotized by his revisionist novelties. Pablo's new line is in violent contradiction to the basic programme of Trotskyism. It is only beginning to be discussed in many parts of the world Trotskyist movement. Not having been backed by a single Trotskyist organization, it does not constitute the approved official line of the Fourth International.

The first reports we have received indicate outrage at his high-handed attempt to foist his revisionist views on the worldwide organization without waiting for either discussion or a vote. We have already enough information to state that the Fourth International is certain to reject Pablo's line by an overwhelming majority.

Pablo's autocratic demand to a leader of a section of the Fourth International to refrain from criticizing Pablo's revisionist political line is bad enough. But Pablo did not stop there. While trying to gag this leader and prevent him from participating in a free discussion in which the rank and file might benefit from his experience, knowledge and insight, Pablo proceeded to intervene organizationally, attempting to crystallize a minority revisionist faction to conduct war on the leadership of the section.

This procedure is out of the foul tradition of the Comintern as it

underwent degeneration under the influence of Stalinism. If there were no other issue than this, it would be necessary to fight Pabloism to a finish to save the Fourth International from internal corruption.

Such tactics have an obvious purpose. They are part of the preparation for a coup by the Pabloite minority. Utilizing Pablo's administrative control, they hope to impose his revisionist line on the Fourth International and wherever it is resisted to reply by splits and expulsions.

This Stalinist organizational course began, as is now quite clear, with Pablo's brutal abuse of administrative control in his disruptive campaign against the majority of the French section of the Fourth International more than a year and a half ago.

By fiat of the International Secretariat, the elected majority of the French section was forbidden to exercise its rights to lead the political and propaganda work of the party. Instead, the political bureau and the press were put under the control of a 'parity commission'.

At the time, we deeply disapproved this arbitrary action by which a minority was used to arbitrarily overturn a majority. As soon as we heard about it, we must admit that we made an error in not taking more vigorous action. This error was due to insufficient appreciation on our part of the real issues involved. We thought the differences between Pablo and the French section were tactical and this led us to side with Pablo, despite our misgivings about his organizational procedure, when, after months of disruptive factional struggle, the majority was expelled.

But at bottom the differences were programmatic in character. The fact is that the French comrades of the majority saw what was happening more clearly than we did. The Eighth Congress of their party declared that 'a grave danger menaces the future and even the existence of the Fourth International . . . Revisionist conceptions, born of cowardice and petty-bourgeois impressionism have appeared within its leadership. The still great weakness of the International, cut off from the life of the sections, has momentarily facilitated the installation of a system of personal rule, basing itself and its anti-democratic methods on revisionism of the Trotskyist programme and abandonment of the Marxist method'. (*La Verité* September 18, 1952).

The whole French situation must be re-examined in the light of subsequent developments. The role the majority of the French section played in the recent general strike demonstrated in the most

decisive way that they know how to uphold the fundamental principles of orthodox Trotskyism. The French section of the Fourth International was unjustly expelled. The French majority, grouped around the paper *La Vérité*, are the real Trotskyists of France and are so openly recognized by the SWP.

Particularly revolting is the slanderous misrepresentation Pablo has fostered of the political position of the Chinese section of the Fourth International. They have been pictured by the Pablo faction as 'sectarians', as 'fugitives from a revolution'.

Contrary to the impression deliberately created by the Pablo faction, the Chinese Trotskyists acted as genuine representatives of the Chinese proletariat. Through no fault of theirs they have been singled out as victims of the Mao regime in the way that Stalin singled out for execution the entire generation of Lenin's Bolsheviks in the USSR emulating the Noskes and Scheidemanns of Germany who singled out the Luxemburges and Liebknechts of the 1918 revolution for execution. But Pablo's line of conciliationism toward Stalinism leads him inexorably to touch up the Mao regime *couleur de rose* while putting grey tints on the firm, principled stand of our Chinese comrades.

What to do

To sum up: The lines of cleavage between Pablo's revisionism and orthodox Trotskyism are so deep that no compromise is possible either politically or organizationally. The Pablo faction has demonstrated that it will not permit democratic decisions truly reflecting majority opinion to be reached. They demand complete submission to their criminal policy. They are determined to drive all orthodox Trotskyists out of the Fourth International or to muzzle and handcuff them.

Their scheme has been to inject their Stalinist conciliationism piecemeal and likewise in piecemeal fashion, get rid of those who come to see what is happening and raise objections. That is the explanation for the strange ambiguity about many of the Pabloite formulations and diplomatic evasions.

Up to now the Pablo faction has had a certain success with this unprincipled and Machiavellian manoeuvrism. But the qualitative point of change has been reached. The political issues have broken through the manoeuvres and the fight is now a showdown.

If we may offer advice to the sections of the Fourth International from our enforced position outside the ranks, we think the time has come to act and act decisively. The time has come for the orthodox Trotskyist majority of the Fourth International to assert their will against Pablo's usurpation of authority.

They should in addition safeguard the administration of the affairs of the Fourth International by removing Pablo and his agents from office and replacing them with cadres who have proved in action that they know how to uphold orthodox Trotskyism and keep the movement on a correct course both politically and organizationally.

With fraternal Trotskyist greetings,

National Committee of the SWP.

DOCUMENT 16

Resolution forming the International Committee, November 23, 1953

The English, French, New Zealand and Swiss sections of the Fourth International have decided as follows:

1. We affirm our solidarity with the fundamental line of the appeal of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party to the Trotskyists throughout the world, and particularly with the definition therein of the programmatic bases of Trotskyism:

(1) The death agony of the capitalist system threatens the destruction of civilization through worsening depressions, world wars and barbaric manifestations like fascism. The development of atomic weapons today underlines the danger in the gravest possible way.

(2) The descent into the abyss can be avoided only by replacing capitalism with the planned economy of socialism on a world scale and thus resuming the spiral of progress opened up by capitalism in its early days.

(3) This can be accomplished only under the leadership of the working class as the one truly revolutionary class in society. But the working class itself faces a crisis in leadership although the world relationship of social forces was never so favorable as today for the workers to take the road to power.

(4) To organize itself for carrying out this world-historic aim the working class in each country must construct a revolutionary socialist party in the pattern developed by Lenin; that is, a combat party capable of dialectically combining democracy and centralism — democracy in arriving at decisions, centralism in carrying them out; a leadership controlled by the ranks, ranks able to carry forward under fire in disciplined fashion.

(5) The main obstacle to this is Stalinism, which attracts workers through exploiting the prestige of the October 1917 Revolution in Russia, only later, as it betrays their confidence, to hurl them either into the arms of the Social Democracy, into apathy, or back to illusions in capitalism. The penalty for these betrayals is paid by the working people in the form of consolidation of fascist and monarchist forces, and new outbreaks of wars

fostered and prepared by capitalism. From its inception, the Fourth International set as one of its major tasks the revolutionary overthrow of Stalinism inside and outside the USSR.

(6) The need for flexible tactics facing many sections of the Fourth International, and parties or groups sympathetic to its program, makes it all the more imperative that they know how to fight imperialism and all of its petty-bourgeois agencies (such as nationalist formations or trade-union bureaucracies) without capitulation to Stalinism; and, conversely, know how to fight Stalinism (which in the final analysis is a petty-bourgeois agency of imperialism) without capitulating to imperialism.

These fundamental principles established by Leon Trotsky retain full validity in the increasingly complex and fluid politics of the world today. In fact the revolutionary situations opening up on every hand as Trotsky foresaw, have only now brought full concreteness to what at one time may have appeared to be somewhat remote abstractions not intimately bound up with the living reality of the time. The truth is that these principles now hold with increasing force both in political analysis and in the determination of the course of practical action.

2. We consider as having forfeited its power the International Secretariat of the Pabloist usurpers, which is devoting its activity to the revisionism of Trotskyism, the liquidation of the International and the destruction of its cadres.

3. Representing the vast majority of the Trotskyist forces of the International, we decided to constitute an International Committee of the Fourth International.

4. We call on the leadership of all the sections of the Fourth International to establish relations with the leadership which represents the Trotskyist program and the majority of the forces of the International. Every responsible cadre, every Trotskyist militant concerned with the unity of the International and the future of his national section, must clearly and swiftly take a position as between the revisionist and liquidationist center of the Pabloist usurpers, and the International Committee of the Fourth International.

For the English Section: *Burns*

For the French Section: *Bleibtreu*

For the New Zealand Section: *Smith*

For the Swiss Section: *Jacques*

DOCUMENT 17**Document of the French Trotskyists,
October 1953***The successive stages of Pabloite revisionism*

1. With the Third World Congress the Fourth International entered upon a crisis which has steadily worsened and today threatens its very existence. The root of this crisis is to be found in the inculcation within the leadership of the International of an ideology alien to Trotskyism: revisionist and liquidationist Pablism.

2. The principal theoretical ideas of Pablism were formulated by Pablo as a personal contribution during the course of the discussion on the buffer zone (1949-50). Dazzled by the transformation of the productive relations in the buffer zone countries, attributing in addition the victory of the revolution in Yugoslavia and China under the leadership of centrist parties of Stalinist origin to the resources of Stalinism itself, Pablo, using the sectarian errors of the Chinese Trotskyists as a pretext, began a fundamental revision of our historical perspectives. In place of the conception of proletarian revolution he substituted that of centuries of transition between capitalism and socialism under bureaucratic rule; he introduced military-bureaucratic action by the Stalinist bureaucracy as an independent historical force, capable of taking the place of action by the exploited masses in accomplishing their historical tasks, he declared that Stalinism was objectively struggling for the proletarian revolution in capitalist countries and that in the USSR and buffer zone countries, it could only be reproached for causing suffering for the masses which was historically unnecessary; whereas the historical necessity of the Fourth International lies in the fact that Stalinism has 'definitively passed over to the side of bourgeois order' in the capitalist countries (that is to say, the Stalinist bureaucracy fights neither consciously nor 'unconsciously' for the proletarian revolution but seeks primarily to maintain the status quo in all spheres), and will lead the workers'

states to ruin in the USSR and in the buffer zone if it is not overthrown by the masses.

3. It is in 'Where Are We Going?' that Pablo develops these theoretical premises to their final conclusions and begins to draw the political and tactical conclusions from them. The revolutionary action of the exploited masses from here on are from him nothing more than a supplementary force to be added to the military and technical forces of the Stalinist bureaucracy whose nature and historical function have changed radically; history from him is no longer one of class struggle but that of the struggle of blocs, between the capitalist regime and the Stalinist world. He denies that the character of the period separating us from war (considered by him as imminent, anyway) is a distinct historical period involving specific tasks for Trotskyists, and under the designation 'war-revolution' proclaims the identity of a war conducted by the Kremlin bureaucracy with the proletarian revolution; he substitutes for the Trotskyist perspective of revolutionary overthrow of the bureaucracy that of an 'objective' leadership of the world revolution by the bureaucracy, and of a subsequent and gradual withering away of the bureaucracy with the development of the productive forces. Within such a perspective, the Fourth International loses all historical necessity, and even all meaning.

4. Thanks to his tactic of bureaucratic manipulation, accompanied by a clever camouflage, Pablo succeeded in introducing his basic ideas in a thinly veiled form into the theses of the Ninth Plenum of the International Executive Committee (subsequently adopted by the Third World Congress) and thus achieved this eclectic and contradictory mess. Strengthened by the majority he thus secured, he was able at the Tenth Plenum of the I.E.C. to develop the tactical conclusions of his liquidationist orientation. He predicted that the policy of the Kremlin bureaucracy and that of the Stalinist parties would increasingly develop leftward, while the masses would flock about them; from this he deduced an entrism tactic into the Stalinist parties with political capitulation by the Trotskyists, entrism 'sui generis': these ideas and this liquidationist tactic were subsequently extended to the reformist parties and to all mass organizations under petty-bourgeois leadership (the Bolivian MNR, the Peronist movement in Argentina, the Ibanist in Chile, etc. . . .).

5. However, events brought refutation after refutation to the Pabloist predictions. Following the 19th Congress of the C.P. of the USSR, the Stalinist parties throughout the world oriented their policies not

toward the left as Pablo had predicted but toward the right. With the policy of the United National Front, the present position of the Stalinist Parties such as the French CP and the Italian CP is far more rightist than at any time in the past. The revolutionary upsurge of the masses, of which the general strike of August 1953 in France has been the most startling manifestation up to now, has under these conditions swept the crisis of Stalinism to a higher level, setting the communist militants in direct conflict with their leaders, while for the first time in history, the radicalization of the masses in France is not passing into the channels of Stalinist organizations, which are continuing to lose their members. The decisive role of the independent revolutionary party as a pole for attracting and organizing communist militants who are in conflict with the Stalinist leadership thus shows up in a striking fashion.

In an equally striking fashion does it appear that the revolutionary upsurge in the capitalist countries, far from provoking the outbreak of a 'suicide-war' by imperialism, serves to delay the effective unleashing of the war.

Finally, the Kremlin bureaucracy, caught in a vise between imperialism marching toward counter-revolutionary war and the pressure of the proletarian masses, which have been stimulated by the progress of soviet economy and the worldwide revolutionary upsurge, and seeing the class equilibrium on a world scale broken, the equilibrium from which it was born and upon which its power in the USSR was founded, has entered a stage of convulsive agony which is tearing it into opposing tendencies; for, contrary to the declarations of Pablo, it is incapable *as a whole* of basing itself on the masses as against imperialism and the potentially restorationist tendencies in the USSR (Beria's orientation); and it is no less incapable *as a whole* of basing itself on the potentially restorationist tendencies as against the masses (Malenkov-Khrushchev orientation). Finally, it is more ready than ever to sacrifice the interests of the masses in countries like France and Italy, for example, as a price for even limited concessions of the bourgeoisie in foreign policy.

6. In the face of such a complete failure of his perspectives, Pablo has begun a large-scale operation of camouflage and political swindling, abandoning some of his fundamental positions and deliberately back-tracking, in order the better to hold on to the basic element: liquidation of the *political independence* of Trotskyism vis a vis the Kremlin bureaucracy and bureaucratic apparatuses in general.

'Objective conditions' yesterday imposed deformed workers' states for centuries. Today Pablo declares that nothing must interfere in the near future with establishing the widest proletarian democracy. War was imminent at the Third World Congress and the revolutionary upsurge could only precipitate imperialism into a 'suicide-war.' Today Pablo has the audacity to write that war has become 'possible at any time now' (so it wasn't yesterday?), either immediately or in 'several years'; that the revolutionary upsurge is delaying the war and may even prevent it! And he coldly concludes from this that 'our tactic' (outlined at the Third World Congress and at the Tenth Plenum of the I.E.C.) 'remains (!!!) valid.'

Whereas he refused, as the French majority especially demanded, to inscribe among the slogans of the Third World Congress the traditional Trotskyist slogan for the overthrow of Stalin, today he correctly declares that the struggle for the approaching overturn of the bureaucracy is one of the basic tasks of the International and speaks with tears in his voice of 'our Soviet brothers,' a subject which was taboo two years previously. Yesterday the victory of Mao Tse-Tung 'was not exactly a victory of Stalinism'; today Pablo correctly indicates what the majority of the ICP has stressed for three years, that it is only the *break* of the Chinese Communist Party with the Kremlin which permitted the victory of the Chinese revolution.

7. At the same time, Pablo is reaffirming and developing his liquidationist orientation: insistence upon an objective revolutionary process which is automatic and irresistible, and which subordinates the reformist and Stalinist bureaucratic apparatuses to itself, changes their nature and function before our eyes and is ever increasingly transforming them into instruments of the revolutionary will of the masses. The analysis of Pablo winds up by considering the problem of revolutionary leadership as 'objectively resolved,' and ignores the unequal development of the revolution in the backward countries and in the advanced countries, whereas it is precisely the delay of the proletarian revolution in the advanced countries which underscores the importance, historically more decisive today than ever before, of the conscious factor for the victory of the world revolution.

He ignores the pressure exerted by imperialism on the Kremlin bureaucracy, and above all, ignores the fact that the pressure exerted by the Soviet masses, far from transforming the role of the bureaucracy and compelling it to enter upon an irreversible course of ever increasing concessions to the masses, is, on the contrary, strengthen-

ing its counter-revolutionary vigilance in self-defense. He foresees, contrary to the factual evidence and counter to principles, a co-direction of the world revolutionary movement by the Kremlin and the masses during the entire transitional epoch. He does not understand that the policy of the Kremlin will continue to oscillate right up to the end, up to its disappearance, and pastes the same label on the Beria course, during which the leading oligarchy had attempted to find a support in the masses against the restorationist forces and imperialism, and upon the Khrushchev-Malenkov course, during which the leading oligarchy is searching for a support in the restorationist forces against the masses.

For Pablo the historical mission of the Fourth International has lost all meaning. The 'objective revolutionary process,' under the aegis of the Kremlin, allied with the masses, is taking its place very well indeed. That is why he is mercilessly bent upon liquidating the Trotskyist forces, under the pretext of integrating them into the 'movement of the masses as it exists.'

The salvation of the Fourth International imperatively demands the immediate eviction of the liquidationist leadership. A democratic discussion must then be opened within the world-wide Trotskyist movement on all problems left suspended, befogged or falsified by the Pabloist leadership during three years. Within this framework, it will be indispensable for the health of the International that the greatest self-criticism be carried through on all phases and causes of the development of the Pabloist gangrene.

DOCUMENT 18Editorial of *The Militant*, December 21, 1953*Fourth International rallies against Pablo*

The Fourth International, the World Party of the Socialist Revolution founded by Leon Trotsky, has recently been affected by an internal crisis. The power and mass influence of Stalinism in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, Asia and Western Europe overwhelmed a small faction in the leading committee led by Pablo and caused it to veer in the direction of becoming a 'left' wing of Stalinism.

Such a political symptom is extremely dangerous. If it engulfed the International it would mean its certain death as a revolutionary force. But the Fourth International can not easily be derailed. The genuine Trotskyists are now meeting Pabloite revisionism in a struggle that has every promise of success.

We are pleased to report that the Fourth International is moving ahead with sure and firm steps to assert the will of the overwhelming majority of the world Trotskyist movement against the usurpation of the Pablo faction.

The French, British, Swiss and New Zealand sections have formed an International Committee of the Fourth International. They have issued a declaration to all sections reaffirming the basic Trotskyist program and calling on the cadres of the world movement to struggle for the life of the Fourth International against ruin at the hands of the Pabloites.

The International Committee charges the Pabloites with the crime of covering up the current betrayals of Stalinism and attempting to foist a dictatorial rule on the International in the interest of the new revisionist doctrine of Pablo.

The International Committee condemns the Pabloites for having dared to speak to the East German workers in the name of Trotsky's

Fourth International as nothing but luke-warm 'critics' of the Stalinist counter-revolutionaries, and for having refused to demand the withdrawal of the Kremlin's troops from East Germany although Moscow used these troops to suppress the East German workers.

The International Committee condemns the Pabloites for covering up the betrayal of the Stalinists in the French general strike of last August, and the betrayal of the Stalinists in Iran in the same month.

The organization of the International Committee signifies that the Fourth International has once again proved its historic viability. It shows that no force on earth external or internal, can destroy it.

Reactionary enemies and cynics may try to gain comfort from this struggle within the Fourth International. These people cannot understand that the International is a living revolutionary organism that can mature and measure up to its historic responsibility precisely through such internal struggles. They are part of the hard school of preparation for the greatest step forward humanity has yet taken — the world socialist revolution.

We hail the formation of the International Committee of the Fourth International. Because we are compelled to remain outside the International organization due to the reactionary Voorhis Law of 1940, we are all the more interested and concerned with the development of the Fourth International. The International Committee insures the line of revolutionary continuity that extends from Lenin, through Trotsky and into the future victory of socialist mankind.

DOCUMENT 19**Letter from Farrell Dobbs to co-thinkers in
England and France, December 3, 1953**

Dear Comrades,

We note that the November 22 conference of representatives of the British, French, New Zealand, and Swiss sections proposed an Emergency International Conference within two or three months. So far as we can determine, the motivation for this conference appears to be that it is necessary in order to give authority to the International Committee of the Fourth International (Trotskyist) and in order to save some of the weaker sections in Europe from demoralization at the hands of the Pabloites.

In our opinion, the International Committee already has all the authority it needs, representing as it does an initiating group of four important sections, and it will gain further authority as additional sections rally to its support. An Emergency Conference instead of giving authority to the International Committee could have the opposite result. Such a conference would confront people with the necessity of making organizational decisions when the central need is for discussion of political ideas. It could open the way for Pabloite organizational maneuvers when the task is to hit the Pabloites with political polemics.

It would be incorrect in our view to determine the question of an international gathering on the basis of Europe alone or on the basis of areas where the struggle is now most acute or has already been concluded. It is important to think in the broadest world terms in connection with any contemplated international gathering.

A hasty conference would not be likely to influence weak sections, except perhaps the wrong way. Waverers who could in time be won by us through political polemic would be considered Pablo supporters.

Similarly, any section that for whatever reason could not be represented at the conference or would not be in a position to express itself in connection with the conference would be counted in the Pablo camp. Given time, however, we can present such a solid front against Pablo that it will destroy any pretense on his part of representing anything at all.

We note also that reference is made to the 'provisional' character of the International Committee. We think this concept should be dropped. There is nothing at all provisional about the participation of the sections that have already initiated the International Committee. Nor will there be anything provisional about the action of the sections who will later come to support the Committee.

The term 'provisional' implies that we concede Pablo a majority in the International. It conflicts with the need to make clear that the International is composed, not of Pablo's rigged majority on the IS and IEC, but of the functioning parties and groups throughout the world who base themselves on the Trotskyist program. From its start the International Committee constitutes the coordinating body whose task is to mobilize these genuine Trotskyists for a finish fight with Pablo.

The immediate functions of the International Committee, as we see it, should be to: develop contacts everywhere in the world; publish an internal bulletin in the name of the Committee for a democratic discussion among genuine Trotskyists; conduct public polemics against the Pabloites in the press of the sections; and provide supplementary information to the genuine Trotskyists everywhere on developments in the different sections.

We believe this fight will be decided, not by an Emergency Conference, but by a showdown that will take place section by section. In this showdown the International Committee should appeal in its name for allegiance to genuine Trotskyism as against the revisionist-liquidationist IS of Pablo. Thus the central task of the International Committee in the next period would be to enlarge, country by country, the circle of its adherents. As further forces come to its support the Committee can be expanded in order to increase its influence and authority.

Once all the sections have declared themselves, the time will have come to take up concretely the convening on a democratic basis, not of an Emergency Conference, but of the Fourth Congress of the Fourth International.

The views set forth in this letter represent the collective opinion of the leading comrades here. If you find yourself in disagreement with these views, we hope you will write us as soon as possible so we can reach a common understanding and coordinate our actions accordingly.

Fraternally,
Smith



Appendix

Documents of the International Secretariat

The documents reprinted in this appendix are taken from the material issued by Pablo and his majority faction in the immediate period of the split, and provide necessary background to the main body of material in this volume which gives the detailed record of relations between the forces which formed the International Committee.

These letters and statements from the Pabloite spokesmen are characterised by the fundamental objectivism which was later to prove such a fatal trap for the SWP itself. Cannon was able in 1953 to conduct the fight against Pablo, reacting against the open liquidation into the Stalinist parties in the name of 'new reality', but was unable to take the split to its methodological roots. Pablo and his collaborators have the aim in these statements of characterising Cannon's opposition as a manifestation of 'American exceptionalism' against the International, and of covering up the principled nature of the differences. At every point Pablo, Germain and their American collaborators are seeking only to obscure the basic direction of their political line: the liquidation of the Fourth International and the abandonment of the strategy of building independent revolutionary parties.

DOCUMENT 20a**Letter from the IS to Sam Gordon,
September 3, 1953**

To Comrade Tom
Comrade,

The IS, as you should know, is informed in detail on your factional activity against the International. It profoundly regrets this irresponsible attitude on the part of a leading comrade, who has at other times participated in the international leadership, and to whom it had in full confidence even recently confided important tasks. We insistently request that you cease such activity which places you in flagrant opposition with the statutes and the rules of functioning of the International. Temporarily residing in England, we ask you to integrate yourself in our national section as a member as is stipulated in the statutes of the International and to submit to its discipline. We call upon you also to utilize, for the expression of your differences with the International, as we have recommended to you on several occasions, the normal discussion channels through written documents which we will submit to the entire International.

The IS

DOCUMENT 20b**Letter from the Bureau of the IS to G. Healy,
September 23, 1953***Rough Translation*

Dear Comrade Burns,

We are aware in detail of what has just taken place at the meeting of your NC and of your attitude in particular.

Before the struggle is opened in your section and before the IS and the IEC take a position on it, as they have the duty to do, very firmly to preserve the political and organizational discipline of the International, more particularly in what concerns you as a member above all of the IEC and of the IS, and before this struggle demoralizes, as it will probably be in danger of doing, a series of elements of your organization which is so restrained in spite of everything, we advise you very strongly:

a. To circumscribe strictly the struggle on the political plane of ideas, conducting yourself as a member above all of the IEC and of the IS who defends until the 4th World Congress the majority line and the discipline of the International.

b. To cease to act as a member of the majority American faction and to await from it the political line to defend, and to cease to have circulated its documents in your faction in England, before you make known to the IS and to the IEC your eventual political divergences.

c. To abstain from any organizational measure in opposition to the comrades in your section who defend, as they ought, as you ought to do yourself first of all, the line and the discipline of the International.

d. To reach thereon an agreement with the comrades on the normal functioning of the organization, as a section of the International and not as an independent national unit.

The IS and, we are certain, the IEC will never accept the organizational measures which you have proposed against the defenders of the

line and the discipline of the International. They will judge with an extreme severity your attitude if you persist. We shall never in any case leave without defence the comrades who are devoted to the line and the discipline of the International. We shall invite them as we have the duty, to remain extremely firm on their bases and to accept no other discipline above that of the International. We shall address ourselves directly to the section.

You have reached a decisive crossroad in your political life in the International. Do not let yourself be carried away by your impulsive and authoritarian temperament. Pay attention, Comrade B, you are an element which the International wishes to keep in its bosom. No one prevents you from having finally reached political opinions which diverge from ours and the internal regime of the International gives you all guarantees to express them and make them known throughout the International. But in the framework of a sound democratic centralism which preserves the essence of our movement as a world party and not a mechanical assembly of national groups. We do not wish to return to what has been the prehistory of our movement. Do not deceive yourself on this.

Think again and again, without considerations of false prestige, pride, etc., but as a Bolshevik, Trotskyist leader. The fate of a part at least of your section and of yourself is at stake. The International will appreciate enormously if you recover possession of yourself again, even at this moment. It is our sense of responsibility which urges us to write to you thus, in spite of your extraordinary attitude all this recent time and at the time of your recent NC. Do not think that we are intimidated or machiavelian. We are in reality more convinced than ever of the support of the overwhelming majority of the International, including in the end your own section.

With our internationalist communist salutations,
The Bureau of the IS

DOCUMENT 20c**Letter from Michel Pablo to George Novack,
September 24, 1953**

Dear Comrade,

Still no reply from you to our letters of August 10, 1953, of September 3, 1953, together with that informing you of the convening of the plenum at the end of November. I have before me a document by Morris: 'Remarks on the Rise and Fall of Stalinism,' which explains the delay. You are discussing amongst yourselves beforehand to arrive at a line which will be opposed to the IS document opening the discussion for the Fourth Congress. That is naturally your right. However, I can only regret the way in which this preparation of a faction (moreover not simply American but International) is being done against the line that you declared only yesterday was common to us.

I can only regret the combination of a simultaneous organizational and political attack you are preparing against 'Paris', and which will cause immense harm to our international movement. What reasons can explain this unbelievable about-face? This furious assault upon a common organizational and political achievement? Already Jerry, criminally encouraged by you, has sowed a terrible crisis in his section which will end who knows where, which will demoralize his weakest elements in every way, and which will now halt for a long period the extremely encouraging progress of recent times. The international as a whole has taken a constructive road since the Third World Congress everywhere realizing more or less important progress, full of confidence and optimism. Its leadership appeared more homogeneous and united than ever. You know all that very well, for you followed this evolution very closely, and witnessed it on many occasions in your own section. What has happened meantime?

The factional struggle amongst yourself which, far from being

fomented by Paris, or more particularly by me, has deep roots in the American situation, the evolution and situation of your own organization in particular. You wanted the IS and myself personally to pledge ourselves basically to support you against the minority. When you saw that that was not possible, for no one here was ready to pronounce themselves on the political essence of this matter, since the political differences over the American situation in particular did not really appear clearly, you concluded that it was above all necessary to centre the struggle against 'Paris,' before returning again against your own minority and definitively settling accounts with it. What baffling logic!

But don't you understand that apart, I repeat, from the immense harm you will thus cause the international movement, cancelling all your positive work done up to now in this field, you will demoralize your own organization. For who will swallow so easily what you have already said and what you will be forced by the logic of your new road to say still further on the International, its leadership, its past and present line, its perspectives? For naturally, you will be led to revise all up and down the line '*through and through*,' to fundamentally oppose yourself against the Third World Congress, to take the opposite of everything you have said, written and done in these recent years.

It is essentially Bleibtreu and Tom who will appear to be right and it is upon them and their extreme positions that you will align yourself. Morris has already launched himself on that road. Hesitating at nothing, he wants to 're-Trotskyize Trotskyism,' and sets himself lightly to the task. Can you really read what he writes without becoming indignant at the manner in which he presents our thought, without deploring the lamentable confusion, without recalling the confusionist, sectarian and profoundly pessimistic writings of Bleibtreu, without even recalling the struggle with the right-wing in France, and even with Morrow. Here is a serious, responsible man, whom we had always respected who, without faltering, is now to write that we 'are revising and liquidating' Trotskyism as no one else has ever done. Here are his 'arguments':

We are revising the Trotskyist appraisal of the objective situation. We are revising the Trotskyist appraisal of the role of the party. We are exaggerating the objective revolutionary period which has issued from the Second World War, we profess an infantile and romantic optimism in that respect. We minimize the role of the revolutionary

party and the Fourth International, and we are quite simply liquidating it in reality!

All this in reference to the document 'Rise and Decline,' which is not principally occupied either with the objective situation, the role of the party and the FI, but with a more precise subject: the past, present and future of Stalinism. Along with the 'Rise and Decline' we have presented another document bearing the title: 'To Construct Genuine Marxist-Revolutionary Parties, To thus assure the victory of the world socialist revolution.'

A lengthy final section of this document which is moreover entirely occupied with these ideas is devoted to the more special role of the Fourth International (how to understand its functioning, its perspectives, etc.). However, Comrade Morris knows nothing about all that. Like so many others in the past, he wants to see repeated in each document, and on each page of each document, generalities and axioms which 'guarantee' the continuity of the tradition. Otherwise our severe censor is ready to cry scandal.

As for the so-called 'revision' of the objective character of the period we are living in which 'Rise and Decline' contains, it is the same as that of the Third World Congress and all the documents and analyses made since then by the International. I promise you that we will have a very lively discussion on this matter, since it is really fundamental. But to return to the 'Rise and Decline.'

Our censor has found that the citation from the *Transitional Programme* on the programme of the political revolution in the SU is amputated at its end. Why, asks the clever comrade Morris, it is not at all accidental, and he embroiders a whole novel of political explanation on this point for people who are both very honest and very intelligent in discussion. But the 'Rise and Decline' cites the *Transitional Programme* in respect to the *programme* of the political revolution, and not the *means* or the *end*, of this revolution. The means is revolutionary action of the masses, guided by the revolutionary party. The aim is the overthrow of the bureaucracy. All that is not the *programme*. And what is cited is above all the *programme*.

The two other ideas — by what means to realize this *programme*, and for what end — all that moreover is to be found in the text (very explicitly stated and underlined).

Another example of Comrade Morris' intelligent manner of cutting up the text and discovering its 'revisionism,' he isolated one phrase from the preface of the text which refers to the role of the FI *in relation*

to the crisis of Stalinism. He extracts from that the *entire* role of the Fourth consists for us only in that. I repeat, an entire other text is devoted to this question, as well as an entire part at the end of 'Rise and Decline.' But the very essence of this text is, moreover, to show how much our task finds itself facilitated, etc., in the new conditions of disintegration beginning within Stalinism: this main obstacle on the road to the construction of genuine revolutionary parties and a new leadership. But in reality, what is involved with Morris is not a simple enterprise of a wrong interpretation of a text which is, moreover so clear. There is actually at bottom a profound divergence between us and him.

It consists in the manner of appraising the objective situation and its dialectical relations with the party. For us, the fundamental and determining thing is actually the objective conditions upon which in the last analysis there depends the possibility of creating, not small groups labeling themselves parties, but genuine revolutionary mass parties. For us, it is not the previous existence of such parties which determines whether a situation is pre-revolutionary or revolutionary, but the objective conditions of the capitalist regime. The party does not create this situation, it simply accelerates it if it exists, and intervenes as decisive element only to assure the victory of the masses fundamentally set into motion by the objective conditions.

On the other hand, the party, the decisive element from this viewpoint, is not created in a chemical retort, outside of a given objective setting, in no matter what objective conditions. Neither the study of the 'classics' nor any other similar means can supply a lack of favourable objective conditions. All that is so elementary, so often debated in the workers' movement, and in our own movement, that it is merely ridiculous to return to it and insist upon it. All that we are doing tends to the creation of genuine revolutionary mass parties, not in order to thus create revolutionary situations, but to accelerate their ripening, and above all, to have them culminate in the conquest of power, which is impossible without the party, etc. That is also likewise the meaning of the phrase in the *Transitional Programme*: 'Only the Party of the Fourth International is capable of leading the Soviet Masses to Insurrection.' That is to say, not to *revolt*, but to the revolution, *in the sense of the conquest of power*.

If we insist so much on the objective conditions and the revolutionary movement of the masses that these engender, if we have analyzed as we have done, the new period issuing from the Second World War,

the new conditions of capitalist and imperialist domination, the new relation of global forces between the forces of the revolution in all its forms, and those of imperialism, that is only to set forth the favourable and real perspectives for the formation of revolutionary mass parties and of the Fourth International. To wish to overthrow this manner of viewing and setting forth the revolutionary character of the situation, above all, by the previous existence of such parties, is truly to be shut off in a blind alley, at bottom as idealistic and pessimistic as can be. Parisot and Morrow stuffed us with similar conceptions.

Morris reproaches us for our optimism which is fictitious in addition, according to him. It seems that we expect everything from the objective situation, etc. We expect the essential thing from the revolutionary movement of the masses, that is true, from the revolutionary potentialities of the class, which creates its vanguard, the party, in its struggle. The party is created in the struggles of the class, by the class. Any other conception of its construction is bookish, idealistic and sectarian.

As for what is or is not the present period, its relationship of forces, etc., we shall speak at length in the international discussion. We shall then see who is revising on this plane, and who is maintaining the line hitherto unanimously adopted. We will also see who minimizes the forces of the enemy or of the revolution, who is submitting to pressure, and what is its class nature, who sees in the Korean armistice only 'important concessions to imperialism' and not the greatest defeat American imperialism has yet had, with what eyes we look at the SU today, the Chinese Revolution, the other anti-capitalist states, how this one and that appraises the new revolutionary potentialities in all these countries since Stalin's death, the mass movement in Western Europe and in the colonies, etc. We will see all that in detail.

Morris calls his contribution 'Re-Trotskyize Trotskyism.' He sets himself up as a defender of our traditions in the process of being 'revised and liquidated.' You know as well as I what Lenin and Trotsky said a thousand times about the people 'of the old guard,' the 'Old Bolsheviks' stuck to their dear schemas, their formulas, their citations. The tradition of Leninism, of Trotskyism, of Marxism above all consists in the study of new realities, with a fresh and critical spirit, rid of all conservatism. That was true at all times in the past. It must be now an absolutely imperious need in an essentially new period, extremely dynamic, perpetually changing and so complex.

The solution of our problems is not to be found in any book of the

'classics.' It is to be found in the application of their method to current conditions, an application which demands a great intellectual effort, mastery of this method, and profound understanding of the actual facts of the situation. I am certain that the very great majority of our movement is now of such a disposition. It will never go backward. It will cast off scholasticism, conservatism of thought, sectarianism in all its forms, and it will go forward. The destiny of our movement is lighted up in a more promising and grandiose manner than ever. Despite all obstacles it will be achieved.

I write you all this without equivocation, as I feel it, for I am genuinely upset over what is happening amongst you, over your actions and your document. For I know what immense harm all that will provoke despite everything, in our ranks. For I cannot believe that you will march along this road up to the end. For your political thinking appeared to me to espouse the same lines as ours. For finally, I still want to believe that at least some among you will resist the fatal course which is being projected, and that you will stop it.

We hope that you will soon reply to us, among other matters on our request for a meeting. No one can understand so prolonged a silence, so strange at the very moment when there is being developed such an activity and elaboration and organization of an international faction.

Fraternally,
Pablo

DOCUMENT 20d

Letter from Michel Pablo to George Novack,
October 3, 1953

Dear Friend:

I fear it will soon be midnight in our relations. Your Plenum risks crystallizing yourself on a position fundamentally hostile to our line, to the line which we had in common until recently. Tell Old Jim not to commit this foolishness, as the French say (and pardon the expression). We have nothing, and I personally, have nothing against you. We do not like this struggle against you.

We still think it possible to arrive at clarifying certain questions before you take a definitive position, to dissipate misunderstandings, to reduce, if not to eliminate or fill up, the gulf which now seems to separate us. Provided we can arrive at discussing face to face with you. Your stubbornness in refusing any such contact, of hiding yourself in a so-called haughtiness is deprived of any sense.

You are surely going toward a break with the rest of the movement (its overwhelming majority), the weakening and setback of your own organization. Why all that? There is undeniably political divergences between you and us, a different way of viewing certain things, for we live in Europe over which the shadow of the Revolution is cast and you in America, the incontestable citadel of the power and reaction of imperialism.

But despite that we have a common formation and past which can, perhaps, permit continuing living together in the same organization. Let us make an attempt to verify this possibility. The harsh, ultimastic, rigid, manner camouflaged by big words about conserving orthodoxy against revisionism, etc. make no impression here. We all understand well what is involved. Don't have any idle illusions about that.

I write you, counting on your political intelligence, although your practical attitude strongly disillusioned me. If you have any small influence upon Jim, tell him not to commit the irreparable. Tell him to see us, to see me. It is worth the trouble.

Fraternally,
Gabe

DOCUMENT 21

Resolution of the Cochranite minority of the SWP Political Committee on the internal party situation, November 1953

1. Internationalism and Our International Relations

1. The Fourth International was set up in 1938 under Trotsky's guidance as 'a single world-wide organization, under a centralized international leadership, and a single discipline.' (*Statutes of Founding Conference.*) It has continued to function to this day with these organizational conceptions.

2. Naturally, due to the weakness of the sections and the poverty of material resources, the International could not and cannot exercise the authority of a world organization representing mass parties. Its activities remain limited by the reality of its influence and possibilities. But the functioning of the organization and representative character of its leadership improved steadily in the period after the war, and represents today the highest point of effectiveness yet achieved by the International since its foundation. Especially was its role as ideological leader discharged magnificently with the Third World Congress reorientation and rearmament of the world movement.

3. The actual functioning of the leading bodies and personalities of the International was, until recent weeks, approved by the public opinion of our whole movement, and similarly esteemed by the leadership of the SWP. In the two cases of recent years where disciplinary actions were invoked (in relation to the Haston group in England, the Bleibtreu group in France), the measures pursued were approved by representative International bodies, and supported by our own observers as well.

4. Cannon's speech of May 18, 'Internationalism and the SWP' — the policy of the Majority caucus — represents a fundamental break with this whole tradition of internationalism which has always animated the Trotskyist movement. The proposal to convert the International into a federationist, letter-box form of organization, a centre solely for the exchange of opinions and information, represents a regression towards national and sectarian exclusiveness. The attack on the International has as its purpose nothing less than an attempt to blow up the International organization, give by indirection, intrigue and subterfuge *de facto* leadership to the Cannon caucus and convert the other parties into satellites. It is probably as infamous and irresponsible an intrigue as has ever been launched in the history of world Trotskyism.

5. The discussion up to the May plenum demonstrated that the Cannon faction leaders were, at best, politically confused and disoriented, and did not grasp the new world reality. In recent months a veritable gulf has developed between ourselves and the mainstream of world Trotskyism on the one hand, and the Cannon faction on the other.

Cannon's Social Democratic conception of internationalism and his threats to split the International do not derive from this or that grievance over its functioning that he may have been nurturing for the past several years. Such criticisms can always be discussed on their merits and settled on their merits. Cannon's break with internationalism stems from the growing hostility of his caucus toward the policies and political direction of the International movement. His caucus has broken with the main lines of the Third World Congress on the nature of the epoch, how the revolutionary mass parties are to be built, etc., etc. His caucus has reversed its former attitude and effected a reapproachment with the Stalinophobe-sectarian Bleibtreu group in France. The SWP press has been subverted into a Cannon caucus sheet, and polemical centre against the policies of world Trotskyism. This political break with our movement is now climaxed by Cannon's drive to split the International.

II. The May 1953 Plenum 'Peace Agreement' and How It Was Broken

At the final sessions of the May 1953 plenum, the Cannon caucus leaders reversed their previous course of 'no compromise' and 'war to the death' on the Minority, and proposed a peace agreement to us. We

accepted the proposals and entered into the agreement in good faith. The agreement recognized the reality of the existence of faction formations, proposed to organize collaboration in the leadership, and to continue the discussion in a more moderate and restrained form.

The ink was scarcely dry on our respective signatures than the Majority leaders proceeded to tear the agreement to shreds and make a mockery of the proposed collaboration:

1. A few weeks after the plenum, the Cannon leaders declared war on us in New York out of a clear sky. They started a drive to purge Bartell and his administration from leadership of the New York local. They brusquely rejected every one of our conciliatory proposals. They introduced a new concept of authoritarian organization that the Majority caucus has to have the 'power' in a local administration, in effect barring members of a minority from holding positions of responsibility in the localities while loyally carrying out party decisions. This crude campaign to dump Bartell and the other New York local leaders was a political reprisal, pure and simple, as the record of the comrades involved was an admittedly excellent one.

2. At the same time we learned that immediately with the conclusion of the plenum, Cannon, the new 'Foreign Secretary' of the Majority caucus stepped up a character-assassination campaign against Pablo. In his speech to the Majority caucus in New York on May 18, Cannon admitted: 'We have no tangible evidence to prove that there is any conspiracy against us, or any actions against us, on the international field.' Yet immediately after the plenum, he accused Pablo in a private poison-pen letter to 'Dear Tom,' dated June 4, of instigating a 'power fight' in the SWP, an accusation based not on evidence, but his private 'deductions.' He proposed to 'Dear Tom' to help organize an international faction on the 'principled' basis of who is for or against Cannon; in other words, as a clique, which intends to formulate its political platform as it goes along.

3. The collaboration called for in the May plenum agreement has been from the first — as practiced by the Majority faction leaders — an empty gesture, with no positive content. The Majority leaders make their decisions in their private caucus meetings, and then come into the Secretariat or PC and read off their decisions to us. There is absolutely no give-and-take. The 'collaboration' is strictly limited to permitting us to make counter-motions or amendments, and then voting our propositions down. The degenerate Haston clique ran its

two-bit dictatorship in the British RCP by excluding the minority from the Political Committee. The same monolithic purpose is achieved by the Cannon caucus — except with a little more finesse.

4. The Cannonites arrogate to themselves the right to proclaim by fiat the 'party line' on any and all questions without submitting their private caucus decisions for adoption by any legal party body. As the PC minority Statement of October 5 shows, this was the way they set party policy on recent developments in the USSR, as on most other questions, and at the same time suppressed articles of the Minority on the same subject matter. They opened the magazine by private caucus decision to attacks on the Minority — under the same compulsion that pushed the Shachtmanites in 1940 to justify themselves before Stalinophobe public opinion — but would not print the Minority polemics against the Majority. They adopted no clear-cut official positions, but preferred to operate under the hazy banner of a 'general party line' which, in practice, they interpreted as license to write and do anything they pleased.

This exercise of 'leadership' via an uncontrolled clique was climaxed by convoking the present plenum in the manner of a faction conspiracy through cutting out the Minority representatives from all participation, and even information as to the nature, the purpose, or the agenda of the plenum. The aim of this high-handed usurpation is to drive the opposition out of the party, so that the Cannon clique can conduct its war and carry through its split against the International without hindrance.

III. Conclusions on Nature of Cannon Faction

The foregoing experiences since the May plenum added to that of the previous year's struggle permit the drawing of firm conclusions as to the nature of the Cannon group and where it is heading.

1. The present Cannon faction was gangrenous at its very birth. It consolidated itself from the start, not on the basis of a secure political platform, which it lacked, but on prestige, tradition, seniority, personal loyalties and sentimental attachments.

2. The Cannon caucus leaders openly voiced the concept at the May plenum that the faction debate constituted only a naked 'power struggle' on both sides, and they triumphantly announced that they had emerged as the victors in the 'power struggle.' They thereby flaunted their disorientation and degeneration in the party's face and

attempted to legitimize their concept of personal leadership and clique politics.

3. Devising their political line from day to day because of this or that pressure, impression, or momentary need, the Cannon caucus leaders maintained themselves as a majority on the basis of vague, general doctrinaire pronouncements, which, in practice, enable them to exercise leadership as an arbitrary and uncontrolled clique. Thus, democratic centralism has been scrapped in favour of clique politics, and personal leadership has been substituted for a political line.

4. The Cannon caucus leaders never honoured the agreement to which they adhered at the Plenum. It proved beyond them. They demonstrated in life that they are too ingrown and politically dis-oriented, too thoroughly indoctrinated with mysticism about their 'ordained leadership,' and hypnotized with crackpot notions of 'power' to actually understand what it means to practice collaboration with another Party tendency or faction. They make speeches on holiday occasions about 'Leninist organization principles,' but they do not understand them and they reject them when put to the test.

5. But no clique can long survive in our organization without filling its political vacuity with some programme. As the pre-plenum discussion progressed, it was becoming clear that the Cannon caucus was hardening its scholastic traits, providing 'theoretical' grounding for its ultimativistic approach, deepening its sectarian habits of thought, political outlook and positions. Since the May plenum, the sectarian ossification of the Cannonites is proceeding apace. Unless the process is halted — and reversed — the Cannonites are due to emerge as the new De Leonism of the American radical movement. On the international field, what began as a personal intrigue against Pablo, is already developed as a full-blown campaign to dynamite the International, and furnish a rallying centre for all the conservative, retrogressive, sectarian tendencies, based upon the past.

The 'new sectarianism' reflects no trend of circles in the American labour movement, or even of American radicalism, but arises out of the petrification of the 'old Trotskyists,' who have succumbed to the environment bred of a quarter century of isolation, and who have taken refuge in a make-believe world of their own creation, getting a vicarious thrill of playing at 'revolution.' If the 'Old Guard' — as it denominates itself — goes through with its project to cut itself off from the last remaining sources of critical public opinion represented by the opposition and our co-thinkers abroad, it will signify that ossification has conquered.

In this event, the present Cannon faction — the museum pieces of the 'Old Guard' combined with the Weiss contingent of YPSL's — would have no future in the American labour movement. Its old role as popularizer of Trotsky's programme and struggle is played out. It will be engulfed by the events of our epoch as were the 'old Wobblies' three decades ago, who did not understand in their time the new world of the Russian Revolution and the post First World War period, and could not comprehend the new problems and tasks imposed on revolutionists. The future in this country as elsewhere is with the mainstream of World Trotskyism which understands the new epoch, and the tasks of the revolutionists in fusing themselves with other left-wing forces to form the mass revolutionary parties of tomorrow — and thus validate the Trotskyist struggle and programme.

IV. Tasks of This Plenum

In view of the fact that the 5-month interval between the May plenum and the present one has made clear that the gulf between the opposition and the Cannon faction has widened immeasurably, pointed up by the growing deep-going differences on a host of key questions;

In view of the fact that the SWP press has been converted into a caucus sheet pushing policies in direct contradiction to and violation of the basic lines of the Third World Congress, endorsed by the 1952 SWP convention;

In view of the fact that the Cannon caucus leaders have come into sharp collision with our International leaders and the mainstream of world Trotskyist thought, and now threaten to split the International movement;

The plenum declares:

1. That the present period of discussion preparatory for the Fourth World Congress shall be utilized for the full exposition of the authoritative positions of the Majority and Minority as well as other tendencies within the SWP.

2. That the Majority faction leaders stand instructed to practice collaboration in the leadership and organization of party activities, to cease circumventing, ignoring and excluding the representatives of the Minority, so that the discussion can proceed in a calm and objective atmosphere, and achieve the maximum in clarity and the political education of the membership.

3. That the party press must reflect the basic positions of the Third

World Congress which has been adopted by the latest SWP convention and constitute party law, and that the Cannon faction leaders stand instructed to confine their attacks on these positions to the internal discussion.

4. That, since the magazine has been permitted to carry attacks on the Minority, it be opened for a limited discussion permitting the publication of the authoritative positions of the Minority on the USSR and East Germany.

5. That both the Majority and Minority stand instructed to participate loyally in the discussions and preparations for the Fourth World Congress, and to abide by majority rule in line with democratic centralist practices upon the conclusion of the discussion and the adoption of the Congress decisions; an organization principle that applies, and is to be applied, not only nationally, but internationally.

6. The plenum further declares that all threats, intrigues and campaigns to break with the International movement are a crime against World Trotskyism, and calls upon the Majority faction leaders to remember their responsibilities before history, and to discharge their obligations as responsible and disciplined revolutionists.

DOCUMENT 22

Letter from the Bureau of the IS to the November 7-8 Plenum of the SWP National Committee, November 3, 1953

Dear Comrades,

For a number of months now the IS has asked for a face-to-face discussion with a delegation of members of your majority, and subsequently with a representative delegation of your entire NC in order to limit, if not remove, the difficulties which have arisen between your leadership and the International leadership.

More recently, despite the documents which have come to us and despite the activity which your majority has undertaken against the International leadership, we again emphasized the necessity for such a meeting before the taking of a definitive position on your part.

In place of any other reply to this request, we were simply informed of the convening of your Plenum. We then asked you to communicate, as we have the right and the duty of doing, the precise agenda as well as the documents which would be finally submitted. We know that such documents are now circulating both amongst yourselves and elsewhere.

This request is all the more justified since we have no other means of participating in the discussions of your Plenum, the presence of any one of us, as we ardently desired, being excluded for obvious reasons.

But again, up to this time, at least a week before your Plenum, we have received no reply.

Everything is proceeding as though the majority of your NC has taken the decision to ignore the International leadership from now on, to place it before the accomplished fact, and subject it to the pressure of a kind of ultimatum.

Ask yourselves what is the deepest meaning of such a strange attitude, unique in the annals of our principled and democratic movement.

Is it not exceedingly disturbing that a hostile activity is being developed by your leadership in the International before the taking of any clear political position and without the International leadership having prevented you in any way from expressing your possible divergences through the normal channels of the preparatory discussion for the Fourth World Congress?

Here we are in November 1953, that is to say, more than four months after the documents for the Fourth World Congress were submitted to you, without yet knowing in any responsible manner what your precise position is toward them.

To build a faction under such conditions, then to bring it forth brusquely in the light of day and then violently oppose it to the International leadership becomes, frankly, an unprincipled, unspeakable operation profoundly alien to the traditions and nature of our movement. It can only reflect motives other than mere political divergences. It already appears as a most deep-going break in our ranks and you ought to be the first to be disturbed by its real significance and consequences.

The political basis of this faction is possibly that indicated by Comrade Cannon in his June 4, 1953 letter to Comrade Tom: whether or not there is alignment on the positions of your majority in its differences with the minority. Along this line Comrade Cannon asked to find out who are your 'friends' or your 'enemies' in the International.

This conception also appears to us absolutely indefensible and alien to our traditions.

The International cannot align itself on this or that position of a national order and cannot identify itself with any national faction. On the other hand, it does not know either 'friends' or 'enemies' within our movement, but simply ideological tendencies all treated on the basis of absolute equality.

To wish the contrary is to want to repeat the history of the Stalinist faction in the Soviet Union after Lenin's death, which Russified the Third International and converted it into an appendage of the leading clique of the Russian Communist Party.

The International has the right and duty to pronounce politically on the differences which have arisen in any national section, once these differences become politically precise and clear.

Such was not the case, in our opinion, with your internal struggle up to your May 1953 Plenum. This struggle began, in our opinion, in

confusion and extraordinary factional tension before its political content clearly developed.

The gravity of the accusations launched, without being proved by written documents, the threats, from the beginning, of split, the changes in the course of the struggle of the principal motive attributed by the majority to the minority (propaganda group against independent party, then tendency capitulating to Stalinism, then a defeatist tendency toward the American working class and its perspectives, finally at the May Plenum the struggle for power) were not of a character to clarify the discussion and permit us to give our opinion, in full awareness and confidence, on the real political content of the differences.

Accordingly, we saluted the resolution unanimously voted at your May 1953 Plenum, for it corresponded to our own conceptions and suggestions on the future conduct of the discussion in your organization: to conduct it on an exclusively ideological ground without calumnies or threats of split, as Trotsky proposed during the struggle against Shachtman in 1939-40, and by fully guaranteeing in this way the rights of the majority and minority.

But our surprise and indignation were great when we learned of the letter sent immediately after the Plenum, coming after his so magnanimous closing speech at the latter, and without any new fact intervening, by Comrade Cannon to Comrade Tom, envisaging the constitution of an international preventive faction against some future eventual interference of the IS in 'the affairs' of your party, and organized on a 'basis of military discipline.'

From this moment it became clear to us that your majority, deceived, disillusioned by not having received the support it counted on from us in its struggle against the minority, turned against 'Paris' before again turning against the minority to definitively settle accounts with it.

On the other hand we were not deceived by the efforts from that time on to find as well a political platform different from that of the International leadership undertaken from the beginning for quite other motives. We became acquainted with this attempt at a platform through the Stein document factionally circulating in the International and recently by another 'draft' which repeats and amplifies its line.

Certain articles in *The Militant* moreover do not leave any doubt on certain aspects of the line that you now want to elaborate contrary to

that of the International and connecting with the extreme positions of the confusionist, sectarian and anti-International groups like that of Bleibtreu in France.

It is naturally your right to arrive even tardily in formulating essential differences with the line of the Third World Congress and that of the documents presented for the Fourth World Congress which are its equal. But so long as the conception of our International is a world party, regulated by a healthy regime of democratic centralism, remains valid, we protest against procedures which place themselves outside this regime and could culminate only in the breaking of the unity of the International.

We likewise protest with equal energy against the so-called ideological and political polemics against the line of the International which strangely resemble the worse calumnies of Bleibtreu and his acolytes and which have provoked in so recent a past our common indignation. Among others, against the calumnious and stupid campaign which now re-echoes our so-called 'revisionism' and our 'capitulation before' Stalinism, with the aim of grouping together on the lowest level in an unprincipled bloc all the confusionist, sectarian, Stalinophobe and retrograde elements and tendencies in the International.

An enormous responsibility rests on your Plenum, comrades, regarding your relations with the rest of our movement, which in its overwhelming majority is attached more firmly than ever to the line and organization of the International.

Do not have any empty illusions on that score.

Your choice seems to us a very precise one: either you recognize the democratic-centralist regime of the International, the line and the discipline issuing from its Congresses and defended by its directing organisms, the IEC and the IS, and develop within the framework of this regime with all its consequences your possible political divergences with the present leadership of the International, the legal depository of the line of the Third World Congress and that of the 10th, 11th, 12th and 13th IEC Plenums; or else you ought clearly to formulate another organizational conception different from that of the statutes of the International voted at the Second World Congress and based on its present reality, that we will then submit to the judgment of the next IEC Plenum.

We are absolutely convinced that the IEC wishes to permit, and effectively assure, the broadest and most democratic political discussion in the International.

The preparation of the World Congress will be discussed in detail by our next Plenum to which you are invited to send a representative delegation of your organization.

The IEC Plenum will culminate easily and unanimously, we wish to believe, in the adoption of measures concerning the discussion and convening of the Fourth World Congress, giving full guarantee and satisfaction to all organizations and members of the International.

In these conditions no hostile organizational activity will consequently be justified. We would thus then enter into a political discussion on the basis of precise texts defining everyone's ideas and line.

The Fourth World Congress will democratically settle the disputed questions and we declare that we will be the first to respect its decisions in every respect, whatever they are.

Nevertheless, we do not fail to emphasize once again, guided by our sense of responsibility, in this letter and at this last moment what we have repeated in all our appeals for a number of months now addressed to your majority.

Avoid a fundamental political crystallization on this or that line before a previous discussion between delegations responsible to your leadership and the IS or the IEC.

Put above any other consideration the unity of our International movement, the unity of your own organization.

With fraternal greetings.
The IS Bureau

DOCUMENT 23**Statement of the Cochran-Clarke-Bartell faction
on the split in the SWP, November 11, 1953**

The split in the SWP, which Cannon threatened from the very opening of the fight in February, 1952, has now been carried through by his caucus. By his own testimony, he tried repeatedly to quarantine and drive out of the party the leaders of the opposition, but for almost two years, he was thwarted by the 'waverers,' 'weaklings,' and 'grandmothers of the male sex' — to use his own words — on the National Committee. Finally, by dint of unremitting and unrestrained factional effort, he whipped his own caucus into shape, the full fruits of which was the calling of the National Committee into a plenary session on November 7, and, as the first order of business, expelling the Minority leaders in something less than half an hour, while demanding a McCarthyite 'loyalty oath' from the rest of the membership. One has to go to the Stalinist movement for any comparison with this high-handed, bureaucratic outrage.

Cannon has been hatching, maneuvering, contriving, conspiring, intriguing for almost two years to expel the Minority leaders — and at the final execution of his criminal project, he could only offer the flimsiest of pretexts, or more accurately, no pretext at all, if we disregard the slanderous, lying bombast about our alleged 'strikebreaking.'

The purpose of this charge is to distract attention from the clear record that the Cannon caucus has cut out the Minority representatives from all participation and direction of party activity and work, and has been actively lining up its cohorts for the past five weeks to jam through the split at the plenum. The wheels were set in motion

when the PC at its September 30 meeting decided to call a plenum, but refused to inform us about, a) the purpose of the plenum; b) the agenda of the plenum; c) the number of points on the agenda; d) what resolutions, or documents, or motions, or suggestions would be submitted, or whether anything would be submitted; e) the line of the plenum documents, if any; f) what reporters would report, or ought to prepare, on what topics, etc.

This piece of arrogant usurpation was followed up in the next weeks by completely circumventing, ignoring and excluding our representatives from all decisions, and directing party affairs without any reference to us. The October 30 public meeting — like many other projects — was organized on the basis that the 25-year tradition was the private monopoly of the Cannon caucus. We concluded that we would no longer be supine victims of these unilateral, strong-arm tactics that had repeatedly been used on the Minority, and decided not to attend the open meeting, as an organized protest — long overdue — against the dictatorial methods of the Cannon machine.

How the Peace Agreement Was Broken

Actually, the present split was implicit as soon as the Cannon caucus leaders cynically tore up the peace agreement signed by both sides at the May 1953 plenum. You will all recall that at the final sessions of this plenum, Cannon reversed his previous course of 'no compromise' and 'war to the death' on the Minority and proposed a peace agreement to us. We accepted the proposals in good faith. The agreement recognized the existence of faction formations, proposed to organize collaboration in the leadership, and to continue the discussion in a more moderate and restrained form. But the ink was scarcely dry on our respective signatures than the Majority leaders made a mockery of the supposed agreement and the proposed collaboration.

A few weeks after the May plenum, the Cannon leaders declared war on us in New York out of a clear sky. They started a drive to purge Bartell and his administration from leadership of the New York local. They brusquely rejected every one of our conciliatory proposals. They rejected every one of our conciliatory proposals. They introduced a new concept of authoritarian organization that the Majority caucus has to have the 'power' in a local administration, in effect, barring members of a minority from holding positions of responsibility in the localities while loyally carrying out party decisions. This

crude campaign to dump Bartell and the other New York local leaders was a political reprisal, pure and simple, as the record of the comrades involved was an admittedly excellent one.

At the same time we learned that immediately with the conclusion of the May plenum, Cannon, the new 'Foreign Secretary' of the Majority caucus stepped up a character-assassination campaign against Pablo. In his speech to the Majority caucus in New York on May 18 Cannon admitted: 'We have no tangible evidence to prove that there is any conspiracy against us, or any actions against us, on the international field.' Yet immediately after the plenum, he accused Pablo in a private poison-pen letter to 'Dear Tom', dated June 4, of instigating a 'power fight' in the SWP. He proposed to 'Dear Tom' to help organize an international faction on the 'principled' basis of who is for or against Cannon; in other words, as a clique, which intends to formulate its political platform as it goes along.

The collaboration called for in the May plenum agreement had been from the first — as practiced by the Cannon faction leaders — an empty gesture, with no positive content. The Majority leaders made their decisions in their private caucus meetings, and then came into the Secretariat or the PC and read off their decisions to us. There was no give-and-take. The 'collaboration' was strictly limited to permitting us to make counter-motions or amendments, and then voting our propositions down. The degenerate Haston clique ran its two-bit dictatorship in the British RCP by excluding the Minority from the Political Committee. The same monolithic purpose was achieved by the Cannon caucus — except with a little more finesse.

The Cannonites arrogated to themselves the right to proclaim by fiat the 'party line' on any and all questions without submitting their caucus decisions for adoption by any legal party body. As the PC Minority Statement of October 5 showed, this was the way they set party policy on recent developments in the USSR, as on most other questions, and at the same time suppressed articles of the Minority on the same subject matter. They opened the magazine by private caucus decision to attacks on the Minority — under the same compulsion that pushed the Shachtmanites in 1940 to justify themselves before Stalinophobe public opinion — but would not print the Minority polemics against the Majority. They adopted no clearcut official positions, but preferred to operate under the hazy banner of a 'general party line' which, in practice, they interpreted as license to write and do anything they pleased.

The fundamental causes for the smash-up of the May peace agreement derived not from accidents, incidents, or misunderstandings, but the political disorientation and degeneration of the 'Old Trotskyists' of the Cannon faction.

The nature of the Cannon Faction

The present Cannon faction was gangrenous at its very birth. It consolidated itself from the start, not on the basis of a secure political platform, which it lacked, but on prestige, tradition, seniority, personal loyalties and sentimental attachments.

The Cannon caucus leaders openly voiced the concept at the May plenum that the faction debate constituted only a naked 'power struggle' on both sides, and they triumphantly announced that they had emerged as the victors in the 'power struggle.' They thereby flaunted their degeneration in the party's face and attempted to legitimize their concept of personal leadership and clique politics.

The Cannon caucus leaders never honoured the agreement to which they adhered at the May plenum. It proved beyond them. They demonstrated in life that they were too ingrown and politically disoriented, too thoroughly indoctrinated with mysticism about their 'ordained leadership,' and hypnotized with crackpot notions of 'power' to actually understand what it meant to practice collaboration with another party tendency or faction. They made speeches on holiday occasions about 'Leninist organization principles,' but they did not understand them, and they rejected them when put to the test.

But no clique can long survive in the Trotskyist movement without filling its political vacuity with some program. So we observed that as the pre-plenum discussion progressed, the Cannon caucus was hardening its scholastic traits, providing 'theoretical' grounding for its ultimatic approach, deepening its sectarian habits of thought, political outlook and positions. With the split, the Cannonites are due to emerge as the new De Leonism of the American radical movement.

On the international field, what began as a personal intrigue against Pablo has developed into a full-blown campaign to dynamite the International, and furnish a rallying centre for all the conservative, retrogressive, sectarian tendencies, based upon the past. Cannon's attempt to blow up the International organization, and give by indirection, intrigue and subterfuge *de facto* leadership to the Cannon

caucus, and convert the other parties into satellites, is probably as infamous and irresponsible an intrigue as has ever been launched in the history of world Trotskyism. This rupture with internationalism stems from the ever-growing hostility of his caucus toward the policies of world Trotskyism. It has broken with all the main lines of the Third World Congress, a fact underlined by the recent Stein document and the PC Majority 'preliminary draft.' His caucus has reversed its former attitude and effected a reapproachment with the Stalinophobe-sectarian Bleibtreu group in France. The SWP press has been subverted into a Cannon caucus sheet and polemical centre against the policies of world Trotskyism. This up-and-down-the-line political break is climaxed with Cannon's drive to split the International.

The New Sectarianism

The new sectarianism reflects no trend of circles in the American labour movement, or even of American radicalism, but arises out of the petrification of the 'old Trotskyists,' who have succumbed to a quarter-century of isolation, and who have taken refuge in a make-believe world of their own creation, getting a vicarious thrill of playing at 'revolution.' When the 'Old Guard' — as it denominates itself — went through with its project to cut itself off from the last remaining sources of critical public opinion represented by the opposition and our co-thinkers abroad, it signified that ossification had conquered.

The present Cannon faction — the museum pieces of the 'Old Guard' combined with the Weiss contingent of YPSL's — has no future in the American labour movement. Its old role as populizer of Trotsky's programme and struggle is played out. It will be engulfed by the events of our epoch as were the 'old Wobblies' three decades ago, who were not able to understand in their time the new world of the Russian Revolution and the post First World War period, and could not comprehend the new problems and tasks imposed on revolutionists.

The future in this country, as elsewhere, is with the mainstream of world Trotskyism which understands the new epoch, and the tasks of revolutionists in fusing themselves with other left-wing forces as they arise in the course of the coming radicalization and class battles. Thus, and only thus, will be formed the mass revolutionary party of tomorrow and will be validated Trotsky's programme and struggle.

We Represent the Future

When the Cannon caucus expelled us from the SWP, they cut the heart out of the party. Because it is we who understand the reality of this world, and this country, and this labour movement, and the correct tactic for Marxists in the present scene. And because with us — a third of the organization — come the overwhelming portion of the working class cadre, the flower of a decade and a half of unexampled experiences and rich participation in the class struggles of this country, men and women who carved a rich tradition in sectors of the broad labour movement. Our group will cut a path for itself in the next struggles and developments. The Cannonites represent the dead past. We represent the future.

DOCUMENT 24**Letter from the Bureau of the IS to the
leaderships of all sections, November 15, 1953**

Comrades,

The most revolting operation has just been launched against the unity of the International. The majority of the American organization, cynically defying the most elementary rules of our international movement, and its traditions as well as its leadership, have just excluded by the decision of its Plenum of November 7-8 the minority which declares itself in agreement with the line of the International.

In England, the wing of the Central Committee of the organization led by Burns is preparing to perpetrate the same crime against the tendency defending the line of the International.

The international faction of Cannonites, announced in the letter of June 4 to Tom, is in the process of applying its premeditated plan to split our movement, *in the midst of the discussion and preparation for the 4th World Congress of the International*.

The IS, aware of this monstrous conspiracy which has already been going on for some months, as is proved by the attentive reading of the appended documents, has done everything to avoid such a development to which these bureaucratic and sectarian elements of our international movement were furiously pushing, not accepting either the discipline of the centralized world party which is the International, nor the political line of genuine fusion with the movement of the masses.

It is possible and even probable that certain comrades of the International will criticize our extreme prudence on this question and our deliberate and conscious refusal to bring it sooner to the knowledge of all members of the International.

We have nevertheless acted in this way, impelled by an acute sense of our responsibilities, because of a deep and sincere desire to exploit

every chance of avoiding a split in our movement, because of supreme confidence in the sense of responsibility of elements like Cannon, Stein, Warde and other leaders of the American organization. We say and repeat forcefully, in order to avoid the worse, and likewise to act in a principled way.

For we do not believe that the Trotskyist movement can survive otherwise than as a strictly principled movement on the political and organizational plane.

Manoeuvres, duplicity, lies and slanders could never be the arms of a movement like ours. It will inevitably lead to its decay and its complete elimination as a factor of the historical future.

Those who use such weapons hereby give the proof of their degeneration consummated in conditions of their prolonged isolation.

Comrades of the International:

This unexpected crisis arising when our movement seemed to have attained a high level of political maturity and for the first time in its history effectively penetrated into the real movement of the masses, inevitably poses a series of agonizing questions to which it is necessary to give a clear and prompt reply. The attentive study of the appended documents, we are firmly convinced, will speak for themselves, will enlighten with a cruel light all the phases of this revolting affair. Nevertheless we believe it necessary to emphasize certain outstanding facts which will help your better orientation in this crisis, undeniably the gravest in our movement:

For a number of years our international movement has been led by an entire team of comrades who have found themselves, by the force of things and by unanimous and encouraging assent, at the centre of the theoretical and political elaboration of our movement, its reinforcement and its international extension. Their line was always that of the overwhelming majority of the International against the opportunists and sectarians. With all their forces, they worked to apply the method of revolutionary Marxism to the burning problems of our explosive and turbulent time, to break through our isolation and bind us to the real movement of the masses.

The greatest progress in our history was incontestably realized during this period, and the success, almost unanimously recognized, of the Third World Congress marked the highest point in this evolution.

Cannon, Stein, Warde, Burns have up to a very recent date all left

written testimony, praising and often exalting this very work and this line. We will not hesitate to publish them all very soon.

Their 100% about-face today dates only a few months back. How then to explain it?

When were they sincere: when they affirmed their total solidarity with the line of the Third World Congress, or when they today affirm, with an unheard-of cynicism, that we are quite simply Stalinists and even agents of the GPU?

If they now act in this way it is above all to safeguard the personal clique regime in the midst of their organizations that they consider threatened by the extension of the influence of the International as a centralized world party. Finally because at bottom they have *submitted to*, but not assimilated the line of the International toward a real fusion with the movement of the masses and its transformation into a centralized world party. Most often behindhand on the theoretical and ideological renovation of our thought and the tactical turns of our line, imposed by the sharp turns in the objective situation, they in effect represent in our movement the tendency which is showing itself inadaptable to the extraordinary new conditions of the extraordinary new period that the last war bequeathed to us.

Fixed on old ideas and schemas, educated in the old organizational atmosphere of our movement, they really represent politically and organizationally the sectarian tendency which recoils from the movement of the Social-Democratic or Stalinist masses or feels itself ill at ease within it. They further remain profoundly resistant to all real integration into a centralized world party.

The more they isolate themselves from the masses, the more they accentuate their verbiage on their so-called character as a Party and Leadership of the class, which they pretend to be, awaiting the direct influx of the masses toward them. The more they refuse international integration into a centralized world Party, the more they accentuate within their little groups a caricature of a so-called Bolshevik regime, transforming their leaderships into bureaucratic cliques gravitating around a capricious and uncontrollable chief.

Their detachment from the concrete revolutionary reality of our time is such that all their political constructions and all their organizational methods cry out with absurdity, mythology, the ossification of Marxist thought and arbitrariness.

We have not been deceived about the existence of such a tendency, such a current within our movement, and the difficulty of living

together with it. But we thought that the force of events and the dynamic of our positive work toward the masses would pull this tendency further along and diminish its dead weight.

Since the Third World Congress this tendency appeared in manifest retreat, justifying the best hopes. But we have certainly underestimated the process of decline which for a series of years has already been effected within the American organization, more and more isolated from the movement of the masses, which has led, together with the steep drop in its effective forces, to a desolating conservatism of thought in contradiction with the ideological and practical progress accomplished by our movement everywhere else. Isolation from the masses and the drop in effective forces were and remain in a great measure the result of adverse objective conditions. A leadership at the height of its tasks should have combatted their affects by accentuating its advance on the ideological field and by fusing further with the rest of the international movement.

That has not been the case, especially with Cannon. Far from saluting the progress accomplished everywhere else and the affirmation of an international leadership of which his own organization and himself was a part, he began to see in it a rival capable of intervening in his own 'affairs' and disputing with him political influence over his 'own' organization. His struggle against the American minority for him evolved mainly around the motive of a struggle 'for power.' He subsequently rose up against the IS as is clearly proven by the appended documents, for this same reason. He sought to construct a platform of 'fundamental political divergences' with the International only afterward, with difficulty and bit by bit.

To the degree that has fabricated certain political ideas, he has succeeded in manifesting all his political disorientation, the profound sectarianism of his thought, and the pressure to which he is submitted by the present reactionary environment prevailing in the citadel of imperialism. His methods of struggle equal his thought. Without even having formulated a clear political platform, he envisaged and built an 'international faction based on military discipline' with the most heterogeneous political elements and groups: Tom whom he knew to be a strong opponent of the Third World Congress, the Johnsonites in his own organization, Bleibtreu whom he fought with the rest of the International and his observers at the IS and at the IEC.

With a big and generous hand he now scrapes together all the 'orthodox,' all the politically compromised and bankrupt, discon-

tented, sectarian, confusionist, anti-International elements and tendencies who are dying and agonizing under the blows they have received from events and from the line and achievements of the International, lifts them to their feet and launches them with all his force against the International.

The meaning of his so brutal and brusque undertaking is still better illuminated if we place it within the framework of the political conditions external to our movement, that of a new pre-war period, of the preparation of the decisive struggle between imperialism and the concrete forces of the revolution, and the extreme social pressures which result, brutally exercising themselves upon individuals and movements.

The crisis which Cannon has caused to break out has its epicentre in the United States in 1953, and that is not accidental. On the other hand, it is not the first in our movement. It suffices to establish the parallel with what happened on the threshold of the last war and the ensuing dislocation within our movement. It is sad to observe that Cannon, who was then with those defending Trotskyism against the defeatists on the question of the Soviet Union, now places himself at the head of the Stalinophobic sectarians within the setting of the regime of the witch hunt now raging in his country, the bastion of preparation for the counter-revolutionary war.

However, we will see to it that the blow of the desertion and the demolition of 1939-40 is not duplicated this time on a parallel scale. The International has likewise changed since 1939, it has been strengthened and has been hardened. It will not come out broken into pieces from this crisis, but more consolidated than ever. We are convinced of that.

Cannon is grossly deceived if he believes that he can thus destroy an achievement already inscribed in the ascending course of History. In the best of cases for him, he will re-establish only a constellation of vassal elements and groups gravitating around him, which are politically disparate and will lamentably disintegrate when the fever of their common struggle against the International will have subsided.

Comrades of the International:

The International was, remains and will remain a political movement and a principled organization. It will not compromise on its principles, it will never permit the expulsions effected by Cannon, nor those which Burns is preparing in England.

With all our forces we ask the IEC to stigmatize these measures, to enjoin those who have taken them to immediately withdraw them and

to reintegrate forthwith the expelled members within their organizations.

Any other road followed by anyone whatsoever could only place them outside our movement. We are certain that the International, informed on the facts and the substance of this crisis, will firmly draw the same conclusions as ourselves and more solidified, more homogeneous, more confident than ever will resume its forward march. There is no force capable of extinguishing the spirit of living revolutionary Marxism or of halting the intimate fusion of the proletarian vanguard that is animated by it with the real movement of its class. There is no force capable in this sense of burying Trotskyism.

The IS Bureau
M. Pablo, P. Frank, E. Germain

The American organization mentioned in different texts, as is known, is not an organic part of the International and is not formally a section of it.

The IS Bureau

Glossary of Names

BANDA, Michael — Member of the British section of the Fourth International throughout the period covered by these volumes, and of the International Committee during the struggle against the SWP's unprincipled 'reunification' with the Pabloites.

BARTELL, M. — Leader together with Clarke and Cochran of the Pabloite faction in the SWP in 1953. Organized the faction fight in the New York local.

BLEIBTREU-FAVRE — One of the leaders of the PCI majority in 1951-3, who wrote some of the major oppositional documents to Pablo at the time of the Third World Congress. Expelled as an opportunist tendency one year after the split.

BLOCH, Gérard — One of leaders of PCI majority in 1953. Now in revisionist OCI leadership.

BREITMAN, George — Leading member of SWP, and principal spokesman on Negro question.

BURNHAM, James — Leader, together with Schachtman and Abern, of the petty bourgeois opposition in the SWP in 1939-40. Subscribed to the revisionist theory of state capitalism. Split with Schachtman after his expulsion from the SWP. Author of *The Managerial Revolution*.

BURNS — Pseudonym for secretary of the British Section of the Fourth International (G. Healy), which became the Socialist Labour League in 1959 and then the Workers' Revolutionary Party in 1973.

CANNON, James P. — Founder of Trotskyist movement in the United States, expelled from the Communist Party in 1928. Leader of the SWP until he retired in 1960s. Supported Trotsky in the fight against the petty bourgeois opposition of Schachtman and Burnham in 1939-40. Imprisoned during Second World War. Author of 'Theses on the American Revolution' in 1946 (see Introduction to Volume Two). Responsible for the 'Open Letter to the World Trotskyist Movement' of 1953, which denounced Pabloite revisionism and founded the International Committee. In the period 1961-63, together with Hansen, guided the SWP back into the revisionist camp.

CLARKE, George — Led the formation of a Pabloite faction with Cochran in the SWP after Third World Congress in 1951, at which he represented SWP in 1953. Split from Pablo at 4th Pabloite Congress in 1954 to form American Socialist Union with Cochran and Bartell.

COCHRAN, Bert — One time leader of the auto worker faction of the SWP. With George Clark led supporters in SWP of Pablo tendency. Expelled in 1953. Wrote on Eastern Europe and other problems under name of E. R. Frank in period 1946-53. Formed American Socialist Union with Clark and Bartell after split with Pablo in 1954.

DOBBS, Farrell — A leader of the Minneapolis Teamsters strike in 1934. Leading member of SWP from 1940s, and its Secretary during period covered by these volumes.

DOWSON, Ross — Leader of Canadian section of Fourth International who opposed Pablo in 1953 but fully supported SWP's return to Pabloism in 1961. Now leads reformist right-wing group in opposition to SWP in Canada.

EMMETT, F. — British Pabloite and supporter of Lawrence. Circulation manager of Socialist Outlook at the time of the split.

FRANK, Pierre — Collaborator of Molinier in pre-war French section of Fourth International. Leader of supporters of Pabloites in 1951 in French section. Today a leading spokesman of the 'United Secretariat'.

FRANKEL, H. — Supporter of the Clarke-Cochran faction in the SWP.

GERMAIN, Ernest — See MANDEL

GOONEWARDENE, Leslie (pseudonym Tilak) — Leading member of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party which betrayed Trotskyism and entered the Bandaranaike coalition in 1964. Imprisoned during Second World War. Founder member of Bolshevik Leninist Party of India. Advocate of entry into Indian Socialist Party in the 1940s, and one of leading proponents of coalition in Ceylon.

GORDON, Sam (J.B.Stuart) — Representative of the SWP in Britain in the period before the 1953 split. (Pseudonyms Harry, Tom, Burton, Joe).

GRANT, E. — Member of British section of Fourth International during 1940's. Supported Haston against the Fourth International. Unanimously expelled together with Haston at Third Congress of Fourth International in 1951. Later joined Pablo as leader of revisionist Revolutionary Socialist League in the late 1950s. Broke with Pablo to enter Labour Party and supported witch-hunt of Young Socialists in 1960s. Now heads revisionist 'Militant' group which opposes placing demands on Labour Government and calls for support for minimum programme.

HANSEN, Joseph — One of leaders of SWP since late 1930s. Secretary and bodyguard to Trotsky in Mexico. Prominent in faction fight against Cochranites; after 1953 split took lead in opposing discussion of differences with Pabloites. Held principal responsibility for the international relations of SWP in the period covered by these volumes. In forefront of 'reunification' manoeuvres of 1962-63. Leads SWP since Cannon's retirement in 1960s. Author of *Too Many Babies*.

HASTON, Jock — Leader of Workers' International League, one of the two major Trotskyist organizations in Britain in pre-war period. Arrested and imprisoned during the war for anti-war activities. Secretary of Revolutionary Communist Party, set up in 1944 as British section of Fourth International. Directed the Trotskyist movement until the RCP formally dissolved in 1947 to enter Labour Party. Expelled by Fourth International in 1951 for capitulation to Social Democracy. Subsequently joined right wing in trade unions as educational director of EEP TU under the late Sir Leslie Cannon.

HEALY, G. — Secretary of the British section of the Fourth International throughout the period covered by these volumes, and of the International Committee subsequent to the split.

JACQUES — Pseudonym for Buchbinder, leader of Swiss section. Supported 'Open Letter' of SWP in 1953. Joined with SWP in 1963 to support reunification. Subsequently became a pacifist.

LAMBERT, Pierre — Leading member of the PCI (French section) majority in opposition to Pablo, expelled by him prior to 1953 split. Joined in formation of International Committee. Secretary of revisionist Organisation Communiste Internationaliste. Helped betray 1968 General Strike and split from International Committee in 1971. Defender and apologist for Social Democracy and Stalinism in France.

LANE, H. — Leading British Pabloite and supporter of Lawrence in the faction fight in the British section in 1953-4. Member of the editorial board of *Socialist Outlook*. Prominent in St. Pancras Labour Party.

LAWRENCE, John — Took the revisionist position of Pablo against the majority of the British section of the Fourth International in 1953 period. Immediately afterwards joined the Communist Party, which he later left to become an anarchist.

MAITAN, Livio — Leading member of Pabloite revisionists since 1953. Secretary of their Italian section, and a major spokesman of pro-guerrilla faction in 'United Secretariat'.

MANDEL, Ernest (Ernest Germain) — Member of European Secretariat of Fourth International and of Belgian section during Second World War. Betrayed majority of French section in 1951 to join Pablo. Major supporter of Pablo in 1953 split. Author of many revisionist works on 'neo-capitalism'. Betrayed Belgian General Strike in 1961. Secretary of 'United Secretariat' since 'reunification'. Heads the faction of 'United Secretariat' which is again at loggerheads with SWP today and includes IMG in Britain, Ligue Communiste in France, various guerrilla groupings in Latin America and a faction expelled from SWP in the summer of 1974.

MARCY — Leader of a faction in SWP which labelled the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 as fascist and split from SWP before 1959 Convention.

MESTRE, Michèle — Leading member of minority in French section (PCI) which supported Pablo tendency in 1953 period.

NOVACK, George (pseudonym William F. Warde) — Leading member of SWP and prominent philosophical idealist. Sympathetic to Pablo at time of 1953 split, but stayed with Cannon.

PABLO, Michel (Gabriel Raptis) — Worked in International Secretariat of Fourth International during Second World War, becoming Secretary in post-war period. In the period 1948-53 developed theory that mass pressure on Stalinist parties could transform them into revolutionary leaderships. His tendency broke from Trotskyism in 1953, calling itself the 'International Secretariat'. Shortly after 1963 'reunification' with SWP, was expelled from 'United Secretariat' with minority tendency standing openly for liquidation. Became a minister in the abortive bourgeois government of Ben Bella in Algeria.

PENG, Shu-Chih (also known as Peng Shu-tse, S. T. Peng) — Leader with Chen du Tsiu of Chinese CP in 1924-27. Opposed to Stalin's policy of subordination to Kuomintang but accepted Stalinist-Menshevik concept of two-stage revolution. Associated himself with Trotskyist opposition after defeat of 1927 revolution. Abstained from class struggle in China in sectarian and propagandistic manner; completely disoriented by recrudescence of civil war in China in 1947; fled to Hongkong and Paris after coming to power of Mao Tse Tung. Member of International Committee from 1954 until leaving it to rejoin Pabloites, in political agreement with SWP, in 1963.

PERERA, Dr. N. M. — Founder of LSSP. Leader of Ceylon Federation of Labour. Imprisoned during war and escaped to India. Right-wing parliamentarian; Minister of Finance in two coalition governments.

PRESTON — Pseudonym for secretary of the International Committee (G. Healy) in the period 1953-1963.

PRIVAS — Supporter of Pablo tendency in PCI in 1953 period.

RENARD, Daniel — Leading member of the French section of the Fourth International (PCI) at the time of the 1953 split.

RODRIGUEZ, P. (Pierre Broué) — One of leaders of PCI, then of revisionist OCI. Author of works on Spanish and French history.

SCHACHTMAN, Max — Founder member of American Trotskyist movement with Cannon and Abern. Led opposition to Trotsky in SWP over Russo-Finnish war and occupation of Poland. An advocate of 'bureaucratic collectivism'. Split with SWP in 1940 to set up Workers' Party, which he dissolved to enter Socialist Party of USA and to join the Congress for Cultural Freedom — a CIA-subsidized organization. Author of *Behind the Moscow Trials*. Died 1972.

de SILVA, Dr. Colvin R. — Leader of LSSP, imprisoned and escaped to India to form Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India during war. Leading parliamentarian in LSSP; prominent coalitionist.

SINCLAIR, W. — Pseudonym for W. Hunter (British section), author of the document 'Under a Stolen Flag'. Member of SLL and of WRP.

SMITH — Pseudonym for Farrell Dobbs.

STEIN, M. — Longstanding member of the SWP who supported Cannon at the time of the 1953 split, writing some of the main documents against Pabloism.

SWABECK, Arne — Founder member of SWP; left to join Maoists in 1960s.

WEISS, Murry — Leading member of SWP in 1950s and early 1960s. Supported Cannon against SLL.

WEISS, Myra Tanner — Leading member of SWP.

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