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REPORT ON THE THIRD WORLD CONGRESS
OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL SINCE REUNIFICATION

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REPORT ON WORLD CONGRESS

(Given at New York branch meeting June 4, 1969.)

By Joseph Hansen

I'm going to report on the Third Congress since the Reunification Congress was held in 1963. Or, if you figure from 1938, the Ninth Congress since the Fourth International was founded.

The size of the congress has been indicated in the public report published in Intercontinental Press -- around a hundred delegates and observers, representing about thirty different countries. It was fairly representative, therefore, of the status of the Trotskyist movement at this stage in quite a few areas. Some places were not represented for reasons that we do not know -- maybe a breakdown in travel arrangements, or for other reasons of that kind.

The congress lasted for about a week, and still did not complete its agenda. Several important points had to be held over because there simply was not time in that brief period of one week to discuss all the points that needed to be taken up.

The subjects included the general resolution, which the delegates referred to as "the Theses," which covered the political situation in the world since the last congress -- bringing things up to date; a special resolution on Latin America which proposed an orientation, and another document, in fact, two documents, which made an estimate of the Cultural Revolution in China. Then a very important resolution and discussion on the youth movement as it has developed in the past few years throughout the world; and finally, a report on the activities of the Fourth International.

In comparison with the previous two congresses, that is, the Reunification Congress and the congress in 1965, there was one notable difference. At the Reunification Congress there was complete agreement so far as the principled basis of the reunification was concerned. I should explain that just before the Reunification Congress, a Seventh World Congress had been held which was marked by an extremely sharp fight between Pablo on the one hand, and those who supported his position -- he was the former secretary of the Fourth International -- and those who disagreed with his positions as they had developed up to that point -- who were led by Livio Maitan, Pierre Frank, and Ernest Mandel. The Seventh Congress ended and then the Reunification Congress opened.

Following the Reunification Congress, Pablo split from the Fourth International. I won't go into the issues on which that

occurred, but simply record the fact that a split did occur, after the Reunification Congress, a rather small one. Then came the Second Congress after the reunification (or Eighth Congress), the main task of which was to consolidate the reunification, as it had existed over a period of two years, and in the face of the split by Pablo. So there were no major differences recorded at that congress.

Now the present congress was different. We had some differences. I'll go into these in a moment, their nature, and what they might mean.

First, I should like to just indicate something of our general attitude towards the Fourth International, which we unfortunately cannot be legally members of, and say something about the role we have played in building the Fourth International. We were instrumental -- that is, our leaders of that time, 1938 and earlier, were instrumental -- together with Leon Trotsky, in creating and founding the Fourth International. And ever since that time, we have done our utmost to build the Fourth International, to help it in every possible way. Since the beginning of the Trotskyist movement, our leaders have consciously opposed any tendency to fall into any kind of narrow isolationist attitude. And because of this long tradition in our movement, the Socialist Workers Party has always had an attitude toward the problems of building an international that could be said to be among the very best.

One of the things we have always held to -- very consciously -- was not to try to assume leadership of the International. We viewed our position, and our role, and our function, even though we were the most powerful sector of the movement for many years, as that of offering support -- helping and supporting the key leaders but not substituting for them and not trying to assume the leadership.

Over that long period, there was only one big split with serious consequences, if we leave aside the split in the SWP in 1939-40. In 1953, a split occurred which lasted for ten years. In our opinion, this was not our responsibility. It was due to a series of very bad errors that were committed at that time by the leadership of the International under Pablo. It was aggravated by the fact that McCarthyism, which raged at that time in the United States, prevented us from being able to give a clear picture to the International of our positions on certain items; and a series of misunderstandings arose as a result of that. These were

finally overcome, and we had the reunification of 1963.

Two points should be noted in this reunification, because we felt them in the present congress. One was that at the Reunification Congress we reached an agreement to leave the assessment of the differences of 1953 to a time in the future when we could discuss them in an educational way without any heat. We did not think it advisable at the time to undertake an assessment of who was right and who was wrong in 1953 and the following years. We thought it best to leave that discussion to a period when it could be viewed in the proper, historic perspective, and with the balance sheet drawn in a way that would eliminate any factional heat due to factional hangovers. All of us agreed on that.

The other thing was that in 1963, certain differences on the question of China had to be considered. We had reached agreement on all the other major questions in the world as we saw them at that time, with the exception of China. Here it turned out that during the years of the split the comrades who were under the International Secretariat had not taken the same position as we had in the Socialist Workers Party, and in the International Committee, with which we had fraternal relations, on the question of China. They did not believe in the necessity of a political revolution. That was the key point, so we had some discussion on that question, and we reached an agreement that what we would do was use a formula that included the substance of calling for a political revolution in China, but without naming it as such. That was the agreement that we reached in 1963.

Since then, that is, during the Cultural Revolution, the comrades who were formerly with the International Secretariat, came to the conclusion that it was correct to call for a political revolution. They came to this conclusion after Mao had come out for a political revolution in China. We thought that this was a progressive step on their part, and that it might lead to a still closer approximation of the positions that had existed before the Reunification Congress. And that's the way things stood as the congress was being prepared.

Now, as to the documents and the discussion that occurred on them at the congress. First on the Theses, the general political resolution, which is called "The New Rise of the World Revolution." I won't go into this very much, because it will be published, as finally edited, in a coming issue of Intercontinental Press. Briefly, what it did was to bring up to date all the major happenings in the three sectors of the world revolution, pointing to the importance of Vietnam, and what Vietnam

had done in rearousing the colonial world and contributing to a new upsurge in the other sectors. The Theses dealt with the events in Czechoslovakia, indicating the deep-going tendency in the deformed or degenerated workers states towards a political revolution. It took up what has been happening in the advanced countries, particularly in France with the explosion of May-June 1968, and how this has accelerated the revolutionary process in Europe, with repercussions all over the entire world. The United States was included, the Theses dealing with the black liberation struggle and the political explosion on the campuses, and how this has contributed to a completely new mood in the United States and opened up great new possibilities for the revolutionary movement. The general conclusion of the Theses, put briefly, was that what has been happening in the past period, that is, since 1965, is an overcoming of the defeats of the previous period, the big ones in places like Brazil and Indonesia. A shift is occurring towards the classical revolutionary norms, and since the word "classical" may not be the best in this instance, let me explain what is meant by this.

It means that the pattern of revolution as we have seen it in China or Cuba or other places in the colonial world where the peasantry have played a very big role, where the cities, and the city masses seem to have been rather quiescent, or able to play only a secondary role, has now changed, or is changing. What we are witnessing is the resumption of the key role of cities; that is, the key role of the urban masses, and in particular the working class. This signifies that there are greater possibilities now of revolutions occurring somewhat on the pattern of the Russian Revolution in which a party is required of the Leninist type. This now becomes more and more the probability. This was the general conclusion of the Theses.

There were contributions in the discussion from various areas, some of which were of particular interest -- one from Pakistan, for example, which pointed out what had been happening there in the weeks just before the congress, where for the first time a student rebellion, spreading over the country, had succeeded in bringing down a government administration, and ousting one dictator even though he was replaced probably by one not much different. This was symptomatic of the times.

And there were some interesting contributions from India, on the problems that they face there, and particularly on the role of Maoism, not as a revolutionary force, but as an obstacle towards the building of a revolutionary movement. Other significant contributions were made

from a number of areas. There was general agreement on this resolution, although, of course, not all the formulations met with unanimous approval. There were differences on some of these.

I come to the question of Latin America -- the resolution around which the sharpest differences appeared at the congress. I'll go into that at greater length, one reason being that I was more directly involved in that than in some of the other discussions.

There was general agreement on the first part of the resolution which describes the conditions in Latin America as being prerevolutionary, almost revolutionary, or at least of explosive proportions over the entire continent. This situation has existed, in my opinion, in Latin America for about ten years or more, so that there was really nothing new in this, beyond recording how difficult it is becoming for the oligarchies in Latin America and their American backers to keep the lid on the situation.

The differences arose over what conclusions should be drawn from this general situation in the way of advancing the revolution. Thus the differences concerned the question of strategy in the revolutionary struggle. Our view on this question was that what was proposed, namely, guerrilla war, can be taken as either a tactical or strategic question. If it is taken as a tactical question, then the use of guerrilla warfare ought to be decided by each section and fitted into a broader strategy. For example, if the Peruvian Trotskyists think that it would advance the revolutionary process in Peru to engage in guerrilla warfare this is a tactical problem for them to decide in relation with their overall problem of constructing a combat party capable of leading a revolution to success. But if guerrilla warfare is not viewed that way, but is viewed as a strategy, that is, a new way of carrying out a revolution, then the Leninist concept of constructing a combat party as the main strategic task is put into question and we disagree with that. This, then, ought to become the axis of the discussion -- the question of whether or not guerrilla warfare could be accepted as a strategy. Our view on this was shared by other comrades there, India for example.

The opposing thesis, that of the comrades who maintain that rural guerrilla warfare should be adopted as a continental strategy for a prolonged period, is linked with a certain view of where the Fourth International stands, and what the possibilities are facing the Fourth International. The view is something like this: the Fourth International has great prestige because of its political and theoretical capacities, but it remains small

organizationally. At the same time it is confronted with tremendous revolutionary possibilities, particularly in a place like Latin America, and everything now hinges on the possibility of these small forces engaging in the struggle in such a way as to make a breakthrough.

This view was expressed most eloquently by Livio Maitan in a letter which was published in the internal bulletin. Everything hinges, according to this view, on whether or not the Fourth International can make a breakthrough, particularly in Latin America, but also anywhere it may be possible. Once such a breakthrough is made -- the Trotskyists coming to power in a country like Peru or Bolivia or Ecuador, or a place like that, or becoming a major party in a place like France -- then everything else will follow; because the old charge that the Trotskyists can talk, and theorize, and argue well about politics and all that sort of thing, but can't organize -- that will fall to the ground.

Our position was that the situation is certainly ripe enough. This has been shown over and over again -- the ripeness of the situation in country after country, throughout the world, and it would take a very long list to name all the places -- but what is needed for the Fourth International to forge ahead in a big way is more forces. You cannot leap over yourself, more forces are required, even in those areas where the opportunities are greatest. As a matter of fact, that is where you need them the most. This boils down then to the old question of party building, building a combat party. That's what we tried to maintain and to present at the congress as observers.

We forecast, in our arguments, that in Latin America the revolutionary struggle would tend to shift to the urban centers, and we cited as one of the first examples of that trend what happened in Santo Domingo. And then, of course, the way the United States responded to that.

The contention of the comrades of the opposing view was that the struggle will continue to be mainly in the rural areas, not because there's anything better about the rural areas, but simply that it is easier for guerrillas to survive in a rural area than it is in a city area.

We posed against the orientation concentrating on the preparation of guerrilla war, an orientation towards the youth, that is, toward those sectors of the population which have shown by their own actions that they are drawing revolutionary conclusions and tending to move into action. We maintained that this orientation was valid for Latin America as well as for other parts of the world.

The opposite position was that we should orient towards engaging in military preparations for rural guerrilla war on a continental scale, no matter how small the forces might be in any given country.

Our conclusion was what this line of argumentation implied was an adaptation to the limitations of the Cuban leadership. And I'll go into this to indicate precisely what we meant by that, so as to avoid any possible misunderstanding.

They, of course, denied that they were adapting at all to the Cubans. Instead, they held that if any conclusion was to be drawn it was that we were under the influence of the peace movement in the United States and that we were continuing in the tradition of "commentary" politics; that we comment and do not engage in action.

I got the impression that some of the comrades who took this view tended to divide the European Trotskyist movement as it was and as it stands now along the following lines: That there was a bad past in which the Trotskyists were engaged in entryism -- that was in Europe -- and there was a bad past in the United States, in which the Trotskyists engaged in commentary politics. Fortunately at the present time, in France they have overcome the stage of entryism, but it appears that in the United States we have not yet overcome the stage of commentary politics. Only one or two comrades expressed it that clearly on the floor. These comrades had the position that the Fourth International should stop living in the shadow of Stalinism and on its mistakes, and strike out boldly, with new tactics and vigorous actions.

In considering the limitations of the Cuban leaders, some points were brought out at the congress which have not been discussed before. Our view on the Cubans as we presented it at the congress was that the Cubans made an enormous breakthrough in their revolution. They succeeded in gaining a victory due to the default of the Communist Party, and the fact that they, as a young generation of revolutionaries, refused to follow the Communist Party, and struck out on their own. Under the peculiarities of the situation in Cuba at that time, they succeeded, through guerrilla warfare and its development, in gaining power. This was their great positive achievement. But this very achievement, in the peculiar form in which it occurred, also tended to set the subsequent course of this leadership along lines which they have not yet transcended.

First of all, in Cuba they utilized the Communist Party. They dismantled it, tried to put it together and make something new out of it. It was like using old bricks in a new building. They found the Cuban CP useful in this respect.

Then, in extending the Cuban revolution, thereby defending Cuba in the most effective way, they sought to repeat the Cuban pattern, that is, the pattern of the Cuban revolution. They sought to utilize the Communist parties in other parts of Latin America.

After a time, this effort to utilize the Communist parties in Latin America ended up in a real faction fight. Because the Cubans, in utilizing the Communist parties, did not try to build a combat party in any of these countries; instead they tried to utilize the Communist parties to build guerrilla forces. This proved not to be successful. So they ended up in a factional struggle with the CP's, in which the key issue became armed struggle vs. peaceful coexistence.

On that issue, of course, all of us were on the Cuban side -- against the concept of peaceful coexistence.

The faction struggle ended in a split with the important Venezuelan CP, and this was codified more or less at the OLAS conference in 1967. Here, one of the limitations of the Cubans showed up, that in splitting with the Venezuelan CP, they did not make any political accounting. No political accounting over what the role of Stalinism was, and they sort of buried the whole thing and ended up in a very small minority. Because of their incorrect political course, the Cubans ended up with a small minority not only in Venezuela but elsewhere in Latin America. Nowhere did they succeed in building, or putting together, forces of a size and quality capable of carrying out a revolution in the pattern of the Cuban revolution, or any other pattern.

At the OLAS conference, they projected a new course -- that they would work with anybody. We interpreted that to mean, well, "anybody," that includes Trotskyists. How else would you designate Trotskyists from the Cuban viewpoint?

The defeat of Che Guevara followed that. It had a dampening effect on the whole Cuban line, and its implementation. At the OLAS conference the OLAS had a definite structure, had a definite set of rules, and was projected as a definite organization. And if you'll recall what was said at the time, it was projected that the OLAS might even constitute the core of a new international. This appeared in different newspapers and magazines written by people who had very close contact with the Cuban leadership. Such an article appeared in Ramparts, for example. But Che's defeat had a dampening effect, and the OLAS began to wither. It eventually became more and more reduced, until at the congress, the comrades who were closest to the situation in Latin America said, "OLAS does not exist. What does

exist is a number of currents, or tendencies, who more or less agree on the necessity of armed struggle, or guerrilla warfare, who come under the general designation of OLAS, and that's all that remains."

Despite these bitter experiences, the line of the Cuban leaders -- and this is primarily at the present time the course and the line of Fidel Castro -- remains rural guerrilla warfare on a continental scale over a prolonged period. That's their line. But our assessment of it -- we're talking now of the assessment we made at the congress in presenting a minority view -- is that it is more difficult today to repeat that pattern than it was in 1958 and 1959. The enemy, that is, the imperialist enemy, has learned a bit, and there has been a series of defeats which have had their effect in Latin America.

In presenting these views, we asked, or rather called for, a drawing of a balance sheet on the whole experience of guerrilla warfare, as to what conclusions could be drawn from it, its weaknesses, whatever positive qualities it has, how far it should be included in the program of the Fourth International, just what assessment should be made of it.

In the process of this discussion, we brought up the question of Che Guevara and the lessons to be learned from the defeat of his undertaking in Bolivia. We drew some rather sharp political conclusions concerning Che Guevara's course in Bolivia.

First of all, we talked about Che Guevara as a symbol. He really is a very admirable figure. He is an admirable figure to all youth who are inclined in a revolutionary direction. He caught their imagination. For one thing, he was a man of action. That's a type of revolutionist coming into increasing prominence -- revolutionists of action. Che Guevara's dedication is particularly impressive. He was second or third in the leadership of Cuba, had enormous prestige, an assured government career. He gave that up. He gave up his wife, his children -- everything. He gave up all this in order to dedicate himself to a struggle that was very hazardous, a difficult, hard struggle. No wonder he caught the admiration of the youth everywhere. We share this feeling about Che Guevara. We share it very deeply, because to us, he's our kind. We're the kind who dedicate ourselves in the same way, really dedicate our lives to the revolution.

At the same time, we have to make an estimate of him politically, of what he did politically, and what happened politically.

First of all, on the points where we

agree with Che Guevara.

We agree with Che Guevara on his overall goal of revolutionary socialism. But we disagree with him that this can be precipitated at any given moment by the will of a revolutionary.

We agree with him on the concept that the best aid that can be given to the Vietnamese revolution would be to create one, two, many Vietnams. But we disagree with him on its being possible to do this through the action of a small group that decides in a selected country that it will precipitate a Vietnam there.

We agree with Che Guevara on his internationalism, and particularly with his concept that the best way to defend Cuba is by extending the revolution. Here we disagree with him on one simple thing. We disagree with his concept that a revolution can be exported. In saying this we are taking into consideration more what he tried to do than what he may have said on this point. That's what he actually tried to do in Bolivia -- export a revolution.

We agree with him on his opposition to Stalinism. What we disagree with him on is how to oppose Stalinism. Our concept is that in opposing Stalinism, we must work this out through political confrontation with Stalinism, through the elaboration of differences with Stalinism, through the assessment of the historical experience with Stalinism, so that the whole development of Stalinism and its meaning becomes understood to the core. It's not enough simply to be anti-Stalinist. Much more is required.

We agree with him in his opposition to the politics of peaceful coexistence. Our alternative to that policy is to construct a combat party in the Leninist tradition, and what we stress is the importance of political leadership.

We did not take up the technical side of Che Guevara's operation in Bolivia, simply indicating that on this very little has been said by experts. Fidel Castro only went so far as to say that Che Guevara had a tendency sometimes to be much too bold in these operations; but he might have meant that in the sense of throwing himself personally into sectors of the battle where he could easily have been killed.

What we were concerned about was Che's political errors. And these we listed as follows:

First, he assumed that a particular situation in Bolivia followed directly from a general situation on a continental scale. If all of Latin America is in an explosive condition and if the whole situ-

ation is prerevolutionary, then if you look at Bolivia, you must say that Bolivia is the weakest link in Latin America. And you can list all the reasons why it should be the weakest link. But what Che left out in making this estimate was that there are also ups and downs within a particular country, and that it becomes very, very important in a revolutionary struggle to know when the movement is actually rising among the masses, and when it is declining. This involves the question of timing -- when to throw yourself into action, how to conduct yourself, what slogans to raise, what actions to engage in. This takes us to the next point.

Second, Che Guevara left out the timing in relation to the Bolivian class struggle. Timing is a crucial question in an important revolutionary action. I should say that it's also a very difficult question for even a revolutionary party to determine. We know that from the Bolshevik experience. It is very difficult for even a revolutionary party to determine precisely the moods of the masses, the exact extent that they're moving forward, and to be able from this knowledge to undertake the correct action at the correct moment. It does not follow directly from a general situation and it requires a party in order to determine it. Che had no party. His timing was conceived in the light of a general continental situation and on the objective need to help the Vietnamese and to defend the Cuban revolution, not on a direct and immediate appreciation of Bolivian realities.

To be noted in this conjunction was his belief that a revolution can be precipitated through the action of a small force, even from the outside, because most of the people who he brought into Bolivia in the beginning were from the outside. This whole approach of Che Guevara in this situation resembled a sectarian approach. Preconceived ideas. The general situation is explosive, you've got to help the Vietnamese, and the revolution can be precipitated by a small force. He proceeded almost dogmatically. He formed his concept of the situation in Bolivia in much the way sectarians do.

His third political mistake was that in place of relying on a combat party, in place of constructing that, or having it available to him in Bolivia, he depended on a very treacherous ally. In the first place, you shouldn't depend on an ally, any ally at all; you should have your own forces. But he didn't have his own forces -- political forces -- and he had to depend on an ally. And the ally was a very treacherous one -- it was the Bolivian CP. Even with the Bolivian CP, his political preparations were inadequate. He did not work out his alliance with the Bolivian CP carefully. What he should have done, since they were treach-

erous, was to have a showdown with them in advance, before the operation was even engaged in. He had to have this showdown with them in order to determine how reliable they might be when the fighting began. It was absolutely essential for the success of his guerrilla operation in Bolivia to have good connections with the miners, and to have good connections with the masses in the cities, particularly in La Paz. The fact that he did not undertake this showdown, but simply engaged in the action, made it much easier for the Bolivian Stalinists to shift their differences with Che Guevara from a political level -- that is, the difference between the line of peaceful coexistence or armed struggle -- to shift it from the political level to organizational questions, which happens nearly always in a factional fight with an unprincipled group. They raised the organizational question against him. They were all for what he did, but they had organizational differences with him. First of all, they accused him of a lack of consultation. And, of course, they had a point there. He did not consult them about the operation. Next, they raised the question of who should have command. That's not a very good question to debate because it involves personal qualifications and the whole thing gets lowered to a very vulgar level. The Stalinists did this very deliberately to avoid the main political question. It was an error to permit this kind of a situation to develop.

Che Guevara's fourth error, which I have already referred to, was to begin an armed action without a political party or even a nucleus of a party either in the countryside or the city. He did not even have any ties with the Trotskyists, who had a certain connection with the masses both in La Paz and in the mines, and he did not have any connections with the peasants, or any organized political forces in the countryside, so that when he began his action, he was faced with a situation in which if the peasants did not rally immediately to his cause, then he would have to substitute for them. So he fell into a position where a small force substitutes for the masses, or tries to substitute for them. I'm quite sure that in the writings of Che Guevara you can find statements against this, against any substitution for the masses, statements that certain preconditions are required for guerrilla warfare; but the fact is that this is what he fell into in Bolivia.

His fifth error was that he made no advance political preparation among the peasants of any kind. Not the slightest of any kind whatsoever. Party or no party, simply no kind of preparation whatsoever with the peasants. So they were taken completely by surprise. All of a sudden, here are these guerrilla fighters, and it

takes them some time to estimate this, and to judge what it may mean. Precious time was lost by that while the enemy mobilized.

Then, his sixth mistake was to underestimate the will, the readiness, and the technical capacities of the CIA and the Pentagon to initiate countermeasures against him. This he badly underestimated. They, on the other hand, did not underestimate him at all. When they learned about his action, we now know, they held a top-level meeting in Washington, involving all the forces around Johnson -- the Pentagon, the CIA, the State Department, all their top men were involved with all their connections in Bolivia, their vast resources, technical apparatus, and we don't know how many millions of dollars were spent. They estimated Che Guevara as being a very serious person, one who required their special attention. In other words, they had a better appreciation of him than he had of them. That's a bad mistake for a political person to make. You've got to estimate the enemy very, very carefully.

His seventh error was to choose a position -- and this involves a technical side, too -- where it was difficult to break out or to receive aid. It may have been a very good area to practice the technique of guerrilla warfare, but it wasn't very good to receive aid, or to break out of. And he was actually caught when he tried to break out of that place. So this choice made it easier for the counterforces to isolate him when the peasants did not rally immediately, as he had hoped they would.

If we summarize all these errors, we come to the following general conclusion about them, that Che Guevara put guerrilla technique -- armed-struggle technique -- above politics. He put military action above party building. And I think that this is incontrovertible, that this is what he actually did.

The conclusion to be drawn from this, remembering that Che Guevara is a very important advocate and practitioner of guerrilla warfare, is that first of all, guerrilla warfare does not stand up as a general strategy however well it may fit in as a tactic in certain situations when it is used by a well-constructed combat party.

A second conclusion to be drawn from this experience is that it presented fresh proof that the struggle in Latin America has become more difficult and requires a better instrument than previously -- it requires the construction of a combat party to a much greater degree than, say, in 1958 or 1959.

Here's how the comrades of the op-

posing position answered these arguments. They agreed with the criticisms of Che! A few seemed doubtful or hesitant, but the key comrades on the other side agreed with all these criticisms of Che, and even said that they had made the same criticisms themselves, as long as a year and a half ago, in a meeting of the International Executive Committee. They only disagreed on one point -- they disagreed that it was an outside enterprise for Che to come to Bolivia. They didn't agree with that. Perhaps this flows from the concept that Latin America is one country, with the same main language, facing the same general problems. On that basis they would be right in saying that it was not an outside enterprise.

But they did not elaborate. They maintained that despite the errors of Che, the concept of guerrilla warfare still remains valid. And, of course, anyone who practices it now, will profit from this experience and won't make those kinds of errors. The concept still remains valid. They drew the same conclusion for the defeats of the guerrilla struggles in Peru, for example, under Luis de la Puente, and Guillermo Lobatón. The same for Venezuela, and the same for Guatemala. Wherever there has been a defeat for the guerrilla struggle, it was a misapplication of the concept. The concept still remains valid. Also, they agreed on the need for a party. They maintained that the only way you can build a party in Latin America today is through practicing or preparing for guerrilla warfare.

The vote on this resolution was 2-1 in favor of the comrades who favored the guerrilla war strategy. One-third of the delegates were against it. We had to ask ourselves what this represented. Our conclusion was that this represented a feeling, or a mood, or a conclusion on the part of the Latin-American Trotskyists, in combination with a similar attitude among a goodly sector of the French youth. The French youth are emerging from the experience of entryism, which they are much against; they do not have a long experience in party building and they are heavily influenced by the whole general aura surrounding Guevara, the deep sympathy for Guevara, and the attempts to practice Guevarism in the advanced countries as well as in the more backward countries. They are heavily under this influence. So it was this combination or the agreement between them and the Latin-American comrades that was registered at the congress.

I should add that not all the Latin-American comrades agree with this perspective. Some of the comrades in Argentina were opposed to putting the strategy of guerrilla warfare above the strategy of party building. The Argentines split about a year and a half ago, almost down the middle, and this appears to have been one

of the key issues, although it was unstated. And the comrades who were rather opposed to adopting guerrilla warfare along these lines engaged in a split in which it was very difficult for anyone outside Argentina to determine who was in the majority. So these comrades, seemingly in a minority, according to the report of the United Secretariat representative, did not carry full weight at the congress. There may be other comrades in Latin America, too, whose analysis of guerrilla warfare is more or less the same as ours.

But I should say that it's a very real problem, and a difficult one to handle, because of the stand of the Cubans on this question, and because of the fact that it has become a key issue in the differences between Stalinism and the revolutionary current, being posed as armed struggle versus peaceful coexistence. In this conflict guerrilla war was identified with armed struggle, although it is only a specific form of armed struggle. This complicated things since a critical attitude toward the strategy of guerrilla warfare was easily misinterpreted as being identical to the position of the Stalinists.

The next point is the Cultural Revolution. Here we were faced with a strange situation. We had two documents, which originated from one document. The original draft was one we prepared at the request of the comrades on the United Secretariat. Despite the great amount of work we have here, we agreed to do this. The document was sent to the United Secretariat. The majority of the comrades there agreed on a number of changes. This, of course, was their right since what they wanted from us was a first draft. When the changed document came back, we were rather surprised at the extent of the changes, and the nature of the changes. Looking them over very carefully, bearing in mind our entire experience of analyzing the Chinese revolution, and recalling the differences that had existed before 1963, it appeared to us that the document now reflected a differing way of looking at the Cultural Revolution and at China, and that back of the changes loomed some rather large questions: How do you estimate Maoism? What kind of danger is it? To what degree is Maoism the same as Stalinism? A whole series of questions like that appeared to be involved although they showed up only in the form of changes and amendments.

We put the two documents column by column, and ran off copies of the two documents that way, so that the changes could be studied more easily. But our delegation forgot them, and we only had a dozen or so. Thus the comrades at the congress did not have the benefit of seeing them side by side.

This confronted us with a considerable difficulty in bringing out precisely what these differences were, and what they signified. One of the delegates there made a wisecrack that all that was involved was a "marital dispute between the Europeans and the Americans." Everybody laughed at that. Who wanted to get involved in a marital dispute? Naturally there was a tendency on the part of many comrades to say, "Well, this is just hair splitting; let's not get involved in it."

The report for the majority was given by Livio Maitan. My impression of his report was that it was rather general and intended primarily for publication. I could not follow all the details of it as he gave it, but I see from the document itself that it has 36 footnotes. I can't remember any previous report so well supplied with footnotes. I mention this because in my opinion the report appeared to avoid the differences that faced the congress. This made it especially difficult for the reporter for the minority to try to bring out the meaning of the differences. He had to start from scratch, take the two documents, and try to show what was involved by singling out instances which by themselves might not really mean much, such as whether to say "Stalinized Chinese Communist Party" or just "Chinese Communist Party." That was not easy.

We had two other minority reports. One was made by Comrade Peng, who made a very good presentation of his viewpoint. The gist of it was that he considered the minority document to be all right so far as the record was concerned, but that it missed the main problem, which was how to intervene actively in the dispute between the Liu Shao-chi wing and the Maoist wing of the bureaucracy. His position was for intervention on the side of Liu Shao-chi, whom he considered to be a kind of Khrushchevist. Khrushchevism should be regarded as having two aspects, Comrade Peng explained. On the one hand it is more crassly opportunistic than Stalin would ever indicate in language. On the other hand it stands for de-Stalinization. What we ought to support, critically, is the trend towards de-Stalinization. This was the reason Comrade Peng gave for intervening on the side of Liu Shao-chi.

Then we had a report by Comrade Capa of Argentina, who was also for an active policy of intervention in China, but he tended to be for intervention on the side of Mao. His difficulty was that there's a real problem of Maoism among guerrilla fighters in certain parts of Latin America, and he's against Maoism. Thus it was not easy for him to draw a line of separation.

One of the most interesting posi-

tions was the one advanced by Ernest Germain. He tried to bring out that the area of agreement between the two documents was much more fundamental than the disagreements; that actually the two documents were almost the same so far as the points of agreement were concerned. He listed these as follows:

First of all, both sides agreed that what we have before us is a deformed workers state in China.

Secondly, that a political revolution is required.

Thirdly, both sides agree that the Cultural Revolution was a consequence of an intrabureaucratic struggle. A split occurred over differences within the bureaucracy.

But in the process of this struggle the masses were mobilized. This was No. 4 in the points of agreement, that there was a mass mobilization in China. And this mass mobilization had the effect, No. 5, of weakening the bureaucracy.

Finally, the sixth point, Maoism is alien to Marxism.

On all these points we have substantial agreement and we really should not have two documents before us, in the opinion of Comrade Germain.

The changes that they made in the original document, according to him, were either editorial changes, small changes, which we would probably agree to; and, No. 2, they added certain points to explain the objective reasons for the Cultural Revolution.

If you look at the two documents, you'll see a series of points listing a number of contradictions to be seen in Chinese society. These contradictions led to the explosion known as the Cultural Revolution.

Comrade Peng made a good point on one of these -- the contradiction between the population explosion and the limitation of resources available for this exploding population. He said that this could have been said for the last 100 years in China. And the same for many other countries in the colonial world, and this didn't explain the particular reasons for the Cultural Revolution in particular.

The third point that Ernest made was changes in statements of fact. He had the impression that the first draft of the resolution implied that there had been a military takeover and they had rectified this to indicate that there had not been a military takeover even though the military had grown stronger.

The fourth change was to repeat formulas which were used at the Reunification Congress to the effect that Peking comes closer to revolutionary positions than Moscow does. This point was discussed by some of the comrades at the congress, and there was considerable criticism by some of them as to the validity of this point.

Comrade Pierre Frank explained the insertion of "bureaucratic centrism" to characterize the Maoist regime. I won't go into this now.

One of the points to be noted was Livio's impression that much of this discussion was scholastic. He told a story about reading a description in one of Solzhenitsyn's novels of Stalin writing on linguistics; and Solzhenitsyn says at one point, "And at his shoulder stood the angel of scholasticism." Then Livio added, "I thought that angel was in this congress a good deal of the time."

The vote on this resolution was three to one.

I should mention that on both the Latin-American resolution and the one on the Cultural Revolution, the International is going to continue the discussion. In many places, the documents had barely arrived on the eve of the congress, and in some places they had not, due to delays in translation and similar difficulties. It was agreed to continue the discussion on the Cultural Revolution immediately after the congress, and to reopen discussion on the Latin-American resolution within a reasonable time, six months or so.

We come to the resolution on the youth. We had expected that this would meet with rather general approval at the congress, because it dealt with an explosion on the campuses throughout the world. The role of youth was highlighted at the congress itself by a report from Pakistan, telling what the students had accomplished there. And while we were at the congress a number of items appeared in the papers telling about new student actions.

The report at the congress dealt with these questions, how the revolt of the youth had swept many countries, and how we as Trotskyists had become engaged in this movement in many countries, with special emphasis on what this had led to in France, and what had been accomplished there. From this, we had drawn the conclusion that the main task facing the world Trotskyist movement in the immediate period following the congress was to turn all its resources, insofar as they are available, for our main task, towards becoming preoccupied with this field of work, that is, among the radicalizing

youth.

The document itself explained the reasons for this on a world scale, the importance of this politically, and it proposed a series of transitional slogans for work in this field. This is the first time that the Trotskyist movement has proposed a series of transitional slogans for this field.

Somewhat to our surprise, we discovered that there was a good deal of resistance to the document. This was led mostly by the young comrades from France. In their opinion -- and this is listed in the order of their differences -- first of all, the document was superficial. It didn't fit France. It was not worked out so they could utilize it in France as a guide for their actions. The answer of the comrades favoring the document was that what we were proposing here was a document indicating a line.

Perhaps I should mention that I got the impression that a different concept may be involved as to what should be aimed for in a resolution. Our convention documents are worked out to indicate a line to follow; then we write articles to provide the supporting material and to explain in detail all the developments. If you were to put all this together in a single document you would have quite a manuscript. But in a resolution we prefer leanness, just the main indications. The comrades in Europe have a tendency to make a huge document, filled with all kinds of explanations, points of fact, quotations, arguments. If someone asks where our movement stands on a particular question, a big document can be handed to him, and you can say, "Here it is."

This is very useful for a small organization with few members, that does not have its own press, that has only irregular or limited publications. A big document is very handy to have in such circumstances. So when they come to a congress, this is one of the things they expect from it. If they don't get it, they're disappointed and think the document must be superficial or abstract. It doesn't include everything they would like it to include. We noticed at the conference this tendency of comrades from certain countries to ask that specific points be included concerning their country that were of almost a tactical nature. They want such points in so their country is better represented. Then from their standpoint the document is less superficial, more concrete, and of a higher level.

Another argument against the document was that it was noninterventionist, that it was sort of propagandistic, and didn't propose direct intervention in struggles, how to intervene precisely. This was raised by some of the French com-

rades and was really part of their position that the document was not thoroughly enough worked out.

But I also think that their argument that the document wasn't interventionist was probably related to their feeling that the main axis of work in the immediate period should be preparation for guerrilla war and engagement in it where possible.

Then there was some criticism of the slogans. There are two types in the resolution, democratic and transitional. These comrades felt that the democratic slogans have been superseded. Either they belong to a stage long past or they are on too low a level to appeal to the vanguard that we want to reach.

One of our comrades made the observation that they did not seem to have passed the democratic stage in France, otherwise they would not have had the trouble they did in holding their congress. The right to hold a congress freely is a democratic demand. In the last issue of Intercontinental Press you can read a report on how some of the people who came to participate in the presidential campaign for Alain Krivine were thrown out of the country by the police. This was a violation of democracy. Fighting for democratic rights in France still seems to be very much on the agenda.

On the question of transitional slogans, they raised the point that these really concern the working class, so that in relation to students the only slogan you could raise would be that workers control education. In the case of France, that would mean putting control of education under the CP. Do you want that?

We could see from this that their concept of a transitional program was different from ours. We conceive of it primarily as a method, an approach, a way to engage in politics; whereas they appear to view it as a completed program, a piece of literature. In any case, it was clear to us that more discussion is required on this particular point, to resolve any differences we may have over the nature of the transitional program.

But after all this discussion, with these differences being posed sharply in some instances, and argued rather hotly, everybody agreed that the main area of our work in the coming period is the youth. Everybody agreed on this; there was no disagreement on that at all. And a motion was passed that this document should become the basis for a continuing discussion. No vote was taken on this resolution.

On activities. This report dealt mainly with the international campaigns that the Fourth International has been

conducting -- the big campaign around Hugo Blanco, for example, the big demonstrations around the struggle against the war in Vietnam, and so on. This included such campaigns as the one launched last year to help the French comrades during the May-June events. One of the encouraging figures, showing the growth of the Trotskyist movement, was the weekly circulation of the Trotskyist press on a world scale -- about 100,000 copies. On recruiting, the success of the French comrades in this field was reported as a star example. From a very small grouping, they expanded to a rather sizable formation. Now with the election campaign they have just been engaging in, they will probably be able to double the forces they had previously.

On the negative side, the reporter dealt with the perennial weakness of the center, and the necessity of strengthening the center. This, of course, had a familiar ring to our ears, since we have had a similar problem over the years. More personnel, more finances, better conditions of work -- these, it was hoped, would solve the problem. They do have very difficult conditions considering the legal status of the Fourth International in most countries -- it's not easy to remedy the situation.

Now let me summarize as to where we stand. On the nature of the differences and what may happen. I think we will have to see how the discussion will develop before drawing any conclusions about this. The differences over orientation on guerrilla warfare should very shortly be put to the practical test, and I think it won't be too long before we'll be able to have better evidence on the particular question, one way or the other. We will see to what degree the coming social explosions involve the urban masses. Maybe the comrades who put great store in the strategy of guerrilla war will be able to gain a breakthrough, putting a Trotskyist government in power in some country in the immediate future. I am afraid that the odds are against this. The experience up to now has not proved promising, including the experience of Che Guevara's attempt. But it remains to be seen. And maybe some of the comrades have learned much more than we would give them credit for.

On the question of China. This discussion should, I think, prove quite interesting. It may involve basic concepts and our basic analysis of the Chinese revolution; but it remains to be seen how deep the differences are, and how firm different comrades will stand on their positions as the discussion develops and arguments are advanced.

We should add that there's another

area in which differences may come up -- the estimate of 1953. One of the points that was left off the agenda was a resolution on the question of entryism as it was practiced in Europe. The resolution ends the application of entryism, but also includes a historic estimate of it so if you vote for the resolution you not only have to vote for the change in tactics, but also for the historic estimate included in the package. And this rather compels those who disagreed with this tactic, or considered it a dangerous one that may have at times cost more than it was worth -- it requires them to say something about the historic estimate in the resolution. As to what that will lead to, it's hard to say; I don't imagine the differences being of such grave nature as to lead to any hot discussion.

But it could turn out that the discussion on China and on the question of guerrilla warfare as it develops, the question of party building as it is associated with the problem of entryism, that all of this could turn out to be one of the richest and most educational discussions that the Fourth International and the world Trotskyist movement has had up to this point. That remains to be seen. My feeling is rather optimistic.

I should state that in my opinion, the discussion on these points is not at all doctrinaire; it's not a question of hair-splitting, dogma, or anything like that. In each of these instances, we're dealing with very real problems in which Trotskyists are deeply involved in their countries, problems which they meet every day, and try to handle for good or for bad, but real problems. In the case of guerrilla warfare, there's not a country in Latin America where this is not advocated by key sectors of the vanguard.

The question of the Cultural Revolution is of top concern because of the Maoist groupings. Relations with them vary from country to country or grouping to grouping. In some cases Maoists are involved in common actions with our comrades and this necessitates a certain tone in talking with them. In other places relations with the Maoists are quite different.

Our way of solving differences of this kind in the movement is through free and democratic discussion. That's the tradition in the Trotskyist movement. I think that in the coming period we'll demonstrate once again the contrast between the monolithism of bureaucratic parties like the CP and the Social Democracy, and a living movement like ours, that recruits and assimilates through discussion and debate related to actions in which we are engaged.