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WORLD MOVEMENT REPORT

by Mary-Alice Waters

Adopted January 4, 1976 by the National
Committee of the Socialist Workers Party

There are basically three sections to the world movement report the political committee asked me to prepare for this plenum:

1. The impact of the Portuguese revolution on the Fourth International and the forces outside the Fourth International that consider themselves to be Trotskyist.

2. The evolution of relations within the United Secretariat, and our evaluation of actions taken by the majority faction of the United Secretariat in the last few months.

3. The split that took place at the Liga Socialista convention in Mexico two weeks ago, and the repercussions of that split for the Fourth International and the Leninist Trotskyist Faction.

I. PORTUGAL AND THE TROTSKYIST FORCES INTERNATIONALLY

We have to begin with the broad historical picture that we outlined last August at our party convention. [See "The Portuguese Revolution and Building the Fourth International," IIDB Vol XII, No. 6, October 1975.] Our starting point is not only the impact of the Portuguese events on the two main factions within the Fourth International—the International Majority Tendency and the Leninist Trotskyist Faction—and the way the political lines advocated for advancing the revolution are cutting across both factions. We must also take a broader look at the impact of this revolution on all currents that claim adherence to Trotskyism. A shakeup is taking place on an international scale. What is happening in Portugal is affecting every current and tendency, and a broad political debate is beginning to take shape. We have to take a closer look at this process and think about the historical responsibilities that we and other Trotskyist forces have.

It is important to keep this broad framework in mind. If you don't, it's easy to become short-sighted, impatient, or to get lost in minutiae.

Trying to follow what is happening among all the forces on a world scale who consider themselves part of the Trotskyist movement—as Al Hansen commented yesterday—is like trying to follow three or four different chess games being played simultaneously on the same board.

On this broad international and historical plane, where are we and what is happening?

The international political resolution submitted to the last world congress by the Leninist Trotskyist Faction emphasized the turn in the pattern of world revolution, the end of the long detour, the new rise of proletarian struggles especially in the imperialist centers, and the increasingly

favorable conditions for the growth of revolutionary marxist forces. [See *Dynamics of World Revolution Today*, Pathfinder Press, 1974.]

The result has been thousands of new recruits to Trotskyism, to the sections and sympathizing organizations of the Fourth International. These new, young forces bring with them the prejudices and erroneous conceptions prevalent in the "new left" milieus from which a large majority have been recruited. They are often marked by the miseducation absorbed in the Stalinist, Social Democratic or Guevarist schools through which they have passed. But they bring with them a desire to make the socialist revolution and a tremendous historical potential for doing so, provided that the Fourth International is politically capable of training and developing them as Trotskyist cadres.

The growth and development of the Socialist Workers party in the last decade has been an integral part of this process that is taking place internationally.

But the forces that are today part of the Fourth International are not the only ones that are growing. Virtually every organization that claims to represent the continuity of Trotskyism is winning new forces. And the political clarification that has emerged from the polemics inside the Fourth International over the last seven years has had repercussions amongst the broader forces that consider themselves Trotskyist. All, without exception, are attracted to and must define themselves in relationship to the broad political lines that have bisected the United Secretariat.

This is true because the issues we have been debating and clarifying are not obscure factional squabbles, but the most fundamental questions of revolutionary strategy and political principles which have been posed by the rising tide of world revolution. And the debate in the Fourth International has posed the issues with maximum clarity and precision. But the international does not exist in a vacuum. It is surrounded with other political forces. All are being affected by and forced to respond to the major historical events that mark our epoch, whether they are inside or outside the Fourth International.

As we noted at our convention last summer, events have affected the international current known as the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International (OCRFI)—the "Lambertists"—leading them to request political discussion with the United Secretariat. Forces like Lutte Ouvrière, a "national Trotskyist" organization in France, whose influence is roughly comparable to that of the LCR, are being affected, as are all the groupings emerging from the disintegration of the

Healyite International Committee, and groups that have spun off from the Fourth International in recent years as the process of debate and clarification developed—groups like Spartacusbund in Germany, Rojo in Mexico, and others.

No serious group can escape the political test of the historical events taking place. All are trying to think through the questions of revolutionary perspectives and strategy. More and more, some of these forces outside the Fourth International are beginning to think about the historical responsibilities posed by the revolutionary developments that are certainly on the agenda.

The Portuguese revolution has been the main catalyst in this process. There is increasing recognition that the upsurge has tested all the contending Trotskyist currents. Even more important, bigger tests are coming. Everyone is now watching Spain. But if we are going to be responsible about meeting our political obligations in the coming period, we must prepare, and the first step in that preparation is a broad political discussion and clarification. The goal is not to deepen the lines of cleavage as they now stand, but to engage in a genuine discussion without any preconceived sectarian schema of where such a process of clarification will lead. The goal is to strengthen the Fourth International.

The process taking place on a world scale is in many ways similar to what happened in the 1930s, leading to the foundation of the Fourth International; or in the post-war period; or around the time of the Hungarian revolution, the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU, and the victory of the Cuban Revolution. Major historical events are leading to a political shakeup and bringing new forces toward us. It is not something that happens overnight. It's produced by objective developments in the class struggle that are beyond anyone's control. And subjective, deadend factionalism cannot stop such major historical shakeups either. In the long run politics, not characterizations, are decisive.

There are two significant factors that differentiate the current shakeup from earlier periods, though. The forces involved are more numerous than ever before. And the historical context in which the process is occurring is much more favorable. The opportunities for building the Fourth International today are incomparably greater than the thirties when we faced the rise of fascism and Stalinism, or the postwar years when our forces were decimated by the extended period of reaction and isolation.

It will help to make this more concrete if we take a closer look at some of the forces that will be involved in any political discussion on a world scale, a discussion which is still unorganized at this stage, and sporadic.

Disintegration of Healyism

First of all, political and organizational disintegration of the forces that once made up the rump International Committee of the Fourth International, the Healyites, is accelerating.

Just in the last year and a half, two key leaders, Tim Wohlforth and Nancy Fields, have been expelled from the Workers League, and we are seeing all the obvious signs of crisis in that organization, now under the command of Mazelis.

In Britain the Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP) has

driven out the forces that now comprise the Bulletin group, the British component of the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International. And a year ago the WRP expelled a large opposition group, many of whom went on to found the Workers Socialist League (WSL).

In Australia, a group, including the editor of Healy's paper there, broke from the International Committee, formed a group called the Socialist League, and then fused with the Socialist Workers League last October.

There are indications that Healy is having problems in a few other places such as Greece and Peru.

The caliber of the forces that have been driven out in the recent period indicate the advanced stage of decay in the Healyite ranks.

Just as important as the disintegration of Healy's forces, is the fact that amongst those who have gone through the Healy madhouse and survived, some are now willing to reexamine their positions on the Fourth International and engage in serious discussion with us.

They do not necessarily agree with us, but they want to discuss the issues, not as they learned them and our positions from Healy, but objectively. And we assume they want to discuss not for discussions sake or to score points, but with the goal of strengthening the organized world Trotskyist movement, the Fourth International.

This loss of control by Healy, of course, is the main explanation for Healy's grotesque slander campaign against Joe Hansen and the SWP leadership in general.

One of the more important of the groups that have broken from Healy is the Workers Socialist League. Some comrades may have heard this referred to as the Thornett group, because one of the central leaders of the organization is Alan Thornett who is a well-known Trotskyist leader in the large British Leyland auto plant, Cowley, near Oxford. The WSL was formed after the expulsion of about 200 members of the WRP, which included most of Healy's industrial cadres, and the entire fraction at Cowley, with one exception.

After they were expelled, it took the WSL a little time to get themselves organized, regularize their biweekly paper, *Socialist Press*, and begin to think out their positions on a whole range of questions. Until this fall they were reluctant to talk with representatives of other currents in the Trotskyist movement internationally. They told us they had decided not to engage in any discussion until they got their own initial positions sorted out.

In December, after consultation with comrades from the Political Committee of the International Marxist Group (IMG), the British section of the Fourth International, two members of the SWP political committee met with several comrades from the WSL leadership.

They gave us copies of their three-part document on the history of the Fourth International which has just been published in *Socialist Press*, and they informed us that they had come to the conclusion that the next step had to be broad political discussion amongst many of the Trotskyist forces on a world scale to begin to clarify positions.

They want to begin by discussing the post-World War II overturns in Eastern Europe and the 1953 split in the Fourth International; we want to begin by discussing the Portuguese events and the other political questions that confront revolutionists today. But that can be sorted out by starting with the political questions and working back

to clarifying the historical and theoretical points.

The WSL forces broke with Healy essentially over what the auto fraction at Cowley should do. They saw that Healy's line was leading them to disaster and that they were losing support in the plant, and they began to make some correct criticisms, trying to think out how best to apply the basic conceptions of the Transitional Program in that factory. They were expelled before any discussion could take place. But on many other political questions they still accept the validity of the positions they learned in Healy's school. One gets the impression that they are just beginning to think their way through the interrelated aspects of Healy's politics.

But the important thing is that they want to discuss, they feel they need discussion with a broad range of forces in order to move forward and to link up with an international movement.

Another very important development taking place in Britain is the fragmentation of the International Socialists. The British IS is a state capitalist group. It has ties to the American IS, with whom it has much in common politically. But unlike the American IS, in the early 1970's the British IS grew to be one of the most important organizations on the left, with several thousand members. It had some weight amongst radicalized workers.

For the last year or so, the IS has been on a real ultraleft binge. In Portugal they have aligned themselves with the PRP-BR and supported its so called "soviets" and its insurrectionist line. In Britain they have been following a similar ultraleft line. The result has been a series of splits and loss of influence in the working class. Most of the groups leaving IS tend to identify themselves as Trotskyist, disagreeing both with Healy and with the Fourth International. Several of them have set up shop as new Trotskyist organizations.

The number of "Trotskyist" organizations existing in Britain today would be funny, if it weren't so tragic. There are certainly over a dozen (at last count), and the number is still growing. This poses a tremendous obstacle and challenge to the IMG. Can they take the lead in showing the way out of the sectarianism that has plagued British Trotskyism throughout its history and has reached unprecedented proportions today?

Our impression is that the IMG leadership understands the scope and dimension of the problem better than some others in the leadership of the IMT faction. They seem to be genuinely committed to trying to open a dialogue with forces like the WSL and some of the groups that have split from the IS, and understand both the opportunity and the challenge this presents.

Perhaps for this reason, they have taken a less sectarian, less factional, less barren attitude towards the approaches from the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International and are against its becoming a factional issue.

Lutte Ouvrière

Another important international current that is worth calling attention to is one whose strongest component is Lutte Ouvrière in France.

Lutte Ouvrière descends from a group in France that broke with the Fourth International on the eve of World

War II and has maintained an independent existence ever since. Not surprisingly, they evolved some unusual variations on Trotskyist positions. For example, they do not recognize the overturn of capitalist property relations in the deformed workers states. They believe that the Soviet Union is the only workers state in the world. They tend towards workerist and economist positions, and are sectarian on the national question especially.

Like the other two Trotskyist currents in France—represented today by the LCR (the French Section of the Fourth International) and the OCI, (the French Section of the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International)—they grew significantly in the post-1968 radicalization. In the 1974 presidential elections in France they ran a young woman bankworker, Arlette Laguiller, as their candidate for president, and received a substantially higher vote than did Alain Krivine, the candidate of the LCR. This was a real blow to the LCR, which until that time had been generally seen as the most influential Trotskyist organization in France. The LCR tried to explain away the discrepancy in vote by attacking Lutte Ouvrière for an "opportunist" campaign. A typical criticism was that Laguiller failed to use her campaign to educate on the need for revolutionary violence.

Although it is difficult to get accurate figures, I think it would be correct to say that there is no qualitative difference in size and influence between the three Trotskyist organizations in France. They each have several thousand members and organized sympathizers.

In 1970, Lutte Ouvrière initiated fusion negotiations with the Ligue Communiste, the French section at that time. After rather extensive discussion, by the end of 1970 LO agreed to all the conditions set down by the LC, including the condition that the unified organization be the French section of the Fourth International and operate under its statutes. Given Lutte Ouvrière's history and attitude toward the FI, that was a significant concession on their part.

When the fusion was thus ready to be finalized, the LC broke it off. To us at the time it seemed to be an inexplicable sectarian blunder on the part of a young and politically insecure leadership. We now learn, from some of the LTF comrades in Europe, that the explanation given in the European sections at the time, was that the fusion was off because fusion would bring Lutte Ouvrière into the Fourth International, and if they came in they might agree with the minority position on guerrilla warfare in Latin America, thus turning the minority into a majority!

That is all part of the background.

On the Portuguese events, Lutte Ouvrière has taken more correct positions than the LCR on some of the key questions. In particular, they have been very strong and clear on the need to chart an independent class struggle alternative that breaks from subordination to one or another wing of the MFA, and exposes both the CP and SP lines of class collaboration. LO is also wrong on some of the key questions. For example, they seem to consider the SP to be simply a bourgeois party.

Like other currents in the world Trotskyist movement, they feel the need for broader discussion and clarification.

Last November, LO called an international conference that was attended by the British IS, Lotta Continua from Italy, Spark from the United States, the remnants of the Spanish POUM, Combat Ouvrière from the Antilles, and

the African Union of Internationalist Communist Workers.

The main thing that happened at the conference was a split between Lutte Ouvrière and IS over what policies to follow in Portugal, with the differences overlapping many of the same issues that have divided us inside the Fourth International—the “new mass vanguard” line, problems of the united front, evaluation of the line of the Socialist party, the Communist party, whether dual power exists, all the problems of revolutionary strategy in Portugal today. [See *Intercontinental Press*, Vol. 14, No. 1, pp 31-32, and Vol. 14, No. 4, pp 143-44.]

In December, the leadership of the LCR arranged for two members of the SWP Political Committee to meet and discuss with two comrades from the leadership of the LO. In the course of a discussion that touched on a number of points, the comrades of the LO leadership emphasized what they say has been their long standing position: the need for a broader political discussion on a world scale amongst forces that are today part of different international Trotskyist currents in order to clarify positions, strengthen the Fourth International, and prepare for the decisive political tests that are on the agenda.

Pablo

I should mention in passing that even Pablo is getting back in the picture. The Pablo organization in France (which probably had several hundred members) last year dissolved itself into the Parti Socialist Unifié (PSU), a sizeable centrist party whose right wing recently split and joined the SP.

For the last year, the LCR has been seriously trying to establish what they call a “privileged relationship” with the PSU, a kind of agreement to consult and work together in all areas where they both have forces. This extends to many different areas—the women’s liberation movement, the antimilitarist campaign, the unions—and was supposed to be paralleled by an organized, public discussion of political differences. At least some of the comrades in the LCR leadership say the goal is a fusion with the PSU. Others deny it and say they just want to win over the left wing of the PSU. In any case, the main obstacle in this process has been the reluctance of the PSU leadership to let it go very far.

Meanwhile the Pablo forces are inside the PSU, and as part of the orientation towards the PSU, the LCR leaders have had a number of discussions with them. Recently, Pablo renewed a request he had raised earlier for a formal discussion with a delegation from the United Secretariat to discuss Portugal and other questions. We, of course, were in favor and such a meeting has been scheduled.

Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International

On the OCRFI, there is not a great deal to add to what we said at our convention last summer when we took note of the fact that they have been drawn increasingly toward the Fourth International, attracted by the discussion and debate taking place, and reacting to the difficulties they have encountered in trying to build their own international current. [See *IIDB*, Vol. XII, No. 6.]

The leaders of the OCRFI say quite frankly that many of

the same differences that cut across the Fourth International, are to be found in the ranks of the OCRFI. The same kinds of discussions are taking place.

Since the United Secretariat responded to the OCRFI’s overtures a little more than a year ago, and opened the door to probing further discussion and possible areas of collaboration, in some countries, the forces affiliated to the OCRFI have begun to collaborate with sections and sympathizing organizations of the Fourth International on concrete tasks in the class struggle in their respective countries. That has been true in Québec, for example. In the past few months, the LSO (Canadian section of the FI), the GMR (a Canadian sympathizing organization of the FI), and the GSTQ (Quebec component of the OCRFI) have worked together in a number of strike situations and other actions. This process of common work led the Canadian section to invite both the GMR and the GSTQ to attend their convention last week, and to participate in some parts of their pre-convention discussion. They expect this process to continue.

I will return to the question of the OCRFI later in the report. But here it is important to emphasize one thing. The OCRFI poses the same objective challenge as the other groups mentioned. For more than two and a half years, the OCRFI has been raising one simple proposal: let’s discuss. Let’s clarify the issues. Let’s find a way to begin a discussion that must take place on a broad international scale, a discussion that is objectively posed by the course of events themselves. They say to the United Secretariat: you set the conditions, you set the agenda, anything. But let’s discuss.

Over time, the refusal of the United Secretariat majority to engage in such a discussion becomes more and more damaging to the Fourth International. They look more and more like a *sect* that is not interested in politics, but in justifying itself and its own history. More and more, they get trapped in a posture of dead-end factionalism.

Inside the Fourth International

I want to turn now to the forces inside the Fourth International and take a look at how they are being affected by the political differentiation taking place around the Portuguese revolution.

The main thing to emphasize is that the differences cut across all factions and tendencies. Second, the process of clarification and differentiation is only beginning. In most parties of the Fourth International there has been little or no organized discussion in the ranks on the Portuguese revolution. A few parties have had discussions in their central committees. There has been no French language internal discussion bulletin of the international. The Leninist Trotskyist Faction’s two resolutions on Portugal, adopted last August, have not even been published in French, much less the reports from our convention. In reality, the only debate has been the one carried on by Frank, Maitan and Mandel for the IMT and Foley, Hansen and Novack for the LTF in the pages of *Intercontinental Press*. And while Frank, Maitan and Mandel have been published in French, Foley, Hansen and Novack have not.

So the differentiations we are seeing are only the beginning.

Denmark

The Danish section is currently in the midst of a preconvention discussion, in which a reevaluation of the line of the IMT's European resolution figures prominently. The majority of the Danish leadership have been strong supporters of the IMT for several years, but the concrete attempt to implement the European resolution in Denmark, plus the test of the Portuguese revolution, has led some of the Danish majority leaders to rethink a few positions.

Two of the political points they raised with us were disagreement with an orientation towards the centrist "new left" type groups which the IMT generally defines as the "revolutionary left." Some of the Danish leaders think this has led to maximalist type errors in Portugal and in Denmark. Second, there is growing disagreement with the IMT's general refusal to concretize the governmental slogan "for a workers government" and thus present a concrete governmental, class alternative at all times. In Portugal, for instance, they are critical of the IMT's refusal to call for a CP-SP government.

Once you start pulling at the threads of the European resolution on either of those questions, the whole fabric unravels rapidly!

The LTF comrades in Denmark have also found growing agreement on some concrete tasks, and a nonfactional atmosphere of attempting to work together seems to be developing.

Britain

A very interesting political process is taking place in Britain too.

There has been a long-standing division within the IMT supporters in the leadership of the IMG. The differences are not always clear, but there are two groupings that periodically constitute themselves as tendencies. In the most recent period they have been known as Tendency A and Tendency B. That's to distinguish them from "the *Tendency*" which includes all the LTF supporters in the IMG.

[One of the new organizational theories developed by the IMT in the last few years is that tendencies should not have names, like Leninist Tendency, or Bolshevik Tendency. The theory is that if you name yourself Leninist Tendency you are implying that those outside your tendency are not Leninists. Therefore all tendencies have to be designated by a neutral number, or a letter—one, two, three, four, or A,B,C. Of course, for anyone outside the organization it becomes virtually impossible to follow. It forces you to revert to a less desirable method of designation by referring to the leaders whose names are most familiar to you.]

Leaders of Tendency A include Tariq Ali, Pat Jordan, and Robin Blackburn. Leaders of Tendency B include Alan Jones, Brian Grogan, and Bob Pennington. Tendency B has the support of the majority of the members of the IMG.

On a number of questions both A and B seem wrong to me. They score good points against each other in the debate, but it doesn't go anywhere because neither has a correct line to tie it all together. For that you have to turn to the Tendency. On some issues, however, there are clearer differences, and a real evolution has taken place.

For example, on women's liberation. At one time, the IMG majority leaders were amongst the most bitter critics of our line of women's liberation and especially of the leadership role we played in the struggle to legalize abortion. They accused us of single-issue opportunism, failure to draw a class line in the women's movement and all the rest. But today they are deeply involved in the National Abortion Campaign in Britain and are fighting hard against all the sectarians, workerists and ultralefts, trying to convince them of the need to concentrate on the question of abortion rather than taking up a hundred and one different issues which we all agree are vital to women; and trying to convince them that the axis of the struggle must be around legal abortions, not free abortions. They are having the same fight that we did on almost every aspect of the abortion campaign.

The IMT minority in Britain—the Tariq Ali, Pat Jordan wing—is still strongly opposed to this line.

A similar type of evolution has taken place on the line followed in Irish defense work. The Jones-Grogan majority favors trying to build a troops out movement along lines that we would largely agree with.

The Jones-Grogan leadership has also made a real effort to reduce the factionalism inside the IMG, and to integrate the Tendency comrades in meaningful political work. And as I mentioned before, they are critical of the IMT's dead-end factional stance towards the OCRFI. And they understand that this is not an LTF vs. IMT question but one of general leadership responsibility to reject dead-end factionalism and sectarianism.

They also had a generally favorable impression of our convention last summer. Comrade Jones reported to the United Secretariat that he thought the turn we are making is correct, that it is neither too early nor too late but flows from the changing objective situation we face. He also indicated that he was impressed by the character and the level of the political debate.

However, on Portugal, the surprise comes from the other direction. As comrades heard at our convention, Alan Jones seems to be a strong supporter of the IMT line as presented by Frank, Maitan and Mandel in their polemic against Foley, Hansen and Novack.

But Tariq Ali recently made a tour of Canada speaking on Portugal. The comrades of the LSA tell us that Tariq stressed questions like the central importance of a united-front perspective to win over the workers who follow the SP, the need to win the masses before you can make a revolution, the dangers of any kind of minority revolution perspective, the fact that nothing resembling soviets exists in Portugal—themes that have not exactly been at the heart of the IMT's polemics. We have seen a couple of short written items by Tariq which also give the impression that he does not agree with the IMT's line on every point. [See SWP Internal Information Bulletin No. 4 in 1976, Letter from Tariq Ali to the editor of *Economic and Political Weekly*.]

The result of all this has been quite a change in atmosphere in the IMG. I was quite struck by it when I recently visited the IMG National Office. For the first time in several years I felt like I was greeted as a comrade, not rebuffed as an alien intruder.

I think Comrade Jones meant it when he told our convention last summer that he considered the debate on Portugal to be a debate among revolutionists. And that is

extremely important. As long as that attitude exists, there is a possibility that we will listen to each other, that we can influence each other, that we can learn from each other.

In this sense, I think the attitude of the IMG majority leadership is quite different from some of the other comrades in the IMT who are trying to create the opposite atmosphere, to close comrade's minds, to prevent them from listening to what other revolutionists have to say. They are trying hard to foster the view that we are in the camp of the counterrevolution in Portugal, or as Pierre Frank put it in his scandalous letter to Murry and Myra Weiss, that we are being propelled into the camp of American imperialism.

The fact that there may be some in the IMT who are not yet ready to consign us to the camp of American imperialism, however, simply spurs the factional frenzy of those who are.

And Even in France

There has been no organized discussion on the Portuguese revolution in the membership of the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR) in France, but Portugal has been discussed in the LCR central committee, and there have been two discussion bulletins with contributions by Central Committee members on Portugal. We are translating some of these articles and will publish them in an Internal Information Bulletin. [See IIB No. 4 in 1976.] As comrades will see, in the Central Committee, the differences are significant.

A year ago, at the December 1974 convention of the LCR, there were four tendencies. Tendency 1 had about 18 percent of the delegates, Tendency 2 had an absolute majority, Tendency 3 had about 19 percent, and Tendency 4 had about 7 percent.

Tendency 4's platform rejected the IMT's European Perspectives resolution, making many of the same criticisms of the majority line as the LTF makes. Tendencies 2 and 3 both supported the European resolution of the IMT and claimed to be interpreting and applying it correctly for France. Tendency 1 included both supporters of the IMT and comrades who reject the general line of the European resolution. The Central Committee elected by the convention gave roughly proportional representation to each of the four tendencies. Then all four tendencies were instructed to dissolve!

As the debate on the Portuguese revolution proceeded in the Central Committee, some broad areas of agreement began to appear between some ex-Tendency 1 and ex-Tendency 4 committee members. And the points on which they disagree with the LTF are secondary. They seem to consist of differences of emphasis rather than of line. One Central Committee member has joined the LTF.

I think this helps to explain the tone of the polemics by Frank, Maitan and Mandel. It is not only against us they are arguing. They are worried about currents in the IMT as well.

It would be idle to speculate on how the differentiations will evolve. The important thing is that a debate on Portugal is forcing its way to the surface, and a process of clarification is beginning. But it is *just* beginning. Our central task is to prevent it from being closed—either in

fact or spirit—before the differences are clear and the test of the class struggle in Portugal itself can help to resolve the disputed issues.

Portugal and the LTF

Just as the differences on Portugal cut across the IMT, they have emerged in the LTF as well.

The documentation that is available on these differences in the LTF has been submitted to the International Internal Discussion Bulletin [see Vol. 13, No. 1, February 1976], so I will only take time to emphasize a few points.

Prior to the meeting of the Steering Committee of the Leninist Trotskyist Faction last August there were some differences in the faction. In the United Secretariat, one member of the LTF voted against a motion clearly defining the bourgeois character of the MFA. And there was an exchange of correspondence between Comrades Hansen and Moreno in which conflicting opinions were expressed.

Prior to and during the LTF Steering Committee meeting there was extensive discussion on all these points, at the end of which the comrades present at the meeting felt they had reached agreement on the general line. Some secondary differences and differences of emphasis remained, but the discussion around the draft resolution was good, most of the criticisms helped improve the final editing; and the agreement on line was reflected in the unanimous vote to adopt the general line of the draft resolution.

The vote turned out to be mistaken; we were not in agreement. After the edited version of the draft was published [IIDB Vol. 12, No. 4, 1975, or *Intercontinental Press* Vol. 13, No. 37, October 20, 1975] the leadership of the Argentine PST informed the faction that they could not vote for the line of the published document.

Unfortunately, they didn't simply inform the faction that they disagreed with the line of the document and would make a contribution to the discussion on Portugal in the international. Instead, whether deliberately or not, they tried to create a scandal around the document, accusing the SWP leadership of having introduced a different line in to the published document, contrary to the line that had been voted for by the faction leadership.

The members of the LTF Steering Committee who were present at the August meeting were polled to see if others held the same opinion. Twenty-nine comrades responded immediately, unanimously concurring that the line of the published document was the line they had voted for. Five comrades failed to reply, including the comrades of the PST leadership who had been present. The vote definitively settled the fact that the document "Key Issues in the Portuguese Revolution" is the line of the LTF and we hope we can now get down to the real discussion—whether the line of the LTF is correct or not.

On that level, it is much harder to piece together exactly what the PST comrades disagree with. We are waiting for them to write something. In oral discussions with PST leaders, however, they have raised the following disagreements:

1. They define the existing situation in Portugal as one of "atomized dual power," meaning, it seems, that many organs of dual power exist but they are not coordinated or centralized. We disagree. With few exceptions, the workers commissions, tenants commissions and soldiers commit-

tees that did emerge either disappeared, or because of the deep divisions in the working class failed to develop into united-front action committees on broader political questions, or developed into narrow fronts for one or another political tendency of the left. The concept of "atomized dual power" is a contradiction in terms. If it's dual power, it cannot be atomized. If it is atomized, it is not a power parallel to and competing with the bourgeois government and state apparatus.

2. The LTF document is wrong, they say, because it does not state that the task of the Portuguese Trotskyists is to build organs of dual power. We have pointed out that we think it is erroneous to reduce the tasks of the Portuguese Trotskyists to such a narrow framework. The strategic axis of the LTF resolution, from the introduction to the final paragraph is an analysis of the political lines along which the Portuguese workers must move, and the political obstacles they will encounter, if they are to advance towards conscious political and organizational independence from the Portuguese bourgeoisie, the creation of their own organizations for united-front action and eventually power, and the establishment of a workers and peasants government. Like the transitional program, it takes a broad political framework in which soviets crown the program, but they do not substitute for it.

3. The fact that the LTF document does not state that the task of every Portuguese Trotskyist is to build organs of dual power reflects the SWP's "propagandist" conception of party building, according to the PST. We are only interested in publishing Trotsky's writings and circulating a newspaper; they, by contrast, build a party by intervening in the class struggle. I won't bother to comment on this; each member of the SWP knows whether we only "publish" or if we also "intervene" in the class struggle.

4. The PST leadership does not see "organs of dual power" emerging from united-front action committees. In fact they see the problem of the united front as a secondary issue in Portugal today. In his July 17 letter to Joe Hansen last summer, Comrade Moreno emphasized:

"One of the most important modifications in our tactic because of the new revolutionary situation concerns the reformist parties and the united front. Now that the task of developing and centralizing the existing elements of dual power is raised to a much higher plane—offensive and not defensive—our united front tactic toward the reformist parties becomes secondary" [IIDB Vol XIII, No. 1, p. 16].

In other words, the "organs of dual power" Comrade Moreno is talking about do not seem to be much different from the so-called soviets set up by the various sectarian centrist organizations in Portugal today.

Differences over the centrality of the united-front strategy are also revealed in the fact that the PST seems to be against the call for a CP-SP government, unless it is coupled with the demand that such a government must be based on workers commissions.

6. Their position on *República* is fundamentally the same as the IMT's. They argue that while the democratic rights of the SP were violated, the heart of the conflict was the fact that a workers commission was trying to establish workers control over a printing plant. It was wrong to publish Trotsky's article on "Freedom of the Press and the Working Class" [*Intercontinental Press*, Vol. 13, No. 22, June 9, 1975] since Trotsky wrote it only for a special situation in Mexico and it does not apply elsewhere.

Trotsky's views as expressed in that article are irrelevant.

7. The LTF is soft on the Portuguese Socialist party, they argue, because the resolution fails to characterize the SP as the agent of European imperialism. We have pointed out that there is no such thing as "European imperialism": there are many European imperialisms. The Portuguese Socialist party is tied to Portuguese imperialism, and this is primarily manifested today by its subordination to the MFA.

8. The PST leadership disagrees that the MFA is a "bourgeois instrument." They characterize it as a "petty bourgeois movement" and deny that it is the main political instrument of the Portuguese bourgeoisie.

9. In the January 1976 issue of *Revista de América* they characterize the SWP as an agent of imperialism because we refuse to support the MPLA government in Angola in its drive to crush UNITA and the FNLA.

Those are some of the points that have come out in discussions with the PST leaders in the last month. What emerges clearly from a summary of their differences, of course, is the fact that politically their line is converging with the line of the IMT. We hope the PST leadership will soon present their views in writing so they can be discussed throughout the international. We are against a discussion inside the LTF. That is one of the IMT's methods of functioning that we have always condemned. If an initial exchange of views does not clarify differences, the place to have a discussion is not inside one or another of the factions, but in the International Internal Discussion Bulletin where everyone can participate, where everyone can influence the course of the debate and clarification.

Compass too

I should note in passing that a comparable political differentiation is taking place inside the former supporters of the Compass tendency, or the Mezhrayonka tendency at the last world congress.

In Germany, where the Compass tendency had its strongest support, Compass leaders have expressed views that are closer to the IMT than the LTF.

In Denmark and in France, on the other hand, some of the comrades formerly associated with Compass and Against the Stream have indicated no major differences with the LTF document on Portugal.

A real test

The debate inside the Fourth International on what course to follow in Portugal led to one very clear result: a de facto dissolution of the previous faction lines. Despite the fact that the IMT rejected the LTF's proposal last summer that it would be in the best interests of the Fourth International to consciously and deliberately move toward a dissolution of the factions, the course of events seems to be pushing even the IMT along this road. We hope that this can open the way to a genuine political debate. Unfortunately, as we will see in the next section of the report, that does not seem to be the IMT's intention. In fact one can only interpret their organizational moves as an attempt to prevent political clarification.

A second important conclusion emerges from the broad picture we have just sketched: the impact of the Portuguese events on the forces outside of but looking towards the

Fourth International raises a historic opportunity to advance the construction of the Fourth International. Can the international reach out to these forces, engage them in discussion, clarify positions, and bring them closer? Or will the IMT prove incapable of doing this? Will they react as dead-end factionalists and sectarians, refusing to discuss with anyone who is not certified pro-IMT in advance? Are they going to work together with the LTF so the international can move out in a confident, united way to build? Or will they react like an insecure, unconfident combination terrified of losing its 0.5 percent majority, and place narrow factional considerations ahead of the historic interests of the working class, that is, building the Fourth International?

For the last 12 months, we would have to conclude that the majority of the IMT faction has failed this test.

II. THE IMT'S ORGANIZATIONAL OFFENSIVE

Far from trying to open the door to a genuine political discussion with Trotskyist forces attracted towards the Fourth International, the IMT has opened an organizational offensive designed to close comrades' minds to a discussion even inside the international.

The purpose seems to be to shift the axis of the discussion away from Portugal and onto the question of "democratic centralism." By this they hope to convince IMT comrades that the LTF refuses to accept democratic centralism, and therefore the political arguments of the LTF should not be considered in an objective way.

To establish this fraudulent case against the LTF, however, the IMT has adopted motions and "instructions" that go beyond the prerogatives of the elected leadership bodies of the international. Their actions have begun to define what they mean by "democratic centralism."

On one level this is a welcome development, because accusations that the LTF is against a democratic centralist international have been part of the IMT underground campaign for a number of years. We have tried to avoid what could only be an abstract discussion on this issue. If there is any question that demands concreteness, it is the question of organizational norms, and we are now beginning to see very concretely, in practice, how the IMT defines democratic centralism. On another level, however, their recent actions constitute an ominous escalation of the factional frictions inside the international, blocking the necessary political clarification.

The most serious action yet taken along these lines was the motion adopted by the IMT instructing the leadership of the Canadian section, the League for Socialist Action /Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière (LSA/LSO) to withdraw the invitation extended to the Groupe Socialiste des Travailleurs du Québec (GSTQ) to attend the LSA/LSO convention.

Correspondence on this question between the United Secretariat Bureau and the Political Committee of the LSA/LSO has been circulated to the members of the National Committee. [See Appendix I.]

The implications of the IMT's action are indeed far reaching. In effect, the IMT declares that "democratic centralism" means the right of the international leadership to decide the tactical question of what individuals and

currents in the workers movement in a given country can be invited to observe that section's convention!

As is clear from the sequence of correspondence, the IMT made their decision with full knowledge that the invitation to the GSTQ was based on a series of collaborative activities in the class struggle in Québec. It was not part of the discussions on an international level between the United Secretariat and the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International, to which the GSTQ is affiliated.

The IMT has always claimed that they agree with the LTF that decisions on national tactics are the prerogative of the national leaderships, as is specified in the statutes of the international. They have always said that they agree with us that any other method of functioning would be detrimental to the primary goal of the international, to aid the development of strong national sections and leaderships capable of making their own decisions and leading the class struggle in their own countries. But their action in relation to the tactical decision of the LSA/LSO leadership clearly reveals that they have an utterly different conception of the prerogatives and responsibilities of the international leadership than we do, and one that violates even the present highly centralized statutes of the Fourth International.

The second letter from Walter to the LSA/LSO leadership goes so far as to tell them they no right to even probe the possibility of discussion and collaboration with the GSTQ without the prior approval of the United Secretariat and "all the forces of the F.I."

Once the international leadership assumes the prerogative to make tactical decisions concerning activities to be carried out in Canada, some sticky problems arise. Where do you draw the line? If the United Secretariat can decide whom you invite to your convention and whom not, can they decide whom you recruit? Can they instruct you to recruit person A and not to recruit person B? Can they instruct you to try to engage in united-front actions with group A and to reject collaboration with group B? Can they tell you what line to write in your paper and what not to write? Can they tell you to concentrate on support activity for a strike, and downplay women's liberation work? or vice versa?

If the United Secretariat has veto power over whom you invite to your convention, its right to decide all manner of tactical issues would follow quite logically. The Canadian leadership might just as well fold up shop and say: Okay, run it from Brussels, or send in a commissar to take over.

After fully discussing all these implications of the IMT's concept of "democratic centralism" as outlined in Walter's letters, the convention of the LSA/LSO rejected the right of the United Secretariat majority to instruct them whom they could and could not invite to their convention. We agree with this stand taken by the leadership of the Canadian section. We hope that upon further reflection the IMT will also.

Suppression of the IIDB

A second area in which the IMT has made a series of decisions that help to clarify their concept of democratic centralism is in relationship to material submitted to the International Internal Discussion Bulletin (IIDB).

Comrades who were in the party in 1973 will recall that one of the reasons why the Leninist Trotskyist Tendency felt compelled to convert to a faction was the fact that material submitted to the IIDB was simply not being translated into French and circulated to the French-speaking membership of the international. On July 24, 1973 barely six months before the world congress, we published a list of 62 documents printed and circulating in the English language IIDB that were either out of print or had never been translated and published in French! [See SWP Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 31, No. 27, pp. 36-39.] The lack of translation made a mockery out of the idea that a democratic international discussion was taking place.

After the faction was formed, a major part of the articles listed were translated and published, but some of the more important ones have never to this day appeared in French. For example, Gerry Foley's contribution, "The Test of Ireland," [IIDB, Vol. 10, No. 17, October 1973] was never published.

So the question of the IIDB and a democratic discussion translated into the major languages of the international is not a new issue. But in the last few meetings of the United Secretariat we have reached a new stage, with the IMT simply rejecting material submitted to the IIDB.

The world congress adopted a motion in February 1974 specifying that the international discussion would be closed for a *maximum* of one year on the questions of the world political situation, Argentina, Bolivia, Europe, and the statutes. The motion read, "That the international discussion on these points be closed following the world congress for one year unless the IEC decides to reopen the discussion earlier." The world congress also voted that the written discussion would not be closed at all on the "cultural revolution" and China, the youth radicalization, women's liberation, Middle East, Vietnam and Eastern Europe. The motion specified that the discussion "be continued in literary form following the coming world congress in a monthly bulletin not to exceed 48 pages." [See minutes of the world congress, IIDB, Vol XI, No. 5, April 1974.]

In the intervening 22 months, a total of seven bulletins have been published—two of them devoted to nothing but the minutes of the world congress. In terms of pages, it averages out to less than eleven and a half pages a month!

But that is the English language IIDB, In Spanish not a single IIDB has been published. In French there has been *one* bulletin—a selection of items related to the IT split from the SWP!

We agreed that it was correct to slow down the pace of the literary discussion in the months immediately following the 1974 world congress. We did not submit much material either. But the decisions of the most recent United Secretariat meetings have made it quite clear that the IMT intends to drastically restrict the circulation of information and contributions to the discussion leading up to the next world congress—all in the name of democratic centralism, and asserting the majority's authority.

The LTF's two resolutions, "Key Issues in the Portuguese Revolution" and "The Portuguese Revolution and the New Problems That Face the Fourth International," which have been available in English and Spanish since September, have not yet been published in French.

Instead the LCR published a pamphlet with a selection of articles from *Intercontinental Press* by Gerry Foley and

Joe Hansen, and the first polemic against Foley and Hansen by Pierre Frank, Livio Maitan and Ernest Mandel [see "In Defense of the Portuguese Revolution," *Intercontinental Press*, Vol. 13, No. 31, September 8, 1975]. In the French pamphlet, the Foley and Hansen articles were published under the general title "Military Dictatorship vs. Bourgeois Democracy." (The introduction counterposed this to the position of Frank, Maitan and Mandel, for whom the alternative was "for or against the socialist revolution.") When we objected to this scandalous falsification of our position, the LCR leadership agreed to make a public correction clarifying that Foley and Hansen had not made the selection of articles printed to represent their positions; that the title was not their title; and that the title misrepresented their political position. They also agreed to publish Foley, Hansen and Novack's reply, "For a Correct Political Course in Portugal" [*IP*, Vol. 13, No. 36, October 13, 1975], as a public pamphlet. Neither of these things have yet occurred, but we hope they will.

A motion to publish Pierre Frank's exchange of correspondence with Murry Weiss and Myra Tanner Weiss was rejected by the United Secretariat majority on the grounds that it was "personal correspondence"! [See letters in SWP Internal Information Bulletin No. 3 in 1975, pp. 5-14.]

The United Secretariat called on all sections and sympathizing organizations of the Fourth International to suppress the circulation of the appendix to Jack Barnes' report to our last convention, "The Portuguese Revolution and Building the Fourth International." [See IIDB Vol. XII, No. 6, October 1975.] The appendix contains the "Documents and Correspondence Concerning the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International and their Request for Discussion with the United Secretariat." The "reason" given for suppressing this information from the membership of the international is that the procedure followed was irregular, that the appendix was not explicitly submitted to the IIDB as a separate item. Therefore circulation had to be suppressed in order to "teach the minority a lesson."

But it is not only contributions by members of the LTF that are being rejected. The United Secretariat has also rejected immediate publication of a document submitted by the Political Bureau of the Japanese section outlining their views on the character and history of the international; and a contribution by one of the IMT leaders in Britain critical of the European resolution of the IMT. On the latter two items it is clearly a case of the IMT not wanting to publish what are minority views inside the IMT and claiming the right of the IMT majority to publish its documents first to "open" the discussion, which is already open by decision of the last world congress.

All of these decisions to prevent the publication and circulation of material that the membership of the international is entitled to read and study—whatever the particular excuse given for the particular item (and we're sure to get some new ones we can't even imagine at this stage)—are instructive when it comes to understanding what the IMT means when it starts talking about democratic centralism and the organizational integrity of the international.

"Rights of personal correspondence," "teaching the minority a lesson," "structuring the discussion," or whatever, it all adds up to one consistent pattern. Suppressing information that the membership of the

international has a *right* to receive.

It means restricting access to information and views to which the ranks must have access if they are to make *informed* political judgements for themselves. It means undermining the basis for party democracy—*accurate, timely* information.

The IMT has gone too far on this for some of its own members. Comrades Alan Jones and Livio Maitan have either voted against or abstained on some of the motions to prevent publication of material in the IIDB.

Victimizing LTF members

Another instructive example of what democratic centralism means to the IMT can be seen in their attitude toward the SWP membership's right to decide who will be accepted as members of the party and who do not meet the requirements for membership.

This relates to the decisions of our plenum last May and the August convention of the SWP regarding the applications for membership from some former members of the Internationalist Tendency. The IMT voices indignation over the fact that the SWP members decided they had the right to make the decision on each of the individuals reapplying for membership, using an objective criterion—the current party building activities of the former ITers.

As a result of their irritation with the SWP membership, the IMT is starting to victimize individual members of the LTF in the European sections. They also state that they will try to prevent political discussion in the ranks of the international until everyone *they* think meets the criteria for membership in our party is accepted by the SWP ranks.

You will find both of these threats contained in the letter to this plenum from Comrade Aubin for the IMT Steering Committee. [See Appendix II.]

He charges, without any attempt whatsoever to substantiate it that “comrades in political solidarity with the IMT are systematically purged or demoralized inside the SWP,” while comrades in agreement with the LTF are accorded full tendency and faction rights in sections led by the IMT. He then goes on to state explicitly: “Such inequality of chances is obviously intolerable for the IMT. It will not be tolerated by them.”

At the end of his letter Aubin defines recruitment of all IT members applying as a “precondition” for political discussion. “Political differences, important as they may be, can then be discussed.”

Perhaps this throws some light on the IMT's decisions to suppress contributions to the International Internal Discussion Bulletin.

It may also illuminate the recent suspension or expulsion of all but three members of the LTF in the Italian section, including one of the members of the Central Committee who was expelled last month but still has not had any charges presented to him in writing. Two LTF comrades in the French section have also been expelled this fall. The charges against one of them was collaboration with the Lambertists during a teachers strike in the city of Dijon.

The LTF is in the process of trying to document the facts in all these cases so that we can present an accurate picture of what is involved.

But the threat by the IMT, which has now been put down in writing, to victimize LTF members for the

decisions made by the members of the SWP is an extremely ominous development. It says a great deal about their idea of democracy in a “democratic centralist” international.

There is one other point worth noting about Comrade Aubin's letter. The IMT attempts once again to rewrite history as they would have liked it to occur. Aubin states that the February 1975 IEC recommendations have not been implemented. The October 10, 1975, statement of the IMT Steering Committee [see Appendix II] even speaks of a “*violation* of the IEC resolution for collective reintegration”! (emphasis added).

The IEC recommended that “the SWP act in good faith and consider without delay the collective application of the IT for reintegration in the SWP.” The motion is very precise. It does not recommend that the SWP reintegrate the IT. We would have voted against any such motion, and we said so at the time. The motion recommends that we *consider* the collective application of the IT.

The SWP leadership did precisely that at the first plenum following the IEC. Given the split that had just taken place in the IT, after consideration and discussion, we rejected collective reintegration and referred all applications to the branches concerned. In the subsequent months the branches have worked with all the comrades who have shown any interest in collaboration with the SWP and have proceeded to accept the applications of those who demonstrated in practice that they wanted to be active and build the SWP. We acted in good faith and implemented the recommendations of the IEC, all of which we had agreed with and cast our consultative votes for.

Intercontinental Press

The same October 10, 1975, statement by the IMT Steering Committee charges that *Intercontinental Press* has been transformed “into a de facto public faction organ.”

In line with this opinion the IMT adopted a multiple part motion at the November meeting of the United Secretariat recommending to the editor of *Intercontinental Press* that “Articles dealing with issues on which official bodies of the FI have made statements or resolutions (in particular those issues which are in the news, such as Portugal and Angola) and which do not present the line adopted on these issues by the leading bodies, should be identified as contributions which are not within the framework of the orientation of the FI. They should be presented in their totality in such a way that from the point of view of balance, layout, etc. no contrary inaccurate impression could be given as to the general line of *IP*.”

The motions also suggested that official resolutions of the Fourth International should be published in a category separate from “Documents,” that the bureau of the United Secretariat should regularly submit statements and background articles to *IP*; and that the normal practice of publishing public discussion articles be continued.

LTF members of the United Secretariat supported a counter-motion: “that we see no need to suggest considering a change in the way *IP* is being edited, which remains in accordance with the norms followed since its foundation.”

Again, underlying their attempt to make an issue about the way *IP* is edited is their conception of how democratic centralism should be applied in the Fourth International today.

The IMT constantly talks about establishing the authority of the elected leadership bodies of the international. But they try to establish this authority by proclaiming it, showing how little they understand about leadership. Authority flows from respect, which must be earned, and constantly re-earned by showing your political correctness and demonstrating your ability to draw together individuals of varying strengths and abilities into a leadership team. The IMT tries to assert their authority while disregarding the fact that the Fourth International is today divided right down the middle, and the fact that they are acting in such a way as to destroy any authority they might have. Then they wonder why they don't seem to have any authority. So they grow indignant and demand respect. The net result is that the international holds their authority in less and less respect. They respond by talking about discipline and democratic centralism, and teaching the minority lessons.

Intercontinental Press is being edited exactly as it has been since 1963. It is the weekly voice of the Fourth International that carries all the documents and statements of the international, plus news, analysis, signed articles and documents from a wide variety of sources both inside and outside the Fourth International. What has changed is the political reality of the international itself, not the editorial policy of *IP*. Deep political differences have developed on a number of issues. *IP* has reflected this reality, printing signed articles by comrades who support one or another of the organized factions inside the international. As such it plays a unique role in the international.

Joe Hansen, the editor of *Intercontinental Press*, pointed out to the IMT comrades, that if there has been any imbalance in the content of *IP* in the last few years it is because the IMT has boycotted *IP*, rarely submitting articles, despite the fact that several IMT comrades' names are on the editorial board. He pointed out that he welcomed their decision to start regularly submitting statements and background articles. In the past he has had to rely on translating articles from *Rouge*, *La Gauche*, *Was Tun*, and other publications.

Other suggestions such as printing United Secretariat documents in a special category, pose no problem either. In fact the purpose of publishing United Secretariat resolutions under the heading of documents was to call special attention to them, but if comrades want some other way of highlighting them, there's no problem.

You will notice that *IP* has also carried a special box in recent issues calling attention to the fact that signed articles reflect the views of the authors and that regular contributors to *IP* have taken variant positions on issues such as Portugal. The latest article by Comrades Frank, Maitan and Mandel was published under a special heading "Discussion," to clearly indicate its character. These changes are obviously designed to meet some of the concerns of the United Secretariat majority.

However, Comrade Hansen indicated that there was one suggestion which he considered to be an unwarranted change in our norms. That is the suggestion that every article that might possibly contain a line different from

the IMT's had to be accompanied with a disclaimer: Warning: This article may be injurious to your political health! Warning: Read at your own risk! Wrong Line! Incorrect analysis!

Such a policy would be tantamount to barring comrades who support the line of the Leninist Trotskyist Faction from writing regularly for the press of the international. We do not see how that would be in the interests of establishing the authority of the international, contributing to political clarity, or anything else.

The International Executive Committee

The next exhibit in the presentation of how the IMT defines democratic centralism in practice is the meeting of the International Executive Committee that they have called for mid-February.

This is a highly unusual gathering because it has been called as a "restricted IEC." In November the United Secretariat majority voted that only a limited number of IEC members, to be divided proportionately along the tendency lines of the full IEC membership, would be invited to participate. They asked the cooperation of the Leninist Trotskyist Faction in selecting those who would be allowed to participate and those who would be excluded.

The LTF coordinating committee refused, pointing out that no central committee or national committee of any section or sympathizing section in the world would tolerate such a usurpation of authority by its political committee. [See Appendix III.]

At the December United Secretariat meeting the majority responded by deciding to drop the appellation "restricted." Any IEC member who turns up will be allowed to participate. But they still refused to organize a fund drive to finance full participation. So nothing has changed. It remains a "restricted" IEC.

The irony is great. The primary reason given by the IMT for calling a meeting immediately rather than waiting several months in order to be able to raise the funds for such a gathering, is that they need the authority of the IEC behind their resolutions on Portugal, Angola, and other questions. But all they have succeeded in doing is calling a gathering that will have less authority than a full meeting of the United Secretariat.

The most disturbing thing is that they have placed a number of very heated organizational questions on the agenda, including a "balance sheet" on the IT dispute and now the threat to discipline the leadership of the LSA/LSO. That of course, is exactly the kind of point most calculated to exacerbate factional tensions and prevent meaningful political discussion. It makes their claims about calling the IEC for political reasons rather hollow.

Discussion with the OCRFI

The IMT has tried to justify their refusal to respond to the overtures of the OCRFI by invoking democratic centralism and the organizational integrity of the Fourth International. In the October 10 Steering Committee statement of the IMT they even refer to the LTF's use of the term "world Trotskyist movement" as an "ominous sign" of our federalist conception of the international!

In this scheme of things, their dead-end factionalism resembles the heroic posture of Horatio at the bridge holding off the Lambertist hordes bent on storming the international's democratic centralist structure.

In the two and a half years since the OCRFI made the first approach to the international, only one thing has remained constant in the IMT's response: do anything to prevent a political debate with the OCRFI.

The latest event in this chain of responses was the decision to reject the invitation to send a delegation from the United Secretariat to attend the convention of the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI), the French section of the OCRFI. They also instructed all sections and sympathizing organizations to stay away from the possible source of contamination.

When you think about that decision, it is really quite astonishing. An organization with whom the United Secretariat has decided to meet and explore the possibilities of further discussion, with whom the United Secretariat exchanges all internal documents, with whom the United Secretariat has agreed to probe whether there might be some areas of common activity such as defense work and publication of Trotskyist literature in Eastern European languages, invites the United Secretariat to send a delegation to observe their convention, and even to take the floor if desired. And the United Secretariat refuses the invitation; says, "no we're not interested in what you claim to be, or what you think, or what you have to say."

It is a sectarian stance.

The pretext that was used for refusing to send a delegation to the OCI convention was the charge by the leadership of the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR, French section of the Fourth International) that the OCI has a policy of systematically using violence against its opponents within the labor movement.

A serious matter is involved here. But it is clear from the way the IMT has acted that this is being utilized by them as a pretext to block discussion.

To support its contention that the OCI has a policy of systematic violence against opponents in the labor movement the LCR points to four separate incidents that have occurred since the United Secretariat delegation met with a delegation of the OCI leadership in October 1974. Two of the incidents directly involved an organization known as LIRQI (Ligue Internationale pour la Reconstruction de la Quatrième Internationale—International League for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International). One incident at a demonstration in defense of Spanish political prisoners in the spring of 1975, the other at a meeting organized to demand the release of the Ukrainian mathematician Leonid Plyushch in October 1975. A third incident involved the Spartacist group in France and took place at a meeting on Portugal organized by the OCI in early October. A fourth incident allegedly involved a comrade of the LCR at the Tolbiac university center in Paris.

On this fourth incident, the LCR have never publicized anything and apparently didn't even consider it significant enough to mention in *Rouge*. So the facts are not established, and the OCI has never had a chance to respond to the accusation.

On the incident involving the Spartacists, they put out a leaflet claiming they were shoved around by OCI marshalls outside the meeting hall called the Mutualité. We

have not seen any response from the OCI, but we also know that when the Spartacists accuse someone of using violence in the labor movement, it is not always true. More than once they have spread absolutely unfounded accusations against us.

The serious problem is the question of LIRQI. In France they use the name OCI (LIRQI Faction). In the United States the LIRQI group is a descendant of Dave Fender's Communist Faction that split from the SWP in 1971 and now publishes a paper called *Truth*.

The OCI (LIRQI Faction) is a relatively small group that is sometimes also referred to as the Varga group, after one of their central leaders who is a Hungarian exile. Varga took part in the resistance to the Russian invasion of Hungary in 1956, then came to France as a refugee. He was recruited by the OCI. He led or inspired an opposition tendency inside the OCI for several years.

Then the OCI leadership—quite by accident they claim—came into possession of documentation that they believe absolutely confirms that Varga had connections with the CIA and also acted in collusion with the KGB. They published the dossier, making advance copies of it available to other Trotskyist organizations in France, and expelled Varga. They announced that they were willing to turn over the entire archive of documents and evidence to an investigating commission established by organizations in the workers movement. They claim that Varga has never seriously tried to clear himself, nor has anyone else ever refuted the evidence they published.

That is the background, according to the OCI. The problem, they claim, is none of this history, but the fact that today the Varga group functions in France under the name of the OCI (LIRQI Faction). That is, LIRQI comes to meetings organized by the OCI and distributes leaflets signed OCI, leaflets which often have a provocative content. They come to demonstrations and march under banners identifying themselves as OCI. The OCI admits that when LIRQI does this, the OCI tries to take their leaflets or banners away from them. Of course, the result is a physical confrontation, that frequently involves individuals from the LCR and Lutte Ouvrière who come to the defense of LIRQI.

From what we have been able to find out, all the incidents put forward as proof of the OCI's policy of systematic violence in the labor movement stem from this one problem, the OCI leadership's attitude toward LIRQI and the fact that LIRQI uses their name in what they consider to be a very provocative manner.

We have made our attitude on this question very clear—in the United Secretariat, in talking with the LCR, Lutte Ouvrière and others. Even if the OCI's version of the facts is 100 percent accurate, such a stance toward another organization in the workers movement cannot be condoned. It must be unambiguously condemned. This has always been our attitude toward the use of violence in the labor movement, and it always will be. And we consider it our responsibility to use any influence we have with OCI to try to persuade them that such a policy is wrong and can only lead to an escalation of violence in the workers movement, and the isolation of the OCI. We consider it elementary that the Fourth International should approach this question from the point of view of doing what would be most effective in politically convincing the OCI to change its policy.

This is not the attitude of the LCR. From the attitude of the LCR one can only conclude that they are not concerned with stopping the violence but with utilizing it to isolate the OCI and exclude it from the ranks of the "revolutionary left."

This is clear if you look at the sequence of events surrounding this question and the United Secretariat's handling of it.

At the November meeting of the United Secretariat it was decided to postpone a decision about accepting the invitation to attend the OCI convention and "to do everything possible to document the facts on these aggressions." [See Appendix IV.] So two members of the SWP leadership went to Paris to try and document some of the facts.

After getting more of the picture from the LCR leadership and arranging to talk to Lutte Ouvrière, we told the LCR leadership that we intended to go to the OCI leadership, too, and ask them for any material they had on any of these incidents.

The LCR leadership immediately objected. They claimed it would be a violation of the United Secretariat motion on relations with the OCI [see Appendix IV] if we talked to them about any of these incidents. It's okay to listen to the prosecution but not the defense, it seems.

We went to the OCI bookstore anyway and got the material, because we considered the attitude of the LCR leadership to be untenable.

At the December meeting of the United Secretariat we proposed that in light of the facts that had been assembled, the most effective move for the United Secretariat would be to accept the invitation and send a delegation to the OCI convention and take the floor to pedagogically raise the issue of using violence against the LIRQI, explaining our attitude in a fraternal manner that might be able to influence and effect the membership of the OCI. The United Secretariat majority (except for Comrade Alan Jones) categorically rejected this approach.

Instead they sent a letter demanding that the OCI make a public "self-criticism" before the United Secretariat would have anything to do with them, an action designed to make it more difficult for the OCI to back off from its wrong course.

The attitude of the IMT on this question can only be characterized as irresponsible and sectarian. It is not intended to try to influence the OCI or to remove an obstacle to political discussion. Their intention is simply to block any political discussion with a current that has been trying for two and a half years to make a political approach to the Fourth International. It is dead-end factionalism.

There is one other aspect of the OCI/Varga question that I should mention. For some time, the LIRQI has been trying to create a commission—not to investigate the facts or establish the truth about the OCI's accusations, but to condemn the OCI for slandering Varga. [See statement by LIRQI in Appendix IV.] When the LCR and the Spartacists refused to participate in a commission that decided the case before the investigation, the Varga people walked out. Lutte Ouvrière, however, is still interested in trying to set up a commission that will look into both the case the OCI has made against Varga, and the accusation by the LIRQI that the OCI uses physical violence against them.

Given the importance this whole affair has assumed,

when we met with the comrades from the leadership of LO, we told them that we were willing to serve as part of the commission, that we considered it our responsibility to do so. Such a commission, assuming it is objective and honest, would be the best way to handle what has become a serious problem and, if possible, eliminate an obstacle in the path of political discussion and clarification among Trotskyist forces on a world scale.

"Democratic Centralism" is not the issue

Beneath these organizational conflicts that I have enumerated lies the question of the organizational norms of the Fourth International, and differing traditions on how to develop cadres and build authoritative leadership teams nationally and internationally. All this should be discussed out *concretely*, on the basis of the living experience of the international and its sections. It is a political question, that deserves political discussion and clarification like all the rest. But to do that a political atmosphere must be created—not one of threats, reprisals, disciplinary actions.

The IMT faction's attempt to shift the axis of the debate to the question of "democratic centralism" is nothing but an attempt by their split wing to short circuit the process of political clarification around the issues being raised today by the Portuguese revolution.

III. THE SPLIT IN THE LIGA SOCIALISTA

The final major question I want to take up is the split that occurred two weeks ago at the convention of the Liga Socialista in Mexico.

This convention took place so recently and the split itself developed so rapidly, that we have not yet been able to translate some of the key documents and make them available. We will do this as rapidly as possible. [See Internal Information Bulletin No. 3 in 1976.]

Prior to the convention the LS had approximately 225 members. The delegates to the convention were divided about two-thirds, one-third. The split itself resulted from a number of motions adopted by the two-thirds majority at the convention, including a motion to literally *purge* the entire membership. Another motion excluded the leadership of the minority from the incoming central committee. The constitution was revised to eliminate many minority rights.

The majority also voted to sever all relations with the Socialist Workers party.

Comrade Eduardo, representing the political committee of the PST of Argentina was present, as well as a second Argentine comrade, Comrade Greco, who has been resident in Mexico for several months, on assignment from the PST leadership to promote *Revista de América*. The two Argentine leaders played a decisive role in the split. At the convention they spoke explicitly in favor of the organizational measures that were adopted by the majority, in some cases urging that the convention take even more undemocratic steps.

As a result of the new, totally bureaucratic organizational norms adopted by the convention, norms that are alien

to the traditions of Leninism, the minority of the Liga Socialista, the Bolshevik-Leninist Faction (FBL), decided that they had no choice but to constitute themselves as a public faction of the Liga Socialista, and openly denounce the decisions reached by the majority. The first issue of their newspaper, *El Socialista*, which explains what happened at the convention, went on sale in Mexico City yesterday.

We think the comrades of the FBL were correct in their assessment of the situation and their action. They had no choice if the Trotskyist continuity of the Liga Socialista was to be maintained.

I would like to take time to briefly sketch the chronology of events that led up to this split, because I think that will give comrades the clearest indication of what was involved.

The September Central Committee Meeting

The fight broke out in the leadership of the Liga Socialista barely three months before the convention, at a meeting of the central committee held in mid-September. No real political differences surfaced. There was a unanimous vote on preparing a draft political resolution to open the preconvention discussion in the Liga Socialista, and a unanimous vote to adopt a report on Portugal and the tasks for building the Fourth International.

The fight broke out totally unexpectedly, around the organization report. Comrade Horacio, who was assigned by the political committee to give the organization report, thought he was reporting for a unanimous political committee. No disagreements had been expressed prior to the plenum. Much to his surprise, when he finished the report another member of the political committee, Comrade Ricardo, got up and gave a counterreport. The counterreport centered on two points: the structure of the Liga and the need for more activity. The counterreport proposed the immediate reorganization of the Liga to get rid of the branch structure which was described as an obstacle to intervening in the class struggle. Instead it was proposed to organize the Liga according to "fronts" of work. Secondly, the counterreport criticized the low level of activity of the membership and leaders who sat behind desks in offices rather than intervening in the class struggle. It was proposed that members who could not meet the new standards of activity should be demoted to the ranks of a youth organization that would be set up.

The counter organizational report was adopted by a majority vote, and on that basis a new political committee was elected to reflect the majority in favor of "fronts", not branches, and more activity. The organizational secretary of the Liga, Comrade Horacio, was also removed and replaced by Comrade Ricardo.

The most disturbing aspect of the procedure was the refusal of the central committee majority to submit their proposals to a discussion in the membership. The plenum had been called to prepare and formally open the preconvention discussion. When it became clear that there were differences in the central committee, the normal procedure would have been for comrades supporting the alternative positions to write down their views and submit them to the membership for discussion, clarification and

decision at the convention. The majority of the central committee rejected this course, insisting that their organizational proposals be implemented immediately, without any discussion.

Later, when rank-and-file comrades of the Liga objected to implementing some of these measures without any discussion in the branches or fronts, they were informed by members of the political committee majority that they could disagree with the decisions taken, but they had no right to discuss something decided by the central committee or political committee.

As the new political committee majority took over they began to introduce other antidemocratic measures and to take disciplinary actions against members of the political committee minority.

By majority vote the political committee decided that the new fronts being set up would not have the right to elect their own leaderships. Final authority to decide the composition of all local leadership bodies was to rest with the political committee.

At the end of October the political committee majority decided to remove the editor of the paper, Comrade Cristina (a member of the PC minority) for disciplinary reasons. The comrade had been ill for several weeks following two deaths in her family and other personal problems. She had not *formally* notified the political committee that she would be unable to work for several weeks. The political committee minutes note that the decision to remove her as editor was a disciplinary action.

In the middle of November the political committee majority voted to remove the two comrades of the Liga Socialista leadership who are members of the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International (Comrades Cristina and Jaime), on the grounds that they were a minority in the political committee on the question of Portugal. When the PC minority objected to this and the two comrades involved refused to vote in favor of removing themselves from the IEC, the PC majority decided that the minutes of that meeting were not to be circulated to any member of the Fourth International outside the Liga Socialista.

A political difference emerges

The first political difference surfaced only at the end of October—nearly six weeks after the PC majority launched their unprincipled power struggle. It came as a complete surprise.

Comrade Jaime of the PC minority gave a report on Portugal. Comrade Greco who had been invited to attend that meeting then gave a counterreport, attacking the position of the Leninist Trotskyist Faction.

This was how the LTF learned that the Argentine PST leadership did not agree with the line of the faction on Portugal. The PST did not inform the faction directly. They did not even send a letter until almost a month later. The faction found out there were differences on Portugal when a fight broke out among members of the LTF in Mexico.

Following this meeting, the two members of the LTF steering committee in Mexico informed the LTF leadership

what was happening in the Liga Socialista leadership.

As it was clear that more than internal differences in the LS were involved, and that the division there affected the LTF and international as a whole, two members of the LTF coordinating committee went to Mexico City to meet with the LTF comrades. In addition to discussing Portugal and trying to clarify what the difference might be, as the pattern of organizational measures became clear, we raised our concern about the undemocratic actions being taken by the PC majority. Comrade Greco informed us that, on the contrary, in his opinion the PC majority was acting in an extremely responsible and correct manner.

In the middle of November, barely one month before the convention was to be held, two tendencies were formed. The political committee minority constituted the Tendencia Bolchevique-Leninista (TBL) on the basis of a three-point platform: (1) the general line of a document called "For Internal Democracy in the Liga Socialista," (2) the general line of the tasks and perspectives document that had been voted down at the September central committee meeting, and (3) the general line on Portugal that had been expressed in *El Socialista* up until that time. (It was understood that this meant defense of the LTF line on Portugal, but as the document "Key Issues in the Portuguese Revolution" was not available to all LS members in Spanish at the time the TBL was formed the comrades referred instead to the articles in *El Socialista*.)

The PC majority constituted the Tendencia Militante on the basis of the document entitled "Self Critical Balance Sheet," which outlined their organizational proposals. *At no time in the entire course of their power struggle did the TM present a single political document to justify their existence as an organized formation.*

[The Platform documents of the two tendencies are available in IIB No. 3 in 1976.]

Despite repeated demands from the TBL to postpone the convention and allow time for a discussion, the TM refused. In Mexico City delegates were elected on December 12. A number of branches in the provinces did not elect delegates. They did not receive the documents in time to discuss them. For example, Tijuana sent a group of comrades to Mexico City, and only after reading the documents there and discussing with comrades did the Tijuana comrades in Mexico City make up their minds and choose a delegate. Since those still in Tijuana were unable to vote, Tijuana had only one delegate instead of the two they were entitled to.

A proposal to purge the membership

One week before the convention convened, Comrade Ricardo and another comrade submitted a document entitled "Platform for the Dissolution of the Tendencies." The Tendencia Militante announced that the document would be put to a vote at the convention itself.

If you don't have time to read all the materials, you should at least read this document. This is the purge document. No Trotskyist could read it and still have any doubts about the methods of the TM or the character of the organization led by the TM today. Their methods have more in common with Stalinist norms than with Leninism.

The first plank of the "Joint Platform . . ." deals with party membership. The proposal, adopted by the convention, reads:

"Starting immediately after the congress, all comrades who are members of the Liga Socialista will go through a month of testing to determine whether they are full members of the organization. During this month, the rank-and-file and leadership bodies will set concrete tasks for each and every comrade, and will supervise the carrying out of these tasks. On the basis of those assignments, and supervision, a report will be drawn up. This report will be discussed at the end of the month by the appropriate rank-and-file body, which will decide which comrades have fulfilled the minimum level of activity required to be a member of the Liga Socialista and which comrades have not. Comrades who lose their status as full members of the party will not be excluded from party bodies, nor from its activities, nor from its political discussion. They will lose only the right to vote on questions related to the general political line of the organization, to vote in the election of leadership, and to vote on questions of principles."

The convention took place December 19-21, 1975. It was not a political convention organized to discuss political differences and elect a new leadership on the basis of clear counterpositions. It was a gathering organized to drive through a split, holding together an organizational majority by avoiding all political discussion.

For example, the Portugal point was removed from the agenda altogether. The day *after* the convention was over, a panel of five comrades made brief presentations on Portugal, but no discussion was allowed.

The political resolution was supposedly still a unanimous document, supported by both the Tendencia Militante and the Tendencia Bolchevique-Leninista. But at the convention the TM made a report that contained a line different from the line of the document, even though they had never submitted a single criticism of the political resolution prior to the convention.

The TBL then made a counterreport, in harmony with the line of the written resolution. There was less than one hour of discussion, at the end of which the resolution was unanimously adopted, with one abstention. That gives a pretty good indication of the lengths to which the TM was willing to go to avoid all political clarification.

The discussion on the organizational report centered on the motion to purge the membership. The comrades of the TBL did a good job of explaining the implications of the purge motion and other measures that had been taken by the TM leadership in the months leading up to the convention. The TM defended the purge on the grounds that only comrades who did not want to be active could be afraid of voting for such a proposal.

When the purge motion was adopted, the TBL announced that they were organizing themselves as a faction in order to fight against the TM's organizational measures which were alien to the traditions of Leninism.

The next point on the agenda was the statutes. Draft statutes had been prepared several months prior to the convention, unanimously approved by the political committee, and submitted to the discussion. One week before the convention, the TM announced they would probably propose a few amendments, but they submitted nothing in writing. At the convention itself, the TM orally presented extensive "amendments" that constituted a complete revision, codifying all the antidemocratic practices that had been introduced by the TM in the period leading up to the convention. The revised statutes that were adopted

without any delegate being able to even read the changes, included measures denying the right of local bodies to elect their own leaderships and removing clauses guaranteeing minority rights.

Witchhunt of minority leadership

But all that was simply preparation for the final session of the convention which can be most accurately described with terms such as witch-hunt, kangaroo court and massacre.

Formally, the point on the agenda was the election of the central committee. The proposal was to elect a central committee of 24 full and 6 alternate members. Eight full and two alternate members were to be selected by the FBL, the rest by the TM.

When the FBL presented their slate, however, a leader of the TM immediately moved to reject the slate and suspend from all leadership posts six of the central leaders of the FBL. The six included the four members of the outgoing political committee (the four comrades who had been the reporters for the FBL at the convention) and two members of the outgoing control commission.

They were charged with a "violation of proletarian morality," and accused of having circulated the slander that one of the leaders of the Tendencia Militante, Comrade Ricardo, was a police agent.

By this action, Ricardo and the rest of the TM leadership took responsibility for publicly airing a very serious matter that had previously been discussed in the leadership of the LS. Contrary to normal practice, the entire membership of the Liga had been invited to stay for this point on the agenda, as well as representatives of delegations from other sections and sympathizing organizations of the Fourth International.

What was behind such accusations?

Last summer two members of the Political Committee (later to become leaders of the FBL) accidentally came into the possession of material that indicated Comrade Ricardo was a police agent. They concluded that there were two possibilities. Either that the information was accurate, or that it was a plant, designed to sow suspicions and dissension in the leadership of the organization.

Since this was the first time they had ever been faced with this kind of problem the comrades were unsure what to do. Instead of immediately placing the matter before the control commission for investigation, they made a mistake. They sought advice from three other members of the political committee and a member of the control commission on how to proceed.

One of the members of the political committee with whom they consulted began circulating the accusation that Ricardo was being slandered.

The September plenum of the central committee began with a closed session where this matter was discussed. At this central committee meeting, a second mistake was made. Once rumors, suspicions, accusations and counteraccusations of this nature come up, a leadership has no choice but to conduct an immediate, thorough, impartial investigation to substantiate the rumors or to clear the comrades involved. Any other course can have but one result. It will tear the organization apart. The central committee, however, unan-

imously decided that since no charges were being made by anyone, and since the two members of the political committee agreed they had made an error in handling the question, the matter should be considered closed. Members of the central committee were put under discipline not to discuss the matter outside that closed session.

Instead of abiding by the central committee decision, however, Ricardo himself proceeded to raise it with comrades individually and even in the written preconvention discussion, making vague illusions to unscrupulous actions that were exposed by the central committee during an extraordinary closed session. It was used in an underground way to line up comrades throughout the preconvention discussion. Then it was thrown on the floor of the convention, not to rectify the previous errors and defuse an extremely explosive and destructive problem, but for exactly the opposite reason. The only purpose for raising the issue was to try to pillory the leadership of the FBL, to prevent the minority from being represented by its most capable leaders, and to prepare for the further victimization of the minority during the coming purge.

Methods alien to Trotskyism

Furthermore, the manner in which this session was conducted was more reminiscent of the accounts given by some of Healy's victims than anything within the traditions of Trotskyism. It was a genuine witch-hunt in which demands were made that the comrades of the FBL "self-criticize" themselves before the convention for their "methods"; that they "voluntarily" remove themselves from all leadership posts in order to prove that they were willing to be "reeducated"; that they admit their petty-bourgeois weaknesses and lack of proletarian morality.

The methods used came from the school of Stalinism, not Leninism. The majority leaders began with the assumption that the FBL leaders were guilty as charged and that they should be judged *before* any investigation of the facts. The purpose of the witch-hunt was not to condemn the FBL leaders. That was assumed. The purpose was to try to break them as individuals, to force them to thank their accusers for having shown them their sinful ways and saved them from their petty-bourgeois fate.

Fortunately, the comrades of the FBL were stronger than that. They fought back in an exemplary way.

The SWP was a target of the witch-hunt also. The Tendencia Militante circulated the accusation that an unnamed leader of the SWP was responsible for starting the rumor that Ricardo was a police agent. They demanded that the SWP conduct an investigation of its leadership, modeled on the methods they were using in the Liga Socialista, and take disciplinary action against the unnamed comrade who would thus be ferretted out. When it became clear that the SWP would do no such thing, but would instead condemn their methods as utterly alien to everything we stand for, the TM leadership pushed through a motion to break all relations with the SWP.

It is interesting to note that this was the one motion in the course of the entire convention on which the TM was unable to hold its bloc together. Six of the 34 TM delegates broke with them on this motion, three voting against it and three abstaining.

Role of the PST leadership

The role played by the representatives of the Argentine PST leadership throughout the convention was particularly important and reprehensible.

They took the floor numerous times to speak in favor of the measures being proposed by the Tendencia Militante. Comrade Greco spoke during the final session, for example, and argued that it was not sufficient to remove the accused comrades from leadership posts. He urged their expulsion. He gave a lecture about “proletarian morality” explaining that comrades are expelled from the PST in Argentina for “violations of proletarian morality” such as being married in a church, or breaking under torture. He commended the norms being established by the Tendencia Militante as progress in the direction of establishing membership norms more like those in Argentina.

Comrade Eduardo advised the delegates that many petty-bourgeois types fall by the wayside since they are incapable of the kind of commitment necessary to build a Bolshevik party. Thus the delegates should not be overly concerned at the prospect of a split.

Comrade Eduardo’s role can also be seen by his “compromise” proposal concerning the motion to break relations with the SWP. He took the floor and suggested that the majority should not adopt a motion to take effect immediately. Instead they should decide to postpone definitive action for six weeks in order to allow the SWP leadership time to conduct an “investigation” and inform the leadership of the Liga Socialista what disciplinary action had been taken!

The PST leadership as a whole has not yet said anything about the conduct of the two comrades sent to Mexico to represent them, and the role they played in splitting the Liga Socialista. Once they get the full picture, we hope they will condemn it as vigorously as we do. However, there are two disturbing indications that they may instead sanction the conduct of Greco and Eduardo in Mexico.

Comrade Mario, the PST leader who is a member of the coordinating committee of the LTF, with whom we discussed our concern over the course of events in Mexico prior to the Liga convention, indicated that he thought it was a waste of time to discuss these “organizational matters” like whether rank-and-file bodies have a right to elect their leadership. The real problem, he argued, was that the line of the Liga had to be changed, and that’s what the Argentine comrades were trying to promote.

Secondly, Comrade Eduardo informed us that the PST leadership had discussed Comrade Greco’s conduct in the preconvention discussion period; if any criticisms of Greco were raised during the convention the PST leadership had instructed him to defend Comrade Greco’s role and conduct.

We hope our fears on this question prove unfounded but we are not optimistic.

A public faction

After the convention was over, the members of the Bolshevik-Leninist Faction met and discussed what their course should be. They decided that the totality of the organizational measures adopted by the majority at the second convention of the Liga Socialista were such that they had no choice but to refuse to submit to them and to declare themselves a public faction of the Liga Socialista. Only by

doing so could they fight to preserve the tradition, program and organizational methods of Trotskyism in Mexico.

The correctness of this course was further confirmed by the measures adopted by the political committee of the Tendencia Militante at the first meeting after the convention. Among other things, it was decided that Comrade Ricardo, as organizational secretary, would make all decisions on the formation of new “fronts,” distribution of members in the fronts, naming or removal of members of any secretariat that might be set up, and similar matters. Members of the FBL were to be excluded from any assignment in the party “apparatus” because of their petty-bourgeois character and the need to “reeducate” them.

The Liga Socialista (Bolshevik-Leninist Faction) has a core of members who have gone through an extremely educational experience in the last months. Those who made it through the witch-hunt came out a lot wiser than they began. What mistakes they made were the result of inexperience, and it’s not likely they will be repeated again.

The PST and the LTF

By far the most disturbing aspect of the split in the Liga Socialista was the intervention of PST leadership.

If the PST leadership refuses to condemn the organizational method of the Tendencia Militante, and the role played by Greco and Eduardo, it is our opinion that we cannot remain in a common faction with the PST leadership. The methods used by the Ricardo leadership are in total contradiction to the platform of the LTF. The LTF has made defense of democratic norms, and upholding the organizational principles of Trotskyism a fundamental part of our fight in the Fourth International from the very beginning. In our opinion, the LTF has no choice but to expell from the LTF those who were responsible for organizing and leading the unprincipled power struggle in the Liga Socialista using methods that are alien to the Trotskyist movement.

Comrades have also been asking, how do we explain the conduct of the PST leadership?

One of the strengths of the Argentine party has always been its concern with, and commitment to, helping build Trotskyist parties throughout Latin America. This is a tradition that goes back many years, and it has played an important role in the history of Latin American Trotskyism. The Argentine leadership has tried to do this by a number of different methods. They try to help groups financially. They try to publish Trotskyist literature in Spanish that will be useful throughout Latin America. They encourage comrades to send leaders to Argentina for a period of time to participate in their cadre schools and to be active in the PST.

In fact, two of the central leaders of the Bolshevik-Leninist Faction in Mexico are comrades who each spent six months in Argentina working with the PST. They found it an extremely valuable experience and learned a great deal from it which will help them in building a revolutionary party in Mexico. Whatever their disagreements with the PST today, they are glad they had the opportunity to work with them and learn from them in Argentina.

But there has always been a side of the Argentine approach to helping other groups which we considered to be harmful rather than constructive. This is a disagreement that goes back twenty years or more, since the days when they set up the SLATO—the Latin American Secretariat of Orthodox Trotskyists—as a counterpart to Posadas’ BLA

(Latin American Bureau), during the 1950s when the international was split into two public factions.

One of the things that the Argentine leadership usually proposes to other, weaker groups in Latin America is that the Argentines send one of their leading cadres to work with the new group—whether it be in Peru, or Venezuela, or wherever. On the surface, this sounds like a very attractive proposition, so the offer is usually accepted with many thanks. The Argentine comrade is usually someone with considerable experience and ability, and political knowledge. When the comrade arrives to work with a relatively new and inexperienced group, he is usually coopted onto the political committee right away and rapidly becomes the dominant leader of the organization. In the process the developing indigenous leadership gets pushed aside. Usually some kind of politically unclear power struggle develops, in which the local leadership that objects to the methods or political line of the comrade sent in from Argentina, gets characterized as “petty bourgeois” and ends up being expelled, or pushed out, because they are too inexperienced to be able to fight back and win.

Time and again, the results of this method have been disastrous. Often when the Argentine leader leaves, the group falls apart because the natural development of a leadership team has been destroyed by the Argentine intervention. You can't build a strong, self-confident leadership team, capable of thinking for themselves and leading the class struggle in their own country, by putting the group in receivership to Buenos Aires.

The PST leadership's attitude toward the development of the Liga Socialista was consistent with this long-standing method of intervention in other groups. Several times the PST leadership proposed to the leadership of the LS that they would be willing to send a leading cadre to Mexico to work with them. Each time the LS rejected the offer because they felt it would not help the development of a leadership team in Mexico. They suggested other forms of collaboration which they thought would be more helpful.

However, last summer, the PST leadership decided to send a leading comrade anyway, despite the objections of the LS leadership. That was comrade Greco, who arrived with the assignment to promote *Revista de América*. But since that assignment didn't take a great deal of time he found ample opportunity to talk with many comrades and offer his advice concerning the organizational problems of the young organization. Although not formally a member of the Liga Socialista, he rapidly became the central advisor to the bloc that emerged as the Tendencia Militante.

All that was like a rerun of a movie being watched for the umpteenth time.

What was different in Mexico was that a strong indigenous leadership had already been forged. They were self-confident, well-read, had several years of experience in the international faction fight under their belts, knew the Argentines well as a result of this collaboration in the international, and they weren't ready to take orders from Buenos Aires, Brussels, New York, or anywhere. They are the kind of leaders who listen to what everyone has to say and then make up their own minds. They think through for themselves all the problems of general line, strategy, tactics, and how to implement them in Mexico, and then they go ahead and build. You can't push that kind of leadership out of the way without a fight, and that is what was new in

Mexico. The FBL didn't win the majority of the organization (yet) but in my opinion they had a victory all the same. They came out of the fight with a cadre that has learned some lessons they will never forget. And they prevented their organization from being destroyed.

If you are looking for cadres who are capable of building something, you are better off putting your money on 80 people who refuse to vote to purge themselves rather than the 150 who raise their hands in favor.

A loyal minority

We have had another difference with the Argentine leadership since the division on guerrilla warfare in Latin America first emerged at the 1969 world congress. From the beginning, the PST leaders were impatient with the slow pace of winning comrades in the sections and sympathizing organizations where those who agreed with us were a minority. They sometimes expressed the opinion that you can never win an argument or prove you are right unless you demonstrate in practice that your line is correct. And you can't do that if you are a minority that is prevented from putting its line into practice. So if you are a minority it is better to get out, intervene in the class struggle and show your line is better.

We disagreed strongly. We thought the PST leadership oversimplified the problems of building a revolutionary international. We think we show something very important about our line by demonstrating our intention and our ability to be a loyal minority. Would it really settle something to go out and set up Trotskyist Organization #27 in Britain? Of course not. As long as there is internal democracy, if you aren't capable enough to carry on a political fight inside the IMG you wouldn't be able to build anything outside either.

This difference came up several times in various forms. Each time the LTF steering committee discussed it, and overwhelmingly rejected the PST's arguments. Each time, the LTF reaffirmed its position. Agreement with the perspective of functioning as a loyal minority within the sections and sympathizing organizations of the Fourth International is a condition of membership in the LTF. After lengthy discussion the PST leadership always voted in favor of making agreement with that perspective a condition of membership.

We didn't try to psychoanalyze them to determine if they *really* agreed. In a Bolshevik party you never vote for something you disagree with. So we assume that when comrades vote for something it is because they are convinced it is correct. Your common vote defines the basis on which your collaboration takes place.

And the LTF line *was* the basis on which we collaborated for many years. We worked together to prevent splits from taking place and to build the LTF minorities in sections and sympathizing organizations led by the IMT.

But in our opinion a change has taken place in the last year, a progressive deterioration of honest collaboration on the basis of commonly agreed perspectives. The PST has never said that they have changed their opinion and no longer agree with the platform of the LTF. On the contrary, as late as last August they reaffirmed their agreement by voting for the LTF statement entitled “The Portuguese Revolution and the New Problems that Face the Fourth

International,” [IIDB Vol. XII, No.6]. But the PST leadership began acting in a different way. Instead of collaborating with, working with leaders of the LTF in the different sections, in Europe and Latin America, they started functioning behind the backs of the LTF. They in fact started to function like a distinct grouping inside the LTF, a grouping that did not declare its existence or its platform.

At the LTF steering committee meeting in August a special session was devoted to a discussion of the norms of leadership relations in the LTF. Comrades from Spain, Britain, and Colombia raised very sharp objections to the way the PST leadership had been functioning, the obvious attempts by PSTers to foster divisions within the LTF in those countries and elsewhere, their refusal to consult before making moves that might erroneously be interpreted as actions decided upon by the LTF and might have repercussions for the comrades on other countries. In each case, Comrade Moreno or Comrade Mario indicated that they agreed mistakes had been made and that they would not be repeated. Unfortunately, as we saw in Mexico, the pattern was not altered.

In retrospect, I think this change in functioning, which set the PST leadership on a collision course with the rest of the faction, began with the eruption of the prerevolutionary situation in Portugal and the opportunities this created for the growth of revolutionary Marxist forces.

Long before there were any differences concerning the political line to be followed by Trotskyists in Portugal, we had a disagreement with the Argentine comrades concerning our attitude toward the LCI, the sympathizing organization of the Fourth International that was recognized by the 1974 world congress. Following their long-standing practice in Latin America, which I have already described, when the political situation opened up in Portugal, the PST leadership decided to send a comrade to Portugal. This was done without any consultation with the LTF. In retrospect, it is clear that they already saw this as a decision to show in practice that their inclinations were correct. Their impatience got the better of them. They went ahead to build an organization in Portugal outside the sympathizing organization led by the IMT.

Several times this was discussed in the LTF and the United Secretariat. The PST leaders always denied their intention was to build a rival organization. Several times the LTF expressed the opinion that we favored a fusion of the LCI and PRT, that we did not believe the political differences in Portugal justified the existence of two sympathizing organizations of the Fourth International, especially under the circumstances of the political upheaval and the tasks that were posed before Portuguese Trotskyists. The PST leadership always stated their agreement with this LTF position. But in practice it became clear over time that they were not using their influence with the PRT to promote the perspective agreed to by the LTF. In practice they were promoting a counter-perspective.

The political differences on Portugal came later.

Ironically, the political convergence between the IMT and PST could now lead them to change their course and favor an LCI-PRT fusion. They will probably even pretend that the IMT has been won to the PST's positions precisely because they helped to build the PRT as a Trotskyist organization and that put pressure in the IMT to correct its errors!

It is important to keep our differences with the PST leadership in perspective. In this report I have concentrated on our differences because that is what is new. But this changes nothing in our appreciation of the PST's strengths. There are, and there remain very broad areas of political agreement between us and the PST leadership. Our collaboration over the last years has been decisive in the struggle to build the Fourth International. The Argentine PST remains the strongest and most important Trotskyist organization in Latin America, and we will continue to collaborate and work with Argentine comrades on all questions where we agree.

We will especially continue the fight to force the IMT to recognize the PST as the organization that would be recognized as the Argentine section of the Fourth International, were it not for reactionary legislation similar to that which exists in the U.S. We hope that the political convergence between the PST and the IMT will help break down some of the blind factionalism against the PST which has prevented them from being so recognized in the past.

We are certainly not happy about the differences that now divide the PST leadership from the LTF. But we are convinced that the only way we will be able to collaborate with the PST in the future is by showing very clearly where we stand. In regard to the PST's leadership's role in the split in Mexico, we can only hope to influence their conduct in the future by taking a hard stand against the totally destructive character of their intervention in the Liga Socialista.

A new stage

When you put all the elements of this panorama together it becomes clear that there has been an acceleration of centrifugal forces in the Fourth International. An authoritative leadership of the international as a whole is more and more undermined by the IMT; the previous faction lines are dissolving; a new destructive split has occurred, this time within one of the two major factions; the first expulsions of LTF members in Europe have taken place—all this at a time when new forces are coming toward the international, thus posing very sharply the need to break down factional and sectarian responses, to turn outward and work to strengthen the Fourth International.

We are at a critical juncture in the evolution of the political struggle in the international. There is no point in speculating about what may or may not happen in the weeks and months to come. The main thing is that we will continue to follow the course we have maintained since political differences emerged in 1969, fighting to preserve the unity of the Fourth International at the same time that we clarify political lines and build the international. The incoming political committee will have to pay very close attention to developments in the world movement.

I want to end by emphasizing the point I began with. This perspective is nothing new for us. But what is changing is the scope of the historical opportunities before the Fourth International. And that makes us optimistic.

It is worth looking back on where we have come from since 1969. It's worth remembering how many countries there were that had no Trotskyist parties at all six or seven years ago. The list includes places like Australia, New Zealand, Iran, Sweden, Spain, Ireland, Portugal, Venezuela, Lebanon, Israel, Colombia, Puerto Rico, the Antilles—and the list goes on. That has changed, and not only has the Fourth

International grown, at the same time a whole layer of cadres have been educated politically because of the struggle we have conducted.

We have learned a lot in this process. We have learned that there are no shortcuts toward the goal of building an international movement. It is a hard task. Even Marx and Engels and Lenin sometimes threw up their hands in despair.

We have been reminded once again, by our own concrete experience, that amongst our comrades we have no permanent friends and no permanent enemies. For us, politics is decisive.

Once upon a time—way back in 1969 or thereabouts—I used to be somewhat naive or perhaps shortsighted. I used to think that someday we would have a plenum or convention when we would be able to give a world movement report that

would inform the comrades—its over! We'd be able to report that we had won the fight in the international, or that we'd lost it, but at least that something was settled. I suspect other comrades had the same idea, even if unconsciously.

One of the most important things we have learned in the last seven years is not to wait for such a report. The terms of the political struggle may be constantly shifting, but the central importance of this task of building the Fourth International does not change. That growing realization has played a fundamental role in the education of the Socialist Workers party in the last years. It has shaped a whole new generation of cadres who understand the importance of building an international movement, who understand that the SWP cannot be built without shouldering our responsibilities in helping to build the Fourth International.

APPENDIX I: Correspondence between Walter and the LSA/LSO Leadership

Letter to the Political Committee from Walter for the United Secretariat Bureau

December 12, 1975

To the Political Committee of the LSA/LSO, Canadian section of the F.I.

Dear Comrades,

We have been informed that you have decided to invite to the preconvention discussion and the Christmas 1975 convention of your organization the Canadian group affiliated to the so-called "O.C.R.F.I."

We don't know whether that information is adequate and whether it was taken in full knowledge of the October 1975 USEC decisions. Please let us know as soon as possible whether this is the case or not.

We wish to draw your attention to the fact that at the October 1975 USEC meeting, two motions were adopted in relation with the so-called "O.C.R.F.I.", one of which has the following content:

"That sections, sympathising organizations and organizations in political solidarity with the F.I. should take no initiative in relation with the O.C.R.F.I. or its sections, without prior consultation of and approval by the USEC."

If under these circumstances the Canadian group affiliated to the so-called "O.C.R.F.I." indeed is invited to your convention and (or) preconvention discussion, without prior consultation of and approval by the USEC, in spite of the above quoted resolution and after your having unambiguously been informed about it, this would mean an open and deliberate defiance of the organizational integrity and structure of the Fourth International, and a clear breach of discipline.

Please let us know your opinion on the matter. We will put the question on the agenda of the December 22-23 USEC meeting, if the information indicated in the first paragraph of this letter shows itself to be correct.

For the USEC/Bureau,
Comradely yours,
Walter

Copies to: RMG/GMR, SWP National Office, Jack, Alain

Reply to Walter by Art Young for the Political Committee of the LSA/LSO

December 18, 1975

United Secretariat
Brussels, Belgium

Dear Comrades,

As you know, we have been unable to attend the meetings of the United Secretariat in recent months. And we did not

receive any record of its meetings until yesterday, when the minutes of the September, October, and November meetings arrived simultaneously, one day after the letter from Comrade Walter. The delay may have been caused by this country's postal strike, which has only now ended. In any case, we were unaware that the United Secretariat had adopted the motion quoted in Walter's December 12 letter. After reading his letter carefully, we believe that it can only be based on a misunderstanding of the facts of the matter.

Our invitation to members of the Groupe Socialiste des Travailleurs du Québec [GSTQ] has nothing to do with relations on an international level between the United Secretariat and the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International [OCRFI]. Nor does it involve relations between the Canadian section and the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste, the French affiliate of the OCRFI. We have been dealing with the GSTQ as a political organization within Canada. Often we find that we are working in the same areas as the GSTQ—in the student movement, or in the unions, for example—and that its members show interest in our activities. It is not a question of collaboration with another international current, but rather of a concrete opening for party building within Canada, a question of national tactics.

This opening has increased significance because of the GSTQ's weight as a political organization in Québec. It has a size and influence roughly comparable to that of the Groupe Marxiste Révolutionnaire and to the Québec forces of the Canadian section—the two organizations of the Fourth International in Québec. In addition, the GSTQ has members in leadership positions in two major Québec unions, and it has broader influence in the organized labor movement.

To be sure we have many political differences with the GSTQ but detailing them is not to the point in this letter. More relevant is the fact that in the recent period, the GSTQ has collaborated with us on an increasing range of projects where areas of political agreement exist. This has made common work between us fruitful in a number of instances. To cite a few examples:

- The September 22 protest against the murder of eight members of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores in Argentina, signed by political groups and labor leaders in Québec. Signatories of the protest included leaders of the GMR, LSO, and GSTQ. (Although the signature of the GSTQ was omitted in the text published in the English edition of the October 9 *Inprecor*, it was included in the French edition.) The editors of *Inprecor* considered the initiative to be exemplary, stating, "We urge other comrades around the world to follow this example of the Québécois comrades. . . ." It should be added that the collaboration of the GSTQ was indispensable in securing the signatures of the labor leaders."

- Our work with the GSTQ in winning support for a strike of Montreal public transit workers, a strike in which GSTQ union members played a leading role.

- The GSTQ's role in securing labor endorsements for a struggle against the rise in transit fares (a struggle in which the comrades of the GMR also participated).

- Opposing repression in Spain following the assassination of opponents of Francoist tyranny. In this case, once again, the protests carried the signatures of the GMR, LSO, and GSTQ among others.

- Collaboration in the labor movement in opposing supporters of the bourgeois Parti Québécois and promoting proposals for independent labor political action.

- We have also had a good experience with a few members of the GSTQ who live in English Canada.

We have kept the GMR informed of our initiative towards the GSTQ and have sought to work jointly with them in bringing the GSTQ closer to the Fourth International. We also pressed the GSTQ to invite the GMR to its coming convention.

While the development of common work in some areas has not eliminated other differences we have with the GSTQ, it has helped in Québec to cut across the slander that the Trotskyists are a group of warring sects, more concerned with fighting each other than with promoting the class struggle.

The participation of the GSTQ in some common activities has reinforced the positive image of Trotskyism for the radical public. In addition, practical cooperation has produced important concrete gains.

Our intent is to push forward this process. We want the GSTQ members to get to know us better and we seek more exchanges with their leaders and with their membership. The goal is to win them to membership in the Canadian section of the Fourth International. We believe that this is possible and that a positive beginning in this direction has been made.

We have invited a broad range of our contacts to attend our December convention. Our policy is to make available copies of our preconvention bulletins to all those invited to the convention.

In view of these recent experiences, it was obvious that we should include the members of the GSTQ among those invited. We wrote to the GSTQ leadership, transmitting this invitation.

Clearly, then, what is involved is our relation to a political organization inside Canada. Our actions are designed to strengthen the section, increase its effectiveness in the class struggle, and hopefully win new forces in Canada to the Fourth International. In other words it is a question of a tactical orientation of a national section.

Whatever our differences on other matters, all members of the leading bodies of the international have affirmed that these bodies do not attempt to dictate tactics to the national sections.

Since you cite the motion passed at the October Secretariat meeting concerning relations with the OCRFI, and since you include a reference to "the organizational integrity and structure of the Fourth International" we can only conclude that you thought that the invitation of the GSTQ to our convention is in some way connected to the United Secretariat's relation with the OCRFI. We trust that our outline of the facts qualifies that this is not the case.

Your letter arrived as we were making final preparations for our convention. It is not possible for us to participate in the December United Secretariat meeting, to be held four days from now. To insure that you receive this letter in time

for the meeting, however, we are transmitting the text to Comrade Steman, who will present it at the meeting.

Comradely yours,

Art Young

for the LSA/LSO Political Committee

CC: GMR, RMG, Alain, Jack, SWP N.O.

Letter to the Leadership of the LSA/LSO from Walter for the United Secretariat

December 23, 1975

To the leadership of the LSA/LSO, Canadian section of the F.I.

Dear Comrades,

We have received and discussed your answer to the letter of the USEC/Bureau of Dec. 12 relative to the invitation of the Québécois grouping adhering to the "OCRFI" to your national convention.

We note your statement that your invitation of that grouping occurred before you had received the October 1975 USEC minutes, and without your having been informed, prior to the reception of these minutes, about the contents of the two motions voted during the October 1975 USEC meeting on the relations between the F.I. and the "OCRFI." We accept your statement.

However, we cannot accept your argument that even now, after having received the text of the motions voted at the October 1975 USEC meeting, the question of the invitation of the Québécois grouping adhering to the "OCRFI" is a purely national tactical matter for the Canadian section alone to decide.

We are faced with an international offensive of the "OCRFI" which, under the guise of a unity maneuver, pursues the avowed and openly expressed goal of splitting the F.I. The Québécois grouping which is a member of the "OCRFI" has, to our knowledge, never dissociated itself from this goal, nor has it clearly condemned the use of physical violence and slander against political opponents inside the working class movement, systematically practised by the OCI, the main component of the "OCRFI."

Furthermore, any attempt at "regroupment" in Quebec or in Canada—as different from punctual united front agreements which any national section is of course free to conclude with any working class organisation—with the Québécois formation adhering to the "OCRFI" without a previous clarification of these questions, without a clear break of that grouping with the "OCRFI", and without serious guarantees against double membership, would be in contradiction with the organisational and political principles of the F.I. as defined by the statutes.

We therefore request you to suspend your invitation of the Québécois grouping adhering to the "OCRFI" to your national convention, pending clarification of the above-named issues. If you would not conform yourself to this decision, the USEC would have no choice but to:

(a) request that a delegation of the GMR/RMG defends before your national convention the positions of the Fourth International leadership developed in the third, fourth and

fifth paragraphs of this letter, and strongly condemns the violation of discipline involved in that invitation, which could only be considered as a questioning of the organisational structure of the F.I. as defined by the statutes;

(b) submit to the incoming I.E.C. the question of the Canadian section's leadership's breach of discipline.

We hope that you will conform yourself to our decision, even if you don't agree with it, and that you will avoid a further sharpening of the conflict arising out of the question of how to handle our relations with the "OCRFI."

We do not reject in any way the possibility or advisability of moves made by either the FI or by national sections towards the "OCRFI" or its national groupings to probe the possibility for discussion, collaboration or even regroupment with some or many of these forces. But such moves, in order to be productive from the point of view of building the FI and its national sections, should be made after previous consultation of the USEC, in common agreement of all the forces of the F.I., and not as factional maneuvers or unilateral decisions by any separate section or part of our world movement.

Fraternaly yours,
For the United Secretariat of the F.I.,
Walter

Reply to Walter by Art Young for the LSA/LSO Convention

LSA/LSO
Toronto, Ontario
Canada

January 20, 1976

United Secretariat
Brussels, Belgium

Dear Comrades,

1. Our convention took place without hearing your reaction to our letter of December 18. Your letter dated December 23 arrived in Toronto on December 31, after the convention had ended.

Neither the Groupe Marxist Revolutionnaire nor the Revolutionary Marxist Group were aware of your decision. Leaders of both organizations professed ignorance of any decision of the December United Secretariat meeting. A member of the GMR, François Cyr, addressed the convention, presenting greetings in the name of the GMR and RMG,

but he made it clear that he was speaking only for the leaderships of those two organizations.

2. As we have explained, our invitation to the GSTQ to attend the convention, and our participation in some common projects with them, flow from political developments in this country and the evolution of relations between our two groups, and nothing else. This does not depend on the state of relations between the United Secretariat and the OCRFI; that is a different matter.

For example, you mention your fears that the OCRFI may hope to split the Fourth International, and your concern over alleged actions of the OCRFI's French affiliate, the OCI. But you do not show that these questions have any bearing on the Canadian section's decision to invite a particular organization with whom we have been working in Quebec to our convention.

We think that the United Secretariat should be encouraged by the growing influence and attractive power of the Fourth International in Canada, and appreciate the progress we are making.

3. You believe that the United Secretariat has the power to tell us who may or may not be invited to our convention. Your last letter enlarges this supposed power, informing us that the LSA/LSO may not act "to probe the possibility for discussion, collaboration or even regroupment" with the GSTQ without first clearing our moves with you. In other words, you attempt to arrogate authority not only over our right to discuss and collaborate with another political group in Canada, but over our right to *probe the possibility* for any discussion and collaboration.

We reject this attempt to establish veto power over tactical decisions of national sections. Decisions on how we intervene in the class struggle in Canada are the prerogative of the LSA/LSO. In our opinion, your instructions on this matter are in violation of the norms of democratic centralism as it has been practised in the Fourth International since reunification, and as it has been codified in the statutes.

4. Our convention instructed the incoming leadership to continue our course of seeking discussion and collaboration with the GSTQ on projects where we have agreement as long as this process promotes the building of the Canadian section.

This position was contained in the report on the Fourth International adopted unanimously at our convention. We will send you copies of the report as soon as it is published.

Comradely,
Art Young

cc: GMR, RMG, Alain Krivine, Jack Barnes

APPENDIX II: IMT Steering Committee Statements

To the January 1976 Plenum of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party

Dear Comrades,

Once again, we want to draw your attention to the serious situation created in the IVth International by the fact that the recommendations of the February 1975 IEC regarding the collective reintegration of the IT comrades into your party have not yet been implemented, practically one year after they were voted and adopted.

We obviously differ on the antecedents of this dispute, and regarding the responsibilities involved. But about one statement of facts there should be no difference of opinion. As long as the February 1975 IEC recommendations have not been implemented, the highest degree of tension will persist in the F.I. between the majority and the minority. Rightly or wrongly, the majority of the leaders and the members of the F.I. are convinced that a matter of basic principle is involved in that dispute: the question of equality of rights between various tendencies inside the F.I.

Rightly or wrongly, the majority of leaders and members of the F.I. believe that your party's leadership has victimized the IT comrades of the I.T. for the "crime" of coming out, as an organized and efficient faction inside the S.W.P., in favor of those positions of the F.I. majority with which you disagree. Under these circumstances, the continuation of the debate in the international Trotskyist movement occurs under conditions of basic inequality of chances for different tendencies. The comrades in solidarity with SWP positions enjoy full tendency rights and in fact operate as highly organized factions inside all those sections which are led by IMT comrades. However, the comrades in political solidarity with the IMT are systematically purged or demoralized inside the SWP. Such inequality of chances is obviously intolerable for the IMT. It will not be tolerated by them.

We urge you to take this fact into account, regardless of whether you agree with the interpretation of events underlying it. Surely the opinion of the majority of the leaders and members of the F.I., an organization with which you are in general political solidarity in spite of existing tactical differences and even if reactionary legislation prevents you from being members, cannot be a matter of indifference to you. Surely, the question of reintegrating a couple of dozen comrades more into the SWP, comrades who have made unmistakably clear their willingness to accept discipline and the organisational principles of the SWP and to act accordingly, should not be a matter of great concern to an organization of the size of the SWP. Surely, the formal right of local branches to decide upon that matter (i.e. to procrastinate as they have procrastinated since the May 1975 SWP Plenum), should weigh less heavily upon your judgment than the question of normalizing your relations with thousands upon thousands of organized Trotskyists the world over, who regard this matter as *the* key question of the moment, for the above mentioned reason of principle.

We therefore urge you to settle, at your Plenum, once and for all, the collective reintegration of all those members of

the IT who have applied for membership, and who unmistakably declared their willingness to accept the discipline of the SWP, on the basis of their political conviction that the building of the Marxist revolutionary party in the United States is identical with the building of the SWP.

If you act in a responsible manner, as your whole history and tradition commands you to do, we are sure that relations with the FI will become rapidly as normal as they were for many years. Political differences, important as they may be, can then be discussed in a calm and constructive way, without in any way obstructing daily fraternal collaboration. The removal of organisational grievances is a precondition for such normalization.

The IMT Steering Committee,
Aubin
December 23, 1975

IMT Steering Committee Statement, October 10, 1975

1. The Steering Committee of the IMT notes that the political differences inside the Fourth International have deepened considerably as the result of the international minority faction's wrong analyses and reactions to the unfolding of the socialist revolution in Portugal. These wrong positions, now codified in the minority faction steering committee statement of August 31, 1975, have placed the minority on record as giving top priority to the struggle for democratic demands in a revolutionary situation in an imperialist country, not even mentioning the key need to build soviets and to fight for workers power among the six "main axes" of Trotskyist policy in the revolutionary process now unfolding in Portugal. This is a fundamental departure from the line for such situations developed in the Transitional Program and defended by Lenin and Trotsky during the Russian revolution of 1917, the German revolution of 1918-1923, the Spanish revolution of 1936, and the mass upsurge in France in 1934-36. It involves a further development of the incipient revisionism of the minority faction on such questions as nationalism and confusion between the democratic rights of the masses and the institutions of the bourgeois state. It throws significant light on the basic reasons for which the minority faction rejected the "Thesis on the Building of Revolutionary Parties in Europe," and for which it seems obsessed by the fight against "ultraleftism" as the main danger in all countries. The differences now revolve around the central question of how to build revolutionary parties in prerevolutionary and revolutionary situations in imperialist countries, what are the key tasks to be solved during a revolutionary mass upsurge in such countries, and what must be the central thrust of revolutionary Marxist activity within the mass movement in order to make it impossible for the reformist

and Stalinist bureaucracies to prevent this movement from overthrowing the bourgeois state machine and the capitalist mode of production.

2. The Steering Committee of the IMT further notes that the international minority faction has seriously compounded these grave political deviations by organizational measures and attitudes that tend to place into question the existence of the Fourth International as a world party based upon democratic centralism as outlined in the statutes unanimously adopted by the Tenth World Congress. The transformation of *Intercontinental Press* into a *de facto* public faction organ on questions such as Portugal, Angola, and Vietnam, systematically presenting the positions of the minority faction and not those adopted by the democratically elected bodies of the FI; the unilateral decision to invite the OCRFI (Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the FI) to the SWP convention without prior consultation with the United Secretariat and without prior agreement on this question; and the use in the minority faction's steering committee statement of the term "world Trotskyist movement" supposedly including some forces outside of the FI are ominous signs of a trend—whether intentional or objective, that remains to be seen—toward transforming the FI into a loose and non-committing federation of factions and national groupings debating on all questions but acting in common only on those questions on which there is unanimous agreement, a concept Trotsky fought against with all his strength during the last seven years of his life.

3. The Steering Committee of the IMT therefore defines the purpose of its tendency fight as a fight to defend the programmatic, political, and organizational integrity of the Fourth International now seriously threatened by the incipient revisionist course of the minority faction. It decides to incorporate the general line followed by the FI leadership on Portugal—as expressed in the USec resolution on Portugal of June 1, 1975, and the article by Comrades Pierre Frank, Livio Maitan, and Ernest Mandel in answer to Gerry Foley and Joseph Hansen of August 15, 1975—into the basic platform of the IMT. It empowers the IMT Bureau to prepare a draft balance-sheet on the analysis and polemics on Portugal for the November 1975 USec meeting, to be incorporated into the basic documents of the IMT.

At the same time, the IMT Steering Committee, while recognizing the gravity of the political differences that have arisen within the FI and the importance of the political debate that has started and will unfold on these differences, reaffirms its basic orientation followed since the Ninth World Congress on the question of the tendency struggle within the FI:

(a) The key priority for the FI today is external expansion and external activity. It is vital for the FI to continue and step up its promising growth since 1968 to intervene in the unfolding prerevolutionary and revolutionary situations, in which we can already intervene with significant forces, in such a way as to make possible a new qualitative leap forward toward the building of revolutionary Marxist mass parties.

(b) The nature of the political differences inside the FI has not created a principled basis for a split of the FI. We are resolutely opposed to any split course, either internationally or nationally. We must make the utmost effort to reverse the dangerous drift toward several organizations being affiliated to the FI in the same country, by struggling for the reunification of these forces at least in a certain number of

countries as a short-term perspective.

4. The Steering Committee of the IMT notes that the statement issued by the international minority faction's steering committee expresses its conviction that organized factions and tendencies should be dissolved in favor of purely ideological formations. The IMT never was a faction and is not a faction today. Its Steering Committee concurs with the conviction that the maintenance of factions and structured tendencies on a more or less permanent basis after congresses is not normal in a Leninist organization and inhibits political clarification, even if it does not break the statutory rules. However, in the opinion of the IMT Steering Committee, the expressed desire of the minority faction to dissolve factions and structured tendencies is strongly contradicted by the practical evolution of that faction, especially since May 1975, which has led to a serious increase of organizational tensions within the world movement:

(a) As a result of the unjustifiable delay in applying the January IEC recommendations concerning a reintegration of the IT into the SWP and the violation of the IEC recommendation for collective reintegration and the substitution of individual reapplication;

(b) As a result of the unjustifiable delay in regularizing the minority faction's support of common projects of the world movement;

(c) As a result of the dangerous drift toward transforming the FI into a federation of public factions or sections, notably through continuous public breaches of discipline with respect to World Congress, IEC, and USec political resolutions, and the growing transformation of *Intercontinental Press* into a public minority faction organ;

(d) As a result of the unilateral decision of the SWP leadership to invite the OCRFI to the SWP convention;

(e) As a result of an increasing functioning of minority faction representatives in disregard of the normal bodies and rules of the movement, operating as a faction that tries in several countries to contact, influence, and organize militants and groupings outside the normal channels of the FI and its national organizations, travel internationally without prior information and consultation of the international leadership, subordination of participation in official leadership bodies to faction activities, etc.

Only if and when the minority faction corrects these violations of the norms of democratic centralism within the FI can organization tensions be reduced, can the debate really center around the serious differences that have arisen around the problems of the Portuguese revolution, and can concrete steps for the actual dissolution of factions and structured tendencies be undertaken in practice, without endangering the organization integrity of the FI. The IMT Steering Committee pledges itself to make all necessary moves in that direction, as soon as the minority faction proves in practice that it is removing the five above-mentioned obstacles on the road toward this commonly desired goal. The IMT Steering Committee reaffirms its conviction that within the framework of respect for democratic centralism as defined by the statutes—which imply the duty of all sections to apply in public the line decided upon by the democratically elected leadership bodies on international questions—publicly conducted debates are not only permissible but useful and in no way contradict the organizational principles of Leninism.

Appendix III: LTF Coordinating Committee Position on the February 1976 IEC

December 16, 1975

Dear Ernest,

As you know from the discussions at the November meeting of the United Secretariat, we are deeply concerned about the character of the projected meeting of the International Executive Committee that was decided upon by a majority vote. Members and observers on the United Secretariat who support the Leninist Trotskyist Faction discussed this problem after the last meeting. We want to explain our opinion concerning the IEC, and urge the comrades of the International Majority Tendency to reconsider their decision.

The United Secretariat does not have the right to call a meeting of the International Executive Committee and at the same time arbitrarily deny some IEC members the right to attend that meeting. The United Secretariat is a body subordinate to the IEC, and accountable to the IEC. It cannot exclude members of the IEC from a meeting of the body to which they have been duly elected by a world congress.

This would be comparable to the political bureau of a section or sympathizing organization calling a meeting of their central committee with the proviso that only some of the members would be permitted to attend and that those would be selected by the political bureau. No organization adhering to the Fourth International would tolerate such a usurpation of authority by its political bureau.

Several leaders of the IMT have stated their opinion that the last world congress elected too large an IEC. This may be true, and the next world congress may elect a smaller one. But in the meantime, we are bound by a world congress decision that remains in effect until the next world congress.

When the idea of holding a restricted meeting of the IEC was first broached by you last summer, we agreed that the financial problems of the sections and sympathizing organizations of the international made it imperative to consider the possibility of organizing a gathering that would be smaller than the last IEC meeting. However, it appeared self-evident to us that the IEC meeting could not be reduced

in size by the United Secretariat instructing certain comrades that they would not be permitted to attend. The only way attendance could be limited would be by strictly limiting the character of the agenda and the organizational authority of the meeting. There seemed to be agreement on this at the time, at least implicitly, since we were in initial agreement on a limited two-point agenda: (1) an initial discussion and balance sheet on Portugal in order to prepare written material for the opening of the internal discussion; and (2) convocation of the world congress. With such an agenda, some comrades might have voluntarily decided that it was not necessary for them to attend the gathering since they would be able to make their views known through the IIDB, and the problem of reducing the size of the IEC meeting would have taken care of itself.

The agenda now proposed by the IMT for the February 1976 gathering, which includes several highly debatable political and organizational points, is such that every member of the IEC will undoubtedly feel *obligated* to make the utmost effort to attend. Consequently the United Secretariat becomes obligated to find the resources to make this possible.

This holds all the more in light of the character of the organizational motions adopted by the IMT at recent meetings of the United Secretariat and the sharp tensions that were generated by these moves.

Under the circumstances, we believe that the only responsible decision is the one we proposed at the November United Secretariat meeting: to call a meeting of all full, alternate, and consultative members of the IEC who are able to attend; to immediately begin a fund drive to raise the necessary resources; to set early September as the outside date for the convocation of this IEC.

We hope you will consider this problem carefully and adopt the necessary motions at the next United Secretariat meeting.

Comradely,
Mary-Alice Waters

**APPENDIX IV:
Correspondence and Documentation
Concerning the OCRFI
and the Commission to Investigate
the Varga Affair**

A. OCI-SWP CORRESPONDENCE

**ORGANISATION COMMUNISTE
INTERNATIONALISTE**
(pour la Reconstruction de la 4 Internationale)

Paris, September 23, 1975

Jack Barnes
National Secretary, SWP

Dear Comrade:

First I should like to thank you for the fraternal reception you accorded to our delegation and for the facilities that you made available to them so that they could inform themselves as completely as possible on all the various activities of the SWP.

Comrade François has reported to us on the SWP convention and our Central Committee has thus been able to study the step forward taken by your party.

The Central Committee of the OCI has assigned me to invite the SWP to send a delegation to the Twentieth Convention of the OCI which will take place in Paris December 26-30, 1975.

As both sides put it at the time of the meeting with a delegation of the United Secretariat on October 15, 1974, the discussion on the problems raised by the Tenth Congress of the United Secretariat—which, according to the expression used in your declaration of January 2, 1975, on the subject of this meeting, concern “all organizations claiming to be Trotskyist”—must be followed up in one way or another. But it would be preferable, in the interests of Trotskyism, if this were done in a common, organized framework.

It was from this concern, and the desire to give a certain form to the debate, that the decision to exchange internal documents was arrived at. The decision taken by your leadership to invite the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International to attend the SWP convention, with the status of observers, fits into this framework.

Likewise, it is from the same approach that our Central Committee has decided to invite the SWP to send a delegation to our convention. Your delegates may, if they wish, have speaking rights in the discussions at our convention.

We will send you shortly the agenda for the convention

and, as they appear, the documents submitted for discussion.

Accept, dear comrade, my fraternal Trotskyist salutations.

For the Central Committee of the OCI
Pierre Lambert

**ORGANISATION COMMUNISTE
INTERNATIONALISTE**
(pour la Reconstruction de la 4 Internationale)

Paris, September 23, 1975

Jack Barnes
National Secretary, SWP

Dear Comrade,

In a few days we will send you a short reply to the article signed by Mandel, Maitan, and Frank, which appeared in the *IP* of September 8, 1975.

This reply seems to us all the more necessary because we are directly attacked in this article and in a manner that we consider unfair.

We propose that this reply appear in *Intercontinental Press*.

But, as you know, Comrade Moreno in passing through Paris had a brief meeting with some members of our Central Committee. He stressed in particular how important the question of the form of the discussion is, at a moment when necessarily this discussion—and in particular the debate on the problems of the Portuguese revolution—must become public. Comrade Moreno was conveying here the opinion of the responsible leaders of the international faction with which you are in political solidarity. And by “form” we think that what is involved concerns not only “tone,” but also the consideration of the opportune moment to publish this or that document in this or that publication, etc.

Hence, while we think that it would be a positive thing if

our answer were to appear in *Intercontinental Press*, we are prepared to take into account your opinion on this subject and we do not by any means present the question of its possible publication in the columns of *Intercontinental Press* as an obligation in regard to the "right of reply" but as a proposition which must be considered from the standpoint of the necessities and the depth of the discussion.

The same attitude holds, it goes without saying, for the form of your presence at the convention of the OCI. We are aware of the fact that the relations between the SWP and the OCI take place, for you, in a framework accepted by the United Secretariat. Hence, if you consider it necessary, we have no objection to inviting the US to attend our forthcoming convention.

In any case, in the framework of the preparation of the convention, it is necessary that our members should be informed of the international activities of our Central Committee. To fulfill this obligation we ask from you authorization to publish in an internal bulletin the whole of the correspondence concerning the evolution of our relations since October 1974.

Fraternally,
Pierre Lambert

copy to J. Hansen

exchanging according to the agreement of the meeting of October 15 should be made public unless it has been released by those concerned.

We did not know about the meeting you had with Comrade Moreno when he passed through Paris until we read about it in your letter. The LTF steering committee met at the end of August, but it did not ask anyone to initiate such a meeting.

I have not yet received the reply you said you intended to write in response to the article by Comrades Pierre Frank, Livio Maitan and Ernest Mandel which appeared in the September 8, 1975, *Intercontinental Press*. We assume that when it is finished you will send a copy of the reply to the United Secretariat at the above address.

We are forwarding copies of your two letters to the United Secretariat and also to Comrade Moreno.

Comradely,
Jack Barnes
for the Political Committee
Socialist Workers Party

cc: United Secretariat, Hugo Moreno

**ORGANISATION COMMUNISTE
INTERNATIONALISTE**
(pour la Reconstruction de la 4 Internationale)

[received November 12, 1975]

14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014
October 9, 1975

To: Jack Barnes

Dear Comrade Lambert,

Thank you for your two letters dated September 23, 1975.

We are happy to hear that you have decided to invite the United Secretariat of the Fourth International to observe the convention of the OCI. The address of the United Secretariat has been changed since your last correspondence. It is now: [address in original]. It would be good for you to send copies of the agenda and documents directly to the above address as they come out.

The SWP Political Committee appreciates your invitation to send observers to your convention. Could send us three copies of each of your documents as they are printed?

We, of course, have no objections to your informing your membership through internal bulletins of your correspondence with the United Secretariat and other groups. However, none of the internal material that we began

Dear Comrade,

Thank you for your letter of October 9. I confirm the terms of the invitation to attend our convention.

In so far as our written communications with the U.S. [United Secretariat] are concerned, if we address ourselves only to you, it is not because we could not make contact with the U.S. But since the U.S. does not reply to our letters, we decided that we must send our correspondence through you as an intermediary.

I am enclosing four copies of the draft report on the tasks of the organization, adopted by the Central Committee, and submitted to the preparatory discussion for our 20th convention.

With fraternal greetings,
P. Lambert

B. UNITED SECRETARIAT MOTIONS AND STATEMENTS

Motions Passed at the October 4-5, 1975, United Secretariat Meeting

Motion by Walter. The U.S. notes the confusion, misunderstandings and increase in tensions created by and following the invitation of the OCRFI to the convention of the SWP. The US considers it necessary to take all steps to avoid similar confusions, misunderstandings or exacerbations of tensions in future. The process of discussion, regroupment and fusions with various forces and all initiatives which lie in that direction are indispensable in the construction of the International. However, these steps are only of value from a point of view of the goal of the construction of a mass revolutionary international if they lead to a strengthening and not a weakening of the programme, the cadre, the national sections and the international organisation of the FI as a world party and they do not have the effect of exacerbating tensions, or obscuring political differences within it. Such consideration and the need for a concerted and unambiguous response are particularly applicable in the case of an organization such as the OCRFI which has clearly and explicitly stated its purpose as effecting a split in the International between "genuine Trotskyists" and "Pabloites," which has consistently used the worst tactics of political slander, and which is utilizing physical violence within the workers movement.

In order to ensure a unified response to the approach of the OCRFI, to safeguard the International and its cadres from potential operations of a splitting or maneuverist character, to ensure the closest integration in whatever response is decided to the OCRFI and to avoid a multiplication of suspicions and tensions, the US decides to centralise all relations with the OCRFI through its hand and that all sections and sympathizing sections and all those in political solidarity with the FI shall not take any further step or initiative of any kind in collaboration with the requests of the OCRFI before a new discussion has taken place in the US and before a decision has been taken by this body on each specific initiative.

7 for, 5 against, 1 abstaining

Motion by Walter. That sections, sympathizing organizations and organizations in political solidarity with the Fourth International should take no initiative in relation to the OCRFI or its sections without prior consultation and approval by the USec.

8 for, 0 against, 5 no votes

Motion Passed at the November 23-24, 1975, United Secretariat Meeting

Motion: The U.S. has been informed of the invitation extended to the SWP by the OCI to attend its 20th Congress.

An exchange of letters between the leaderships of the SWP and the OCI seems to indicate that the United Secretariat is also invited.

Given recent physical attacks by the OCI against members of the LCR, the United Secretariat, in conformity with the resolution adopted on this subject, decides:

1. To do everything possible to document the facts on these aggressions.

2. To consult the Political Bureau of the LCR (sfqi).

3. To report the opinion of the PB of the LCR to the next United Secretariat which will take a decision on whether or not to send a USec delegation to the OCI convention.

Carried Unanimously

Motions, Statements from the December 22-23, 1975 United Secretariat Meeting

A. Motion adopted by French LCR central committee December 21, 1975

The question posed by the OCI's politico-organizational methods (which consist of using violence in its relations with members of other organizations, including the Spartacists, LIRQI, and the LCR) is a problem that supercedes any confrontation or debate dealing with fundamental political questions.

1. This problem ought to be the subject of a real political offensive against the OCI and its membership.

2. The United Secretariat, having received an invitation to the OCI's Congress, is asking the advice of the Central Committee of the French section of the Fourth International. The Central Committee proposes that the United Secretariat demand that the OCI leadership make a public self-criticism concerning the matters mentioned above and explicitly condemn all forms of violence within the workers movement. This is a precondition for considering the invitation. In the event that this single precondition is met, we are in favor of the United Secretariat discussing a delegation and deciding on its participation in the Congress with the same procedure as with any other organization inviting us under comparable conditions.

3. It is essential to establish accurately a detailed dossier of the various incidents in question (from the attack on the FSI demonstration up to recent events), and to bring it to the attention of the International and of the French organizations concerned.

Motion adopted unanimously except for 5 abstentions and 1 not voting

B. Motion by Fourier.

The United Secretariat of the F.I. has been informed by the leadership of the SWP that, in an exchange of letters which it has had with the leadership of the OCI, the OCI has invited the USEC to attend its next national congress. The USEC has asked the LCR, French section of the F.I., to give its advice on this question.

The Central Committee of the LCR has submitted a report indicating that the OCI has repeatedly used violence towards militants of other organisations of the labor movement, among them "Spartacists," members of the "LIRQI" as well as against members of the LCR who tried to intervene in order to stop such methods. Hence, the CC of the LCR has proposed to the USEC to demand from the leadership of the OCI that it should make a public self-criticism in relation with the affairs mentioned in the above-named report, and that it should condemn explicitly every form of violence inside the labor movement, this being a precondition before the invitation of the OCI could be taken into consideration and any answer could be given to it.

The USEC recalls that the Fourth International has always vigorously condemned the use of methods of violence inside the labor movement, methods used since a long time by the reformists against the revolutionists, and later developed on a monstrous scale by the stalinists. The USEC decides to adopt the proposal of the Central Committee of the LCR, and empowers its Bureau to transmit the present resolution to the OCI.

9 for

C. Countermotion by Stateman:

In view of the evidence presented to the United Secretariat that the OCI employs violence within the workers movement, the USEC decides:

1. To send a USEC delegation to the OCI congress;
2. That a major part of our intervention at the OCI congress should be to denounce OCI violence within the workers' movement, and to explain that any repetition of such action will cut across further discussions with the USEC.

6 for

D. Statement by Jones:

I am convinced that supporters of the LTF are acting towards the OCRFI in a way which is provocative, incorrect and which leads to a sharp increase of tensions inside the international—the invitation of the OCRFI to the SWP convention and the invitation to the LSA/LSO convention being the most obvious case. Comrades of the USEC majority correctly believe that such actions tend to increase tendencies towards a split in the International. However such dangers cannot be combatted by the USEC majority itself adopting positions which are not correct. To take the main points raised:

(a) The use of violence and slander; naturally cessation of this is a precondition for political discussion of the type proposed. However it seems obvious that the best way to get this is to go to the OCI convention to make this point absolutely clear to them there.

(b) Splitting manouvres; I am sure that the Lambertist leaders are attempting to split the International. However (1) even an approach to Pabloites must create big contradictions for the Lambertists which we should seek to exacerbate (2) We cannot act on the basis of our interpretations of their intentions but only on basis of their objective actions. By not discussing with them you help convince them of our weakness and inability to discuss.

In my opinion the approach of the USEC majority indicates a subjectivist reaction which cannot be justified.

Despite this however it is the duty of all those who disagree with the position of the USEC on this to fight for a change in this line within the International. I am therefore naturally totally opposed to any act by the LTF or the SWP which goes against decisions of the USEC or which represents a unilateral approach to the OCRFI. I therefore voted for the resolution on Canada and against the SWP attending the OCI convention.

United Secretariat of the
Fourth International
December 23, 1975

To the Central Committee of the OCI

Comrades,

At its December 22-23, 1975, meeting the United Secretariat of the Fourth International decided to send you the following resolution, adopted at that meeting:

"The United Secretariat of the F.I. has been informed by the leadership of the SWP that, in an exchange of letters which it has had with the leadership of the OCI, the OCI has invited the USEC to attend its next national congress. The USEC has asked the LCR, French section of the F.I., to give its advice on this question.

"The Central Committee of the LCR has submitted a report indicating that the OCI has repeatedly used violence towards militants of other organisations of the labor movement, among them "Spartacists," members of the "LIRQI" as well as against members of the LCR who tried to intervene in order to stop such methods. Hence, the CC of the LCR has proposed to the USEC to demand from the leadership of the OCI that it should make a public self-criticism in relation with the affairs mentioned in the above-named report, and that it should condemn explicitly every form of violence inside the labor movement, this being a precondition before the invitation of the OCI could be taken into consideration and any answer could be given to it.

"The USEC recalls that the Fourth International has always vigorously condemned the use of methods of violence inside the labor movement, methods used since a long time by the reformists against the revolutionists, and later developed on a monstrous scale by the stalinists. The USEC decides to adopt the proposal of the Central Committee of the LCR, and empowers its Bureau to transmit the present resolution to the OCI".

Internationalist Communist greetings,
For the United Secretariat Bureau,
E. Germain

C. CORRESPONDENCE CONCERNING COMMISSION TO INVESTIGATE THE VARGA AFFAIR

Paris, November 17, 1975

To: LIRQI, LCR, Spartacist League, WSL

Dear Comrades,

After a year of joint meetings about the advisability of complying with LIRQI's request to create a commission of inquiry into the accusations made against its leaders by the OCI, we believe that in view of the impasse the discussions have reached it is advisable to jointly work out some proposals that are on the one hand final, and on the other hand clear and plain.

We therefore state our position:

1. Lutte Ouvrière is ready to participate in such a commission.

2. Lutte Ouvrière will not sign the statement proposed by the LIRQI, attached to present letter, which includes approval of LIRQI's proposal before the commission even meets, thus making it pointless to constitute such a commission.

We do not particularly limit ourselves to the statement we proposed in order to facilitate the discussion, and we are prepared to sign a statement that may not embody such positions.

Enclosed for your information is the statement we suggested.

3. In our opinion, LIRQI cannot be both judge and party to the dispute at the same time, and it would be better that its representatives not be members of the commissions.

In the worst case, if no points of agreement can be reached for a common statement, in our opinion each organization could announce the terms it thinks would be best for forming the commission.

If the LCR believes that LIRQI's presence would not be detrimental, we will accept the constitution of such a commission without going back on our own position.

Having said this, to make our position clear, we believe that the discussions among our various groups are now pointless and we await written proposals whether they be from LIRQI or from another of the groups involved.

Our own proposal is that, given the present state of the matter, the LCR, the Spartacist League, the Workers Socialist League and Lutte Ouvrière constitute this commission immediately and invite LIRQI and the OCI to present evidence to them.

Fraternally,
Lutte Ouvrière

STATEMENT PROPOSED BY LIRQI

The undersigned organizations, militants and individuals of the French and international workers and democratic movement met October 30, 1975, in response to an

appeal from the Ligue Internationale de Reconstruction de la IVeme Internationale (International League for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International) and from Comrade Balazs Nagy, also known as Michel Varga, a member of the International League.

They have decided to form a Workers Commission of Inquiry for the purpose of taking a position on

a. the campaign of unproved accusations launched by the leadership of the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste, according to which Comrade Balazs Nagy, a former leader of the Hungarian revolution of 1956 and the former secretary of the Petöfi Club, is an agent provocateur of the CIA and of the KGB.

b. the extension of these accusations to the International League as such, going so far as repeated physical attacks against militants of the OCI-International League Faction, especially at the time of the united demonstrations against Franco and of the diffusion before the meeting for the freedom of Soviet mathematician Leonid Plyushch, and to make its conclusions public in order to put a stop to methods contrary to workers democracy.

The basis for constituting the Commission of Inquiry is that there should be no question in the workers democratic movement of hurling accusations of such a grave nature against a revolutionary militant or an organization without proof. The Commission of Inquiry is being set up because the OCI, contrary to its claims in the various articles and brochures published under its leadership up until now, has not only provided no proof, but even worse it has launched a campaign of physical assaults. Because these accusations and attacks are carried out without proof, assuming that it is up to the accuser to furnish proof, they constitute slanders and provocations.

That is the point of departure for the work of this Commission of Inquiry. Its first action will be to summon the OCI leadership, which claims to have proof, to appear before the Commission to restore Balazs Nagy's archives and to bring forward all the documents in their possession.

Since the Commission of Inquiry is a united organ struggling for respect for workers democracy, and not a political bloc, it is open to all organizations and militants of the international workers movement, including of course militants of the OCI, and all democratic individuals on the basis it was established for. We call on them to take active part in its work which, along with its results, will be made public before the workers movement.

STATEMENT PROPOSED BY LUTTE OUVRIERE

For some time, the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste has put forward a number of accusations, asserting that Balazs Nagy, also known as Michel Varga, is an agent provocateur of the CIA and KGB, and extending these accusations to the organization Michel

Varga belongs to, the Ligue Internationale de Reconstruction de la Quatrième Internationale.

We consider such an accusation against a militant or an organization to be sufficiently grave to require the entire revolutionary movement to determine whether it is justified or not. For that reason we have decided to form a Commission of Inquiry for the purpose of inviting the OCI leadership to present us with all the proofs they claim to possess, and of asking that all those who may be able to provide evidence for a decision in this matter come and testify.

By means of a scrupulous verification of facts and documents, a verification it will make public, the Commission undertakes to prevent the establishment of a climate of accusations and mutual suspicions foreign to the revolutionary movement. In order for this verification to be accomplished with the greatest possible authority, the Commission invites all organizations claiming adherence to the revolutionary workers movement to take active part in its work.

December 20, 1975

Lutte Ouvrière

Dear Comrades,

We received your letter of November 17, 1975, concerning the organization of a commission of inquiry to look into the accusations made by the leadership of the OCI against Michel Varga and the counteraccusation made by the LIRQI against the leadership of the OCI.

Without going into the history of the attempts to organize such a commission, we would like to inform you that the SWP is ready to take part in any legitimate commission established for this purpose.

It goes without saying that neither the accused nor the accusers can participate in this commission in the capacity of judging the facts presented, but we hope that both the OCI and LIRQI leaderships will cooperate in the fullest to provide the commission with all relevant documentation and information.

In our opinion this is the only responsible way to deal with the question and eliminate the potentially serious

consequences stemming from it.

Please keep us informed about steps taken to set up the commission.

Comradely,
Barry Sheppard
For the SWP Political Committee

cc: USFI, LCR, WSL, OCI, LIRQI

14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014
January 9, 1976

Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire
Workers Socialist League
Lutte Ouvrière

Dear Comrades,

The plenum of our National Committee, meeting on January 4, decided to cooperate in the commission of inquiry into the accusations made by the leadership of the OCI against Michel Varga and the counteraccusations made by the LIRQI against the leadership of the OCI.

We have asked John Benson, Gus Horowitz and Ed Shaw to be our representatives on this commission and to do everything possible to gather, in a preliminary way, documentary material and various opinions on these matters. They will get in touch with you in the near future to discuss the organization of the commission and the exchange of information that should be available to all the members of the commission of inquiry.

We've also asked the other members of our leadership to aid the commission in any way possible when they are in Europe.

Please keep us informed as to the results of any preliminary findings.

Best comradely regards,
Barry Sheppard, for the
Political Committee
Socialist Workers Party

cc: USFI, OCI, LIRQI

D. LCR LETTER TO SWP

Brussels, January 20, 1976

To the Political Committee of the SWP

Dear Comrades,

We thought it was important to send you this letter concerning the recent trip to Paris of Comrades J.B. and M.A.W. We think, in fact, that certain problems must be raised and clarified.

Comrades J.B. and M.A.W.'s coming to France was motivated above all by the desire to assemble documentation concerning acts of violence that the OCI has been charged with recently. We made every effort to help the comrades of the SWP on this. In fact it was Comrade Dominique who suggested that they see leaders of Lutte Ouvrière for information, and who arranged the meeting with them on Friday, December 12. But we were surprised and shocked several times by the attitude of Comrades J.B. and M.A.W. For example, they expressed the desire to go to the bookstore of the OCI to purchase documents there. Comrade Dominique then asked them to wait for a decision by members of the secretariat of our Political Bureau, thinking that, given the present situation, one of our members should be sent to get the literature they wanted. Comrades J.B. and M.A.W., finding difficulty in meeting Comrade Dominique Friday morning (at the headquarters), did not wait before going to the S.L.I.O. [OCI bookstore]. But this was not the most annoying.

The meeting with the leaders of LO was organized to enable the SWP comrades to complete their files in regard to acts of violence by the OCI. Nevertheless, Comrades J.B. and M.A.W. saw fit not only to explain their attitude in relation to discussions taking place in the United Secretariat (particularly concerning possible attendance at the congress of the OCI), but they also made specific proposals to LO which had never been discussed beforehand with the leadership of the LCR.

Comrades J.B. and M.A.W. stressed at great length the

importance of the commission of inquiry which there has been an attempt to set up at the request of LIRQI and which has not yet seen the light of day due to the sectarianism of the latter. Then Comrades J.B. and M.A.W. proposed that the SWP participate in this commission of inquiry as it was, explaining the importance that this question assumed for them and the possibility of effectively putting pressure on the Lambertists to stop the acts of violence. Once they had made this proposal, the SWP comrades stressed the extreme urgency of the matter, going so far as to make an appointment for the next morning with LO at the station where they had to take their train in order to get a letter of invitation to form the commission of inquiry, even though LO had proposed to send it to them by mail. Comrades J.B. and M.A.W. also put forward the idea of organizing a political discussion with the United Secretariat, including the exchange of internal bulletins, formation of a structure appropriate to a discussion by the "Trotskyist movement," and mapping out of subjects for the discussion.

On none of these points was the leadership of the LCR or the FI consulted beforehand. For our part, we think that under present conditions it is totally incorrect to make this kind of proposal to an organization outside of our movement, and we say this without prejudging the substance of the question. We think that the attitude of the SWP comrades is all the more regrettable given the number of incidents that have already occurred in regard to the Lambertists. According to the resolutions of the United Secretariat, the most stringent correctness is called for in these relations.

Fraternal greetings,
Roman
For the Political Bureau
of the LCR

cc: United Secretariat