

December 10, 1972

Argentina

Dear Hugo,

The announcement you made during your report that the PSA was holding a convention in the middle of December at which it would declare for the Fourth International had considerable impact. The majority, of course, voiced disbelief, but were affected nonetheless. It was clear to them that a declaration by the PSA for the Fourth International would constitute the clearest possible evidence of your intention to carry on the international tradition of Trotskyism in Argentina. I am sure that in the worldwide debate now going on in preparation for the next congress, the declaration will certainly be weighed favorably by many comrades who have been told that the La Verdad grouping is "anti-Trotskyist."

It was too bad that we did not get an opportunity to discuss more fully all the ramifications of this step before you left Gent. It would have been quite productive, I think, if we could have had at least a day to consider only this question, taking up its various aspects, special problems, and the possibilities of deriving even more benefit from it than might appear possible at first glance.

For instance, I began to think about the problem you face in Argentina of avoiding possible misunderstandings in the left concerning the meaning of such a declaration. Trotskyism, as you know only too well, has unfortunately received a bad name in Argentina because of its association with such currents as those represented by Posadas, Politica Obrera, and others. Some people might get the mistaken impression that in declaring for the Fourth International you are in reality declaring that you have something in common with one of these tendencies, or that you are engaging in some kind of division of labor with one or more of them. In the immediate period ahead this could cause some difficulties or at least some trouble in explaining that this is not the case.

No doubt you have already considered how to avoid the difficulty, or at least how to make it easier to prevent any misunderstanding or to overcome it. In that case, of course, what I have to say will prove to be superfluous. However, since we did not get a chance to discuss the problem with you, I thought you might like to know the results of our own discussion.

First of all, we thought that it would be excellent to include in the formal declaration a brief explanation of its programmatic base. This would have the effect of indicating what Trotskyism is and what it is not, thereby differentiating the PSA from the pseudo Trotskyist tendencies. If it were done carefully, it would not be necessary to name the pseudo Trotskyist tendencies although that is a tactical matter. (The identification could be taken up later, perhaps more conveniently, in explanatory polemical articles dealing with Posadism, Politica Obrera, etc.)

Since the declaration has to be as short as possible, it cannot do much more than list the programmatic points. Here are some

Possibilities for your consideration that I jotted down during our discussion of the question. They are not necessarily in the order they should be presented; and they are certainly not exhaustive.

-- The PSA stands on the revolutionary tradition of the First International, the Second International in its early years (the period of Frederick Engels), the Third International in its pre-Stalinist period (first four congresses), and the world Trotskyist movement.

-- The PSA places particular emphasis on the Transitional Program and its methods. (This might be expanded a bit to indicate its pertinence to Argentina.)

-- The PSA regards as its heritage the contributions of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Trotsky. (This could be put in an appropriate context to indicate that these are the revolutionary thinkers and exemplary leaders whom we regard as the key figures in the development of Marxism.

-- The PSA affirms the revolutionary character of the Fourth International and rejects out of hand positions that call for the reform of the Second International or the world Stalinist movement, or that call for creating a completely new international.

-- The PSA proposes to help build the Fourth International by moving forward in Argentina to the creation of a mass revolutionary party. It also proposes to help shoulder the international task of creating similar parties in all other countries.

-- The PSA affirms the need for political revolutions in the Soviet Union, China, and other degenerated, or deformed workers states that will establish or reestablish proletarian democracy as practiced in the early days of the Soviet Union under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky.

-- The PSA affirms its complete solidarity with the Cuban revolution and its defense of the Cuban workers state against the efforts of imperialism to strangle it.

-- The PSA is critical of the Cuban Communist Party, particularly of its support to the invasion of Czechoslovakia, its support to bourgeois regimes like the one in Peru, and its persistence in maintaining a Debrayist guerrilla orientation for Latin America and elsewhere.

-- The PSA rejects the class-collaborationist policy of "peaceful coexistence" advanced by both Brezhnev and Mao and other leaders of the school of Stalinism.

-- The PSA rejects the "parliamentary road" to socialism as unrealistic, diversionary, and a trap. The PSA affirms the need to

arm the masses to defend themselves and their past gains in struggling for power; but rejects terroristic methods or any other form of "armed struggle" or guerrilla war undertaken by small groups in isolation from the masses.

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The above are only suggestions made with regard to differentiating the PSA clearly from the pseudo Trotskyist tendencies. Other points could be added corresponding to the concrete situation (such as work among the masses, the trade unions, the need for a party of action and not mere talk, opposition to both sectarianism and opportunism, etc.) However, some of these might fit in better with other programmatic statements. Naturally the wording should be recast so that it fits in with that of the declaration as a whole.

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The Militant has asked Fred to cover the convention. I think he plans to arrive a couple of days in advance; but he will write you about this. When he gets in, you might discuss with him the advisability of a special article on the PSA's declaration of affiliation to the Fourth and suggest some specific points that he should include. For example, he could indicate the special problem faced by the movement in overcoming the impressions created by Posadas, and the attacks made by Politica Obrera about "liquidating" into the Social Democracy.

With warmest regards,