



**Nahuel Moreno**

**Spain:  
With the Cortes,  
Against the Monarchy**

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# With the Cortes, Against the Monarchy

What will the Spanish LCR do in the face of the elections? We have read with enthusiastic attention, given the importance of the document and of the electoral problem in Spain, the resolution of the Political Bureau of the *Liga Comunista Revolucionaria* [Revolutionary Communist League, LCR] of 14 February 1977 published in the special issue of *Combate* with the title “For workers’ unity at the elections”. This document apparently synthesises the electoral policy of the Spanish *Liga Comunista Revolucionaria* against the certain possibility that by May or June of this year the elections to the Spanish Cortes<sup>1</sup> will be carried out.

## Practical and non-declarative resolutions

Every resolution of a Trotskyist party must have a practical character, that is, for action and not merely declarative. For example, this document focuses its policy on the attempt to “set up united working-class candidates, based on a common response to the most urgent issues of the moment, without, however, preventing each party from exercising its right and duty to disseminate the totality of its program among the workers”.

Specifically, for the LCR, the axis, the fundamental centre of its electoral policy, is to achieve these united workers’ candidacies, that is, to form common electoral slates of the *Partido Socialista Obrero Español* [Spanish Socialist Workers’ Party, PSOE], the Communist Party and all other workers’ organisations: Maoists, Trotskyists, and so on. It is, therefore, a call for the constitution of an electoral workers’ front.

Here a divergence arises of our part with the comrades of the LCR. As we have said above, every resolution or call must have a clearly practical goal. This is what it just does not have. It is characterised by a declamatory tone, and it only proposes something impossible to carry out, even leaving aside whether it is correct or not. The resolution in its fourth point states that “the decision of the PCE [Spanish Communist Party] and the SP to sit with exclusive slates of their parties (or a possible socialist alliance in the case of the PSOE), multiplies the difficulties for this agreement to be carried out. Nonetheless, we believe it is a goal which must be maintained. To call on these parties to adopt a unitary attitude, and in general, to push in view of the elections a battle for the above-mentioned demands, the most unitary activity of the organisations of the workers’ movement left is necessary”.

## Everyone taking care of its own

We are three or four months away from the elections and the LCR acknowledges it is very difficult to achieve common slates of the different workers’ parties. Or, in their own words, “the difficulties multiply”. We do not suspect, but we assert that to realise these slates is impossible.

<sup>1</sup> The **Cortes** is the legislature of Spain. It is a bicameral parliament, composed of the Congress of Deputies (the lower house) and the Senate (the upper house). [Editor.]

For one simple reason — because the PCE and the PSOE, with all the democratic rights belonging to them to attend the electoral confrontation to see which of the parties is stronger within the worker's movement, have resolved to present themselves with “slates exclusive of their parties”.

Generally speaking, this is correct. No issue of principle is at stake; on the contrary, the principle is for each workers' party to participate on its own in the elections in order to measure the strength of each one. The agreements must come later, in parliament, around certain programmatic points.

Considering this point of view, an electoral resolution in today's Spain, if it wants to be truly Marxist, needs to start from reality, and this reality is categorical. We can discuss it, we can oppose it, but it is totally impossible to unite the candidates of the PCE, PSOE and Maoism in a single slate, and it is even more difficult for these groups to join with a similar Trotskyist tendency.

It is necessary to take into account then that each of the working-class parties and currents will attend the elections independently because the ranks that make them up and their leaderships are determined to do so. We cannot, therefore, lock ourselves in abstract principles, but we must look closely at that reality in order to uphold our political line. In this sense, the resolution of the Political Bureau of the *Liga Comunista Revolucionaria* gives no answer; and, by failing to do so, it does not propose a correct line for elections. It is, perhaps, an expression of the electoral desires or aspirations of the *Liga Comunista Revolucionaria*, not a line for action. We insist — it is a resolution for abstention, never for presentation and full electoral activity. For this reason, it does not answer the questions posed by reality; that is, if there are no unitary workers slates, as it will surely happen, what does the *Liga Comunista Revolucionaria* intend to do? This has an aggravating circumstance, announced by themselves — it is virtually impossible to achieve legality by many workers' and popular organisations.

Faced with this concrete problem, they arrive at a correct answer: “the fundamental battle is centred on the immediate legalisation of all workers' and popular organisations without exclusion”. However, they clarify that the government's will is to leave them in the underground. The conclusion is curious: “and tomorrow, before the elections, if the illegality of certain organisations persists — as it is likely — it will be necessary that those workers' parties that are legalised commit themselves to develop all their possibilities in defence of the legalisation of those which still continue to be discriminated against and in the use of all the mechanisms that allow them to express themselves more freely before the population”.

Really pitiful. It is still possible at this time that the PCE will not get its legality; it has been denied and has passed to the consideration of the Supreme Court. That is, the only legalised parties have been the three socialist parties. And we, in the face of this situation, demand that “the workers' parties that are legalised commit themselves to develop all their possibilities in defence of the legalisation”, “before the elections”.

## The boycott, another alternative

Has it not occurred to the Political Bureau of the LCR the possibility of a boycott? If the PCE does not have legality, is it not a great slogan for the workers' parties to boycott the elections for not having it? What is this of a commitment of the PSOE, “before the elections”, to “develop all its possibilities in defence of the legalisation” of the other workers' parties? That conquest will have to be achieved through the struggle, not the electoral campaign. We must demand from the PSOE that, if the PCE and other parties are outlawed, it is inevitably necessary to take concrete measures of struggle to achieve this legalisation. One such measure may be the election boycott or other similar variations. But the struggle for the legalisation of the rival workers' parties cannot be left in the hands of the socialist parties when the PSOE is the great beneficiary, and possibly its leadership has been the main adviser of that measure. That is ridiculous. These are Platonic approaches.

What we say does not mean that we cannot end up considering the vote for the socialist parties against the liberal and bourgeois candidates that the PCE could eventually support if it continues to be outlawed. We will, in principle, raise the united front for the boycott especially to the PCE if it remains illegal. But if such a slogan does not materialise because the PCE can very well resolve to support “progressive” bourgeois candidates and refuse, in addition, to boycott the elections, then, at that juncture, we could end up supporting the vote to the socialists against the “liberal” slates supported by the PCE. But we would do this without failing to criticise the PCE and the PSOE for having rejected the slogan of a united front for the legalisation of all the workers’ parties that drive the boycott if these are not recognised.

## **The LCR idealises Stalinists and Social Democrats**

In short: the LCR has no concrete policy in the face of elections. Its two approaches (united candidacies and “compromise” for legality) have nothing to do with the real situation and, therefore, are the opposite of the concrete. They spin in the stratosphere.

But it is even more abstract when it states: “in case the unitary agreement we raise in point 3 be not possible, we propose to all the workers’ parties to take on this task together, within the organisations of the mass movement”. And this task is “to increase the politicisation, the organisation, the consciousness of the workers and the people”. As if the reformist parties were capable of fulfilling them!

The idealisation made by the LCR of these parties is truly fantastic. To imagine that unity with these organisations is possible to increase the politicisation, the organisation and the consciousness of the workers and the people is something incredible. There is no possibility of the smallest agreement to achieve these objectives, because the role of the PCE and the PSOE within the workers’ movement is exactly the opposite, and it is impossible to achieve their transformation regardless of the number of calls we make to them. They are against increasing the politicisation, the organisation and the consciousness of the workers because they are agents of the bourgeoisie within the workers’ movement. The only consciousness they propose is that of class collaboration, just as the only politicisation is the conquest of the support of the workers’ organisations to the popular frontist governments.

## **Against the monarchy in defence of the Republic**

Every Bolshevik, Trotskyist policy has an immediate practical goal. In this case, referring to the elections to the Cortes in the Spanish state in 1977, with a king who tries to consolidate his monarchy precisely through them, and with a party like ours which seeks, among other immediate and priority objectives, to liquidate that monarchy.

The resolution of the LCR does not answer the most concrete and immediate question: If by chance a deputy of ours is elected, or a worker’s deputy influenced by us, or a unitary worker’s deputy, what should he do in the Cortes? According to the LCR, he must fight for the following points:

“For total amnesty, democratic freedoms and rights without limitations... For the right to self-determination of the oppressed nationalities which implies the full sovereignty, without conditions, of these nationalities in everything affecting their relations with the Central Power... Against any form of ‘social pact’. For the free unitary negotiation of the workers’ and popular demands... For free elections to a Constituent Assembly that proclaim the Republic”.

Let us continue, however, with the practical problems of everyday life. This deputy begins to raise these programmatic points listed above and is faced with a big problem — another deputy, monarchist, will respond that these measures, especially the one referring to the Constituent Assembly to proclaim the Republic, is not strict jurisdiction of the Cortes. Who will control the

Constituent Assembly to proclaim the Republic? Which government is going to call the elections for that Constituent Assembly? From here two problems immediately arise:

1) Whether the Cortes have the right to call free elections for the Constituent Assembly to proclaim the Republic. That is, the rights of the Cortes are raised in relation to the right of the monarchy.

2) There is also the problem of the government calling to the Constituent Assembly in order to proclaim the Republic. Does it have to be that of the king? Or does the majority of the Cortes have the right to form that government?

These contradictions, insoluble within the program and the resolution of the Political Bureau of the LCR, have their origin precisely in that it is a hare stew without hare; that is to say, a policy and an electoral program for the Cortes are proposed which say absolutely nothing about the Cortes themselves. And that is the first question to answer. It is a program that does not immediately and concretely answer the question: what do we do with the Cortes in reference to the king and the Spanish state? By what mechanisms, then, do we achieve the Republic and the Constituent Assembly? This serious contradiction in the line of the PB of the LCR is also due to the abstract nature of its policy.

### **Long live the Cortes! Down with the king!**

The LCR goes to the elections with the same program it has had until now and it will have after the elections. The same program, in general, it has been holding since before the elections, at this moment, in the face of its realisation, it raises it again without making any adaptation to the reality that is currently being lived.

The king calls elections to the Cortes to legalise his monarchy. If we accept such a call, it has to be with the aim of achieving a purpose opposite to the manoeuvre posed — to outlaw the monarchy. As in Jiu Jitsu, it is necessary to use the government's offensive, its force, to transform it into the opposite, with the aim of striking well and achieving the knockout using its own momentum.

After 40 years, these are the first elections in Spain. Although they are clipped, they are transcendent, because it is a new fact that has not appeared for a long time. The middle class and the vast majority of the working class are willing to vote, and they are going to do so because they just want to influence the problem of government, they want to somehow participate in the governmental issue. It is at least ridiculous not to take into account this aspiration of the mass movement. They vote for that, not because they now consciously try to legalise a Constituent Assembly that proclaims the Republic immediately. And this is so because their reformist parties have been unable to inculcate that aspiration. On the contrary, they have been accustomed to negotiating. We must then start from that element reality gives — the masses are going to vote to see if they achieve a government influenced by their vote — and from there to raise a clear slogan on the elections, one that sums up all our democratic-revolutionary and antimonarchic political line. And this slogan cannot be other than the Cortes, elected by vote, even if curtailed, take the government. That is: for a government chosen by the Cortes so that they become the government of Spain and liquidate the monarchy.

We have to create a kind of dual power. Opposing the Cortes — a product of the popular vote, although curtailed — to the monarch, who nobody chose. And in this dual power, we Trotskyists are the only ones who can have an absolutely clear policy, since the reformist parties, in fact, accept the play of the monarchy to be legalised by means of elections to the Cortes, while the ultra-left and the centrists ignore this problem and are satisfied with empty statements, without any concrete consequences. Today the Trotskyist position in the elections passes by a categorical slogan, categorical and revolutionary: Long live the Cortes! Down with the king!

This slogan can be defined through others more subtle, for example, that the Cortes demand the resignation of the king, that they call for a Constituent Assembly to proclaim the Republic and,

meanwhile, to take the government into their hands; or that they impose a prime minister and suspend the monarchy until the Constituent Assembly proclaim the republic.

Only reality will tell us if it is necessary to complete this slogan with others to achieve our goals. But today there is no more important task than using the Cortes, the first national expression of the bourgeois-democratic popular vote, in order to oppose them to the hereditary monarchy of fascism. Within them, we will have to be the greatest defenders of their power against the monarch and we will carry out an uncompromising struggle for the government of the workers' parties. Thus we can guarantee the fulfilment of our slogans and the correct application of our principles.

In this way, the transitional slogan that will lead us to the amnesty, to the self-determination of oppressed nationalities, to the free negotiation between workers and bosses, and to the Constituent Assembly that proclaims the Republic, passes through a first slogan — opposing the Cortes to the monarch and, within them, to face the workers' government to the governments of the bourgeoisie. Without an electoral program around this fundamental point, we will have a general, abstract programmatic position that can serve both at the time of elections and any other time.

## Two programs: one “pure” worker and another popular frontist

The LCR in its resolution “For workers’ unity in the elections”, we have already seen, it raises a clear program of “united workers’ candidacies”. It does not propose, then, the unity with anyone other than strictly delimited workers’ parties and organisations, with a class character that offers no doubt.

This approach to the elections is complemented by the logic of class worthy of emphasising in the “Manifesto of the LCR to all public opinion”, published in the same special issue of *Combate*. It raises the line of the government of the workers’ parties and states that “only a government of the workers’ parties, supported by the action of the workers and the people, responsible to their organisations, can approach the implementation of this program, opening the road to socialism”.

In summary: it is so categorically classist and worker to the degree of not even raising a workers’ and peasants’ government or a workers’ and popular government. That is to say, a position so closely “proletarian” is maintained that no popularisation of the slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat is allowed, nor it is capable of indicating the alliance of the proletariat with the peasantry and urban popular sectors. That is, these two massive sectors do not fit into the formula of government of the LCR for all Spain.

For this reason, it is truly unusual and surprising the LCR has for Euskadi and Catalonia an approach exactly opposite to the one it formulates for Spain. While for Spain it postulates a strictly workers’ government without the involvement of the peasantry or the people, for the said provinces, instead, it proposes a popular front for the elections and the government.

Surely the reader will be surprised and will think that they are polemising exaggerations. In order to prove the centrism and eclecticism of these comrades, worthy of praise for their great fighting spirit, but confused by those who should have educated them in Trotskyism, we will extensively quote a text referring to the elections in the Basque country. *Combate*, in its special issue, says the following:

“Our position is based on the need for a unitary program of action against government plans. A radical democratic, popular and national program, and one that collects solidarity with the workers’ struggles. A program similar to that explained elsewhere in this issue of *Combate* and which would also serve as a basis for candidacies of the revolutionary and *nationalist organisations*, respecting the right of each of them to carry out propaganda for the whole program of their party”. (Emphasis added.)

Another paragraph of the same article insists on this and criticises the “*abertzale*<sup>1</sup> left, the *revolutionary nationalist* left [because] it would be tempted to propose a separate candidacy of the workers’ forces”. (Emphasis added.)

They are denouncing, as we seem to understand, that revolutionary nationalism (the nationalist left) does not form common slates with the workers.

What does this mean? What kind of class does revolutionary nationalism belong to? Is it a working class, petty bourgeois, bourgeois left current? What is it?

We have to start with a definition of class, because if it is current, no matter how guerrillaist and brave, how consistent with the nationalist approaches at this stage of the process it may be, if it has a petty bourgeois character, it can be a current with strong bourgeois programmatic tendencies. Because the petty bourgeoisie always engenders bourgeoisie, and unity with it, not for action, but for an election with “a radical, popular and national democratic program” (that is, non-socialist) it constitutes a popular frontist, a collaborative electoral coalition of classes.

“A radical, popular and national democratic program” is not an application of the class struggle to the elections, quite the contrary — it is an approach that fits well within a popular front inside a nation or oppressed nationality.

We believe that this conception also takes into account Catalonia. Thus, the special issue of *Combate* states that “revolutionary Marxists we consider that the only government that can guarantee the national, political and social demands of the masses is a government of revolutionary workers’ and nationalist parties”. Put another way, a popular frontist government, unless the revolutionary nationalists are not a petty bourgeois current.

It is also mysterious how the name of these revolutionary nationalist parties is neither stated for the Basque Country nor for Catalonia, thus opening the door to any revisionist and popular frontist possibility. While for all Spanish elections an abstract policy is held, contradictorily, in the regions where the LCR has a greater mass influence, the door has been opened to a very concrete popular frontist policy of collaboration with petty bourgeois currents and parties, either for the elections as to the possibility of government takeover, which is even more serious.

## **Electoral front, workers ‘and peasants’ government, and unity of action**

The comrades of the LCR confuse the electoral fronts with the workers’ and peasants’ government and the unity of action. This confusion is extremely dangerous.

An election is not a mass action, although it may have such implications. It can, at some point, be a means to achieve a great mass mobilisation. For example, when a scandalous fraud or other spectacular event occurs around the elections that triggers an action of the mass movement. In contrast, a mass action can never in itself be an electoral action, since this is a mechanism of the bourgeois state and in the service of it, which it uses for the purpose of diverting the mass movement to a process in which they believe they are represented.

Our intervention in an election should not lead to confusion. We participate in the elections because it is a fantastic means of agitation, almost unique, privileged, as important sometimes or more than the elections in the great organisations of the workers’ movement. For the party, it plays a role of the first magnitude. It is very useful because it allows the party to agitate before the masses the fundamental slogans at a certain historical moment. These slogans must always be directed towards the most uncompromising class struggle and proposing, in any situation, the independence of the workers’ movement.

The tactics can be many, the slogans too. One of the secrets of a good electoral campaign is precisely to know how to raise two or three agitative slogans easy-to-understand for the mass movement as a whole. But no electoral campaign should be confused with the unity of action,

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1 Radical Basque nationalist. [Editor.]

which is exactly the opposite. In the unity of action, we do not try to synthesise the essence of our revolutionary Trotskyist program at any given moment, but we try to find the minimum points that allow us the unity with opportunist and reformist tendencies of the worker's movement.

Instead, an electoral front is built to agitate our program, which we try to synthesise into immediate, clear, massive slogans understandable for millions of workers. It is not, therefore, a unity of action, but quite the opposite — it is a task of propaganda and agitation. Unity of action, instead, has as its fundamental goal to mobilise the masses.

The same is true of the workers' and peasants' government. We raise this slogan (or that of workers' and popular government) around a clear program of breaking with the bourgeoisie. It is a program for the unity of action of the masses, with the aim of achieving a rupture at the governmental level with the bourgeois parties, forcing the workers' organisations to distance themselves from them and not to accept alliances. In this sense, it is also an action of the mass movement, in which we try to drag the parties in which they believe.

We have made these considerations because we are surprised that an electoral front was called (and based on a democratic program) with the Basque nationalists, and the formation of a common government with the Catalan revolutionary nationalists, whom we do not know who they are, on the other hand, as they are unidentified.

We believe that the LCR confuses the problem of the unity of action. We think legitimate and obligatory to call the Basque nationalist organisations, not only those of the left but also the nationalist right, for specific actions, for a precise unity of action; for example, a demonstration for the autonomy of the Basque country, a great rally in remembrance of the Basque martyrs, a great strike for amnesty or any other similar action.

We must be the standard bearers of this unity of action, not only with the left but with any nationalist organisation or reformist workers' party that wants to accompany us.

But this unity of action cannot be transferred to the electoral terrain because then we cause class confusion. We cannot go to the elections only by raising total amnesty or, for example, to remember the Basque martyrs, since this would lead to confusion among the masses. Our politics is, first and essentially, a politics of class independence.

## **The revolutionary unity of Spain and Portugal**

In the four points of the unitary electoral program of the LCR as well as in the "Manifesto to all public opinion", not a single internationalist slogan is raised, except for "international solidarity of the workers against the power of the trusts and the multinationals". We insist, neither electorally, nor in the Manifesto is there a single unitary task of international, European, or regional type. In general, we can point out that the policy of the LCR is fundamentally nationalist.

This lack of an international and regional policy has its own national expression, since the LCR, in both its electoral program and its Manifesto, does not propose a policy of revolutionary unity on a Spanish scale, in the Iberian Peninsula, and much less European and worldwide.

This is aggravated if we consider that one of the most important points of the electoral resolution of the LCR, and also of its Manifesto, is the right to self-determination of the nationalities and regions existing in Spain. This position of the LCR is dangerous because it takes only one side of a truly Trotskyist and Bolshevik attitude — our struggle to defend any nationality that fights for its independence or to achieve some autonomy in relation to the dominant imperialism.

We are for the defence of any oppressed nationality and for their right to express as they wish their aspiration for self-determination. But this is one side, one aspect of our politics. At the same time, we are uncompromising defenders of the unity of Spain, the Iberian Peninsula and all Europe. We are not separatists, nor is the essence of our politics the right to national self-determination.

If we only defend this right and do not point out that we are for the unity of the entire Spanish working class in a single party and in a single state which can be federative, if we do not present the formula that allows self-determination within the unity (For a Federation of Spanish Workers' States, or of Spanish Workers' Republics), we commit a political crime, because we play the game of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie of the oppressed nationalities; they are interested in the development of a petty regional regime.

The lack of the smallest programmatic point on the issue of revolutionary proletarian unity at national, regional, continental and world scale is particularly shocking in relation to Portugal. Neither for the elections nor for after the elections are there any slogans with reference to the Portuguese revolution. This is truly regrettable, since within the Iberian Peninsula there are two revolutions, bordering with each other, and in both countries, they have a historical, racial and, to some extent, linguistic background. However, the LCR does not raise the issue. All the electoral and political propaganda of the LCR does not have as one of its axes the international issue and fundamentally the issue of the revolutionary solidarity between the Portuguese and Spanish revolutions. This is why the LCR continues to refuse to raise in its program, both electoral and national, the line of the Federation of Iberian Socialist Republics, that is to say, Spanish and Portuguese.

## The struggle for socialist unity in the elections

So far we have simply criticised the LCR without giving a positive response. Neither have we responded what a militant should do from this moment on to use the elections in depth. This has been due to a purpose — to demonstrate the abstract, contradictory and sometimes populist character of the position of the LCR and by this means to arrive at a positive conclusion, to give a present and concrete political line for the intervention in the elections.

The unity of the different workers' parties for the elections is totally and absolutely impossible. But reality tells us that if this total unity cannot be attained, at least one would have to fight for the unity of all those who today claim to be socialists. That is, to achieve these candidacies within a positive historical process — the emergence of a strong socialist party in Spain.

We believe that this emergence would be a highly progressive step in the process of class struggle and that only through this way can we achieve an objective fact of enormous transcendence, the triumph of the workers' parties in the elections to the Cortes. We insist; it would be a very progressive objective social process for the Socialists to achieve unitary candidacies, a large unitary party that channels the millions of Spaniards who go to socialist positions and who at the same time oppose the bureaucratic character, for them dictatorial, of the PCE.

We, the Trotskyists, have to take part fully in this process of a great socialist party and movement beginning from the elections, since the ideal outcome, to fight for independent Trotskyist candidates, can hardly take place; with the aggravating factor that the LCR is doing little or nothing for it to take place

In this way, a concrete policy has to be the fight of Spanish Trotskyism to achieve a great socialist movement for the elections, so as to enable us to fortify the front of the PCE and the Socialist Party in the Cortes, in order to achieve a majority. Thus, we could legally raise the construction of a government of the workers' parties through the Cortes.

In the Spain of today, the LCR has to be categorical and guide its militants towards the task on the great mass parties, which are the PCE and the Socialist Party. For this reason, it would be ridiculous not to understand the conditions of the moment, which allow us to use a formidable and extremely progressive gear from the objective point of view, that is, to achieve a consistent struggle for unity and for the united socialist candidacies, and for the support of the Socialists, and also for the PCE if it takes part in them, proving that we are the only standard bearers for the formation of a workers' front participating in the elections. This is the only viable, concrete and real policy we

can take, also because it allows us to enter into direct relationship with tens and tens of thousands of militant workers or directly with the working class, enabling a genuine electoral campaign that frustrates the manoeuvres of the oligarchy and the post-Franco regime, who try to prevent our more direct contact with the masses. §

## ADDENDUM 1

# “Combat”... but not against reformism

I have read carefully the special issue of *Combate*, from the Spanish LCR, published in February 1977. It is an extraordinary, exceptional issue that intends to synthesise and symbolise what kind of newspaper they want to publish. More than anyone else in the Fourth International, the heroic and selfless Spanish comrades deserve to be spoken to clearly. This special issue will become a publication of great importance for the International since here it is embodied and put into reality the prognosis we have made of the danger of sliding towards total capitulation to the European Communist parties

Therefore, with deep sadness, I am obliged to denounce that the special issue of *Combate* is one of the worst expressions of centrism and opportunism in living memory. It is thousands of kilometres away from Nin and light years from Lenin and Trotsky. It is so opportunistic and centrist that there is not a single criticism of the national politics of the PCE and the PSOE. In saying criticism I do not exaggerate — there is not a single sentence or comment. The only three comments on reformist parties are regional or sectoral.

1) On page 7, they make a “harsh criticism” of the Democratic Women’s Movement, controlled by the PCE, for two organisational failures in the preparation and carrying out of the first days of working class women in Madrid.

2) On page 8, the “PCE-PSOE” is criticised for its electoral tactics in *Euskadi* [Basque Country] (only in *Euskadi*?) which lead them to make deals with the Basque right.

3) On page 9, they say, referring to “Taula de Forces politiques y sindicais de País Valencia” [Round Table of Political and Trade Union Forces of the Valencian Country]: “The bourgeois organisations in its interior, and the workers organisations that are actively participating in the commission negotiating with the government — PCE and PSOE — have capitulated to the central power and have accelerated the crisis”.

## Silence means consent

Has *Combate* nothing to say, not even a word, about the policies of the PCE and the PSOE towards the “democratic opening” of the government of Suarez and King Juan Carlos? Is the sinister political line of the PCE and the PSOE in the Basque country an exception? Did they break the discipline of their parties or is it part of a national policy? Is the PCE’s policy regarding the assassination of lawyers incorrect or treacherous? Are the union lines of the PCE and the PSOE of class or opportunistic? Are the leaderships of the reformist parties, or are they not, secretly, for the social pact at the service of the bourgeoisie? Are the majority workers’ parties consistently Republican or are they willing to deal with the monarchy? Are they or are they not preparing for a general strike against the regime?

A special issue of a revolutionary newspaper that fails to rise and answer these politically fundamental and decisive questions, has nothing of Leninist or Trotskyist. It is a terrible

informational newspaper of the union struggles and the oppressed nationalities, but not a Marxist revolutionary organ.

Thus, it is no coincidence that the “Manifesto of the LCR to all public opinion” asserts this: “The LCR is an organisation that during the worst years of the dictatorship has united its efforts to those of the other workers parties and of the nationalities in the fight for freedom and against capitalist exploitation”.

Nor is it surprising the pitiful explanation that the LCR is internationalist “because we defend the need for international solidarity of the workers against the power of the trusts and the multinationals and we maintain close fraternal relations with the organisations of the Fourth International”.

Throughout the newspaper and in the Manifesto it is not explained at all our character as an independent national and international organisation, precisely because the PCE and the PSOE at the national level, such as the CPs and the SPs at an international level, are traitors to the working class, that practice a policy of class collaboration and therefore do not struggle against capitalist exploitation and have thus caused the crisis of leadership of the world and Spanish workers’ movement.

The LCR in its Manifesto says exactly the opposite: “the... (Spanish) workers’ parties” are “united” “in the fight” “against capitalist exploitation”. A word to the wise is enough — the LCR has only tactical differences with the PCE or the PSOE since for many years they have been united “in the fight” “against capitalist exploitation”.

## Why and how we are internationalists

According to the special issue of *Combate* and the Manifesto, the LCR is internationalist for the same reason as Stalinism: for “international solidarity of the workers against the power of the trusts and the multinationals.”

This anti-Marxist conception of internationalism as a united front against the trusts and the multinationals is used by Stalinism to oppose the permanent revolution on a national and international scale since in fighting only against the multinationals it leaves open the possibility of popular fronts with the supposedly “non-monopolist” and “national” bourgeoisie.

And this is not abusive speculation. Anyone who knows the “Eurocommunist” propaganda knows that their favourite camouflage is the “anti-monopoly” verbiage, which seems very radical but which is the justification for the popular front with the supposedly “non-monopolist” bourgeoisie. The “internationalist” formulation of the LCR Manifesto is no more than a “Trotskyoid” echo of that key point of “Eurocommunism” demagoguery, which is not denounced in any way.

Trotskyist internationalism arises from the conception of the world revolution, of the permanent revolution. This internationalism is materialised in the World Party of the Socialist Revolution, the party of the revolution against all the exploiters, from the multinationals to the regional ones. This is why Marx and Engels founded the First and Second Internationals when there were no trusts or multinationals because they wanted to make the international socialist revolution.

We are the inheritors of this program of the international socialist revolution and this is why we denounce the betrayals of the Second and Third International, which abandoned forever this program of the international revolution. We point out the betrayal of the communist parties, which conceal their relentless struggle against the international socialist revolution and their policy of class collaboration under the mantle of “the need for international solidarity of workers against the power of the trusts and the multinationals”. §

## ADDENDUM 2

# From a letter to the Spanish comrades

### For socialist unity in the face of the elections

Paris

11 February 1977

Dear Comrades,

[...] At three months from the elections, it is necessary to find the central slogan that gives coherence and clarity to our political line. It occurs to me that the slogan more or less has to be “unification of all socialist tendencies, of all socialists, without exclusions, to impose a government of all workers’ parties”. Or similar words. Obviously, from it, a strategy and a well-defined electoral tactic arise.

In our slogan of “socialist unity”, there are two aspects. Because I consider it of great importance I want to insist on the first — it objectively poses the possibility of electorally defeating the bourgeoisie and achieving a triumph of the socialist ideas.

The division of socialism in the elections, the division of all the currents which claim to be socialist, is not a triumph of the mass movement, but a defeat. If we succeeded in promoting or at least participating in a process in which the masses which turn to socialism are united in a single alternative to the bourgeois parties, and even against Stalinism itself, we would be participants in a triumph of the movement of masses.

On the contrary, the dispersion of socialist currents would be a triumph of the bourgeoisie. Its unity, I insist, would be, instead, a very relative and distorted victory of the mass movement, taking into account the great weakness of Trotskyism. The ideal would be, of course, that the Spanish Trotskyists were a power and could win these masses by disputing them to the reformists in the electoral process.

But since that perspective is not possible for the moment, we have two real alternatives (there is no third).

### What can happen with socialism divided?

Socialism goes divided to the elections; this would mean a huge loss of votes; a minority of them would go to the ultra-left or to the PCE, but the great majority would go to the liberal bourgeois parties — like the Christian democracy, for example — that will appear like the champions of bourgeois “democracy”.

But the worst of all is that there will not emerge a clear electoral alternative of power. In the absence of a strong socialist party winning the elections or having a great success in them together with the PCE, there can be a danger of a situation like that of Italy — that the masses should be

divided between a bourgeois liberal majority party (PDC, [Constitutional Democratic Party]) and the Communist Party. This prevents us from raising the formidable slogan of a government made up of the electoral majority parties that claim to be socialists and workers, such as the SP, PCE and the centrists and ultra-leftists.

To avoid this disaster, socialist unity

The other alternative is the unity of the socialist movement to face the elections which, under present conditions, means a gigantic progress of the mass movement, since it opens the concrete possibility of a defeat of the bourgeois parties. Hence the importance of the slogan. Insofar as it reflects a deep objective need, it proves that it is not a manoeuvring slogan. It is thus how unity would bring as result a great advance of the mass movement, whereas the division would be a true disaster, a triumph of the bourgeoisie.

### **It is the best policy towards the PCE**

The other positive aspect of our slogan of socialist unity goes beyond the points we have already stated, since it allows us to put the PCE between a rock and a hard place, demanding from it the commitment of a unitary government of the workers' parties. Thus, at the same time, we will be fighting against its popular frontist plans which are basically the same as those of the socialist leadership. It opens, then, the possibility, after the polling, to raise the slogan: "that the workers' parties triumphant in the elections take power".

Our electoral policy allows us, then, to achieve our dearest longing — a solid fulcrum from which we address the ranks of the PCE, its activists and militants, who together with sectors of the ultra-left are the best of the Spanish proletariat in terms of dynamism and activity. The slogan of "socialist unity" thus materialises our strategy and tactics, but once formulated it enriches both.

We all know we must approach the communist workers. This line is strengthened with the electoral slogan, not only because it allows us to influence the masses that are incorporated to socialism, but to hit strongly on the ranks of the PCE, and also on the ultra-left around the character of the future government.

Our slogan of "socialist unity for the elections" has as fundamental, and not secondary, the goal of allowing us to address the ranks of the PCE and the Workers' Commissions in a strong way, with much more force than we do today, and of how we would be able to do it if we remain independent or do not take part in the elections. That is, we apply a policy that can increase hundredfold our strength. That is the goal. [...] §