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DOCUMENTS FROM THE LIGA COMUNISTA OF SPAIN

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Introductory Note

The first two documents reprinted in this Internal Information Bulletin were written by leaders of the Liga Comunista in Spain (formerly the Enrucijada tendency of the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria). Along with "The Crisis of the LCR and the En Marcha Split," which is printed in International Internal Discussion Bulletin Vol. X, No. 24, November 1973, these two articles were submitted to the international pre-world congress discussion. By a divided vote the United Secretariat majority rejected publishing them in the IIDB on the grounds that each of the sympathizing organizations in Spain should be allowed to contribute only 25 pages (typed, single-spaced) to the IIDB.

The third document in this bulletin, the "Letter to the Political Bureau of the French Ligue Communiste from

the Central Committee of the Spanish Liga Comunista," was not submitted to the international discussion bulletin, but we are publishing it for the information of the SWP membership as it contains additional factual material regarding the split that took place in December 1972 in the Spanish sympathizing organization of the Fourth International.

The positions of the LCR-En Marcha are available in three documents submitted by them to the International Internal Discussion Bulletin: 1) "The Evolution of the 'Liga Comunista'"; 2) "Contribution to the Debate on the Construction of Revolutionary Parties in Capitalist Europe" and 3) "The Crisis of the LCR," resolution adopted by the Second Congress of the LCR. These will appear shortly in the IIDB.

Letter to the Comrades of the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria (Sympathizing Organization of the Fourth International)

By the Political Bureau of the Liga Comunista (Sympathizing Organization
of the Fourth International)

I. Introduction

In January of this year, a little more than a month after your split and even though you had already held your factional congress, we continued to propose *joint discussion and preparation of the Second Congress of the LCR to you*. We did not propose that you send a representative to "our" congress to discuss the split. We continued our struggle to bring to its logical conclusion the debate begun in May 1972, to get to the bottom of it by rooting out the political foundations of the entire ultraleftist orientation of the past and in this way provide the LCR with the Leninist-Trotskyist programmatic foundations that are indispensable if we are to make progress in building the revolutionary party of the proletariat.

At the time of the split the debate had begun to clarify some of the basic differences and became concrete on some tactical points only on the level of the leadership bodies. But *all the members of the organization* had the right to take part in this debate and follow it to its final conclusion. For this reason, even after the split, we continued fighting to jointly bring the discussion to its culmination by holding a democratic congress at which attendance would be *proportionally representative* of your forces and ours. In order to make this possible we renewed our proposal for a *parity commission* representing both factions which would also include a representative of each tendency in the International. The articles we presented for this congress, gathered together in the document entitled "La trama del debate," were given to you sufficiently in advance of

the congress.

You didn't answer these proposals, maintaining the same behavior that had caused the split: the use of bureaucratic methods to avoid counterposing your positions to ours in a fraternal and democratic way.

This rejection, a clear extension of earlier bureaucratic impediments to discussion, the worst of which was the split, allowed you to insulate a certain number of very valuable members from the course of the debate. But you were unable to prevent its development and culmination at the Second Congress of the LCR, which provided for our organization the principled foundations of a strategic alternative and basic tactical approach that prepare us to successfully take on the task of building the task of building the revolutionary party.

Meanwhile, you have continued to follow a path that we tried for eight months to change through internal debate between the tendencies. Today we continue the polemic, but now in the context of two different organizations, taking it up, step by step and at all levels, depending on the development of the class struggle. Yours is the road of building the party *outside* the workers and popular movement as a whole—leaving this area in the hands of reformist leadership—through activity that reflects a continuing adaptation to the pressures and vacillations of various petty-bourgeois currents dominant in the section of the vanguard that has broken with the Stalinist apparatus.

We will maintain this conclusion from now on. It is a conclusion all the more correct now that in your attempts to justify your line of intervention since the split you have

been led in some aspects to a general strategic perspective that opens the door to revision of the very fundamentals of the program of permanent revolution, to which you proclaim loyalty before the working class.

With this letter, we are merely trying to continue the fight we began in May 1972 about one basic question: the building of the revolutionary party on the basis of the method outlined in the Transitional Program.

The most effective way to pursue the polemic now is to compare the concrete manifestations of each position as they are applied to the daily events of the class struggle. The continual unfolding of worker and popular struggles in Spain provides the necessary framework for drawing the lessons and deciding which road leads forward to the building of a new leadership and to wiping out the political ideologies alien to the working class held by Stalinists, Social Democrats, and centrists.

The mass mobilizations unleashed by the assassination of Manuel Fernandez in San Adrian del Bessos, the May Day preparations and the general strike in Pamplona, not only contradicted the collaborationist orientation of the Stalinist and syndicalist leadership, they also discredited all those right- and left-centrist organizations that in the final analysis played the game of the reformist leaderships' sell-out policy in one way or another.

We feel that your intervention in these events was unable to meet the test posed by the mass struggle. We trust that in this case, one where you cannot accuse us of abstract theorizing, you will pause for reflection. In this letter we cannot take up all aspects of this matter. We are obliged to leave some, even one as important as intervention in the youth, aside for lack of space and time. We will concentrate on the general thrust of your intervention in relation to the unfolding worker and popular struggles since the end of 1972.

II. End of 1972, First Quarter of 1973: A Phase of Regeneration of the Worker and Popular Movement

Faced with the new wave of struggles set off by mobilizations against the Burgos War Councils [military trials] the dictatorship increased its repression, while anxiously trying to find a way out of the economic recession that had lasted since the middle of 1970. The chain of generalized explosions of 1971 and part of 1972 gave new urgency to these efforts by the government of big business. But, since the upsurge was one of the basic factors causing a "lack of confidence" and "uncertainty" among the factory owners, it made the success of the economic recovery measures difficult.

By the second quarter of 1972, a fragile recovery began to be seen, showing itself even more clearly after the first of May. The recovery caught on at a moment of expansionist policy on the international level and a time when the monetary crisis was papered over. At home, the "recovery" euphoria could base itself on a partial demobilization of the working-class masses in some areas—shown above all by the isolation of such struggles as the one at Cometsa and by the relative ineffectiveness of the May Day activities. This episodic dip in the struggle was essentially due to the policy of the opportunist leadership of the workers movement, above all the CP, which dis-

armed the proletariat regarding the dictatorship's labor agreements ["contracts" arranged by the fascist unions sponsored by the government—translator] once again being used to push through the "recovery" program.

The "recovery" amounted only to a few drops of oil for the machinery aimed at dividing and controlling the workers' struggles, the machinery basically being the Collective Agreements. These certainly did succeed in separating the dynamic of demands raised in some factories from those of others, isolating those showing the greatest combativity at the price of some concessions in the large centers. *But they didn't succeed in putting the brakes on the combativity of the masses, although before this combativity could again express itself through generalized action and before it could again take the form of massive battles in the streets, it would have to go through a period of the masses rebuilding confidence in their own forces and of spreading to new areas, initially in scattered forms.*

In fact, from the end of 1972 to the beginning of 1973, a broad upsurge of struggles swept the country, reaching its highest points in Barcelona, Guipuzcoa, Navarra and Asturias, while a resurgence of factory struggles began in Madrid, Sevilla, Valencia and Zaragoza. The divisive role played by the labor agreements was not able to stop this upsurge of struggles, as was shown by the generalized battles in Bessos and Pamplona.

In the same way, the dictatorship's intention to make use of the respite that the uneven tempo of the workers' struggles provided it, in order to "normalize" the universities and institutes, collided time after time with the student youth, although this reached different levels in the various university districts. The dictatorship responded to the slightest signs of mobilization by closing departments and schools, by imposing martial law in the major cities (Madrid, Barcelona, etc.). These measures confused sections of the students. But if during this term the student movement did not reach the high levels of the previous term, it was basically due to the reformist and corporatist orientations of part of its leadership, while another part of the student vanguard turned toward minority activism separate from the concerns of the masses and away from mass mobilizations.

It is important to take note of the fact that there has been a significant expansion of the high school and technical school movement in different parts of the country. And above all, we should take into account the huge nationwide mobilization of grammar school teachers, which, despite all its limitations went beyond the SEM, inasmuch as it coincided with the mobilization of other sectors of workers in the teaching field.

Thus the development of the worker and popular struggles was characterized in this period by great unevenness, varying from place to place, by a spread in agitation around demands on the factory level, and by the massive participation in struggles of long duration in large factories. Although its action was still limited to the framework of the plant as a result of the support to the dictatorship's policy of division of the reformist and syndicalist leaderships, the winning of some of the demands in the large factories reveals the failure to limit the working class's combativity. The specific factors behind the avalanche of struggles that occurred since the beginning of 1973 are the workers' confidence in their own forces

as a result of their partial victories, the erosion of wage increases by the rise in the cost of living, and dissatisfaction regarding the demands that haven't been won. This helped to stimulate sectors in small and middle-sized factories which would not have otherwise been able to resist, and it is in this framework that the mobilization of important new sectors of salaried workers took place. At the same time, the situation as a whole provided the student movement with the necessary support to remain in motion, to offer diffused but continuous resistance to the dictatorship's aggressive actions. Given this concrete conjunctural situation, this was how the passage of great proletarian batallions into generalized action was prepared, relying on the possibility not only of the enthusiastic support of the youth, but also on the enthusiastic support of other important layers of the population.

For the communists, it was a question of moving ahead in this developing struggle toward the generalization of the movement, centering agitation and propaganda around *the necessity for a joint struggle by the working class and other layers and sectors of the population, based on a line of class independence from the bourgeoisie and its dictatorship.* It was a question of *pushing forward plans of struggle around the demands raised by the workers and against the education law, all intimately linked with the struggle against repression.* It was a question of *intervening more and more deeply in this period of resurgence, projecting a class-against-class line within sectors of the masses and consolidating the elements of that kind of line within a broad vanguard that is now maturing. This is how the appearance of the new generalized explosions, on higher levels than in the past, whose development might or might not be directly tied to action around economic demands, could be prepared.*

Meanwhile, only be consciously taking into account the continuing significance of the 1971 elections, seeking and reinforcing the reflections of their impact in the actions of the masses and correcting the errors in our positions in the process, could we continue to shorten the breathing space the crisis of the left-centrist and ultraleftist groups had granted to Stalinism, and only in these ways could we prepare to capitalize on this crisis.

Nevertheless, in the face of our insistence on *the necessity of pushing forward plans of generalized struggles around specific demands of the workers and other layers and against the repression*—that is, based on our prognosis that was fundamentally confirmed by events—you counterposed a very poor prognosis how *autonomous campaigns of the organization, your organization, first around self-defense pickets, and later around memorial demonstrations, advance the generalization of the struggles at a specific time.* These were campaigns planned with no relation to the process of resurgence of the mass movement, thus leaving the field free to reformists and syndicalists during struggles the workers carried out in the factories for their basic economic demands and against the repression. Leaving the students in the hands of reformist and corporatist leaders, you choked off the mobilization of the students, forgetting the lessons and the political significance of the previous term.

In this way, while the movement was being built through an important upsurge in struggles around economic demands which affected the most diverse worker sectors, preparing the conditions for explosions of generalized strug-

gles of greater breadth than in the past, *you went around dreaming of "Ferrolozos" [explosion at Ferrol] instead of preparing them.* Not seeing anything but the "general line" of the repressive hardening of the dictatorship and the advance of the struggles toward a general strike, *you underestimated the concrete vicissitudes of this process.* Your abstract propagandistic campaigns around the generalized struggle, for self-defense, for the anniversary of Ferrol, *were only able to interest a smaller vanguard, counterposing itself to the actual advance of the mass movement in the struggle against repression, toward workers self-defense and a new Ferrol.* When the workers in different factories in Puerto Sagunto, in February of this year, unified their struggle, extended it to other sectors of the workers and, through direct action, won the support of an important portion of the population, when the imperative need was raised to extend the struggle not only to limited proletarian areas like Altos Hornos but also to the proletariat of Valencia, turning all efforts toward the generalization of the proletarian methods of struggle, what role do you think was played by your "autonomous" activity in your "commemoration of the anniversary of Ferrol" on the fringe of the movement as a whole, of its problems, and of its need to extend and generalize the struggle of the workers and the inhabitants of Puerto Sagunto? What role? And this is just one example.

In summary, your intervention throughout the months that preceded the struggles in Bessos and the general strike in Navarra can be characterized in its general features as *abstract propagandistic politicism, concretized through several minority street actions or actions by the organization's commando groups, superficially bypassing or openly placing yourselves outside the unfolding worker and popular struggles.* Has this activity, supposedly an "example" for the mass movement, prepared you better for the time when a generalized struggle against the repression actually has developed?

How, at the same time that you on the one hand dedicate a great portion of your energies to "revolutionary" actions of the vanguard, outside the context of the organized workers movement as a whole, in the Workers Commissions you are showing clear signs of adaptation to their reformist leadership. What else could be the meaning of the softening of the struggle against the dictatorship's policy of labor agreements, of the struggle for diminishing the internal control of "stewards," etc? Is there an explanation other than improved coexistence with the CP leadership? We will return to this in the concrete.

While you and the whole so-called "new far left" were showing yourselves to be absolutely unable to put forward answers to the requirements of this period, trying to cover over this impotence with sharp turns and successive opportunist adaptations on the one hand, and with "actions of the revolutionaries," on the other, and while the CP made use of the moment to strengthen its class-collaboration positions within the workers movement, positions which had many times been knocked over and bypassed by the healthy class instinct of the masses in struggle, *the workers could not stop responding to the exploitation of capitalism, and to the revival of repression of the dictatorship. They couldn't permit themselves the luxury of disregarding the most valuable lessons advanced by the mass struggles of the last years.* New sectors of the workers were brought in on the road of direct strug-

gle, the only road that can effectively defend the worker and popular demands. The struggle of the workers of San Adrian del Bessos and its spread through solidarity actions, the struggle of the workers at SEAT, La Mina, Uralita . . . the grandiose Navarra general strike, all followed the trail blazed in previous years, contributing new lessons to the constant advance of the Spanish proletariat toward a general strike that will overthrow the dictatorship.

III. But Let's Look At Your Intervention in the Bessos Struggles

Let's see what the result of your sharp encounter with the mass movement was, at the time the mass movement reached a level your general propagandistic intervention of so many months was hoping for. This encounter multiplied your confusion because, as is not strange, you could not understand the dynamic of the mobilization of the masses when it occurred.

As we have already developed in a much more detailed way in *Combate* No. 14, where we drew up a balance-sheet of the struggles in solidarity with Bessos, the present phase of the workers' and popular struggles is unceasingly accumulating the conditions that were found at the roots of the explosion in Bessos, and of the explosions that are going to come, and therefore no one can have the slightest doubt that we are entering the *period of a general strike against the murderous dictatorship*. This process takes shape at the most unexpected moment, through explosions like the one at Térmica or Motor Ibérica, points of departure for ever broader mobilizations. The scope of these explosions will of course vary in relation to many factors. (It is obvious that the impact of generalized action in little towns like Ferrol or Cerdañola don't have the same impact as those in nerve centers like Madrid or Barcelona.)

The struggle of the Central Térmica workers, the assassination of Manuel Fernandez, the solidarity mobilization on a province-wide scale in Barcelona, opened this perspective in an immediate way. It was necessary to advance toward this perspective through a *conscious effort*—all the more so since the apparatus of the dictatorship and the reformist leadership of the workers movement already had been forewarned against it. Thus, it was a question of *promoting joint actions* in the centers of work and study and in the streets aimed at *unifying and centralizing* the movements already on the march and *generalizing* them to new levels.

This motion required, at each point, that one clearly and undemagogically distinguish the tasks that rise to the level of slogans of action and measures of combat—which is different from, for instance, a general strike on a Barcelona province-wide scale, a task that remains only a perspective which will be concretized only through advances in the mass struggle.

The task of the leadership bodies of the workers movement is to know how to advance the masses toward this perspective. Instead of this, the Stalinist leadership launched demagogic chatter about a general strike that will take place through the spread of the movement in the rank and file, prepared by the workers when their assemblies should decide, without any conscious attempt at centralization. Under the cover of these arguments, which are really

those of the syndicalists, the CP-PSUC [PSUC is the CP's name in Catalonia] leadership tried to stop the advance toward a general strike. It wanted to slow down willingness to prepare the strike on the part of a broad workers vanguard that arose in the heat of the struggles and on the part of its own membership. The use of those arguments was simply phraseological cover for its very real battle against a general strike, a battle that developed according to the line laid out by the Assembly of Catalonia.

In the face of the formidable demagogy of the CP-PSUC, in the face of its refusal to take concrete steps in the direction of a general strike, Bandera Roja [centrist group] recognized the need for setting a day of struggle. But, at the same time, it felt that to advance the perspective of a general strike was "frivolous," which left Bandera Roja unable to present a clear alternative to the CP's position. Bandera Roja tended to present its proposal for a day of struggle on Friday the 6th as a "gold medal" for the struggle of those at Térmica and the corresponding solidarity actions, but not as a step toward promoting a more generalized struggle in Barcelona and its environs.

Nevertheless, on the other side of the coin, your propaganda call for a general strike Friday the 6th in Barcelona was *irresponsible vanguardist propagandism*, which in no way contributed to fighting the maneuvers of the Stalinists and their fellow-travelers (on the contrary, such a stance helps to discredit the very idea of a general strike in the eyes of the masses)..

We Marxists, who fight with all our energy to clear the road for the general strike, have a completely respectful attitude toward it. We don't play with the "idea" of a general strike: *we don't abstract it from the general context of the class struggle on the national scale*, from the dynamic that would open the advance toward general strike in areas as important as Barcelona, from the requirements that it carries with it. The general strike was not a slogan of immediate action, as you raised it. It was a slogan that had to be explicitly explained at every level of intervention *as a perspective to advance toward*. This advance required generalizing the strike movement to sectors of the proletariat, salaried layers, and other sectors of the oppressed who had not been mobilized, to stimulate the dynamic of leaving work centers in demonstration, to spread agitation in other centers of work and study, to centralize the action in the streets through open concentrations and demonstrations with sufficient preparation. Simultaneously, there was a need for work to spread the solidarity movement to the most conscious sectors of the proletariat, the youth and the oppressed masses in other parts of the country, which had hardly been started.

And, once again, to the lack of understanding of the dynamic of the mobilizations, displayed in the characterization of the specific period and in the general slogans of agitation, you added the abandonment of some concrete objectives which the LCR has tirelessly fought for and which the class struggle today puts on the agenda.

The Central Térmica workers began to struggle for their demands through massive assemblies and the election of a commission controlled by the workers as the body to negotiate their demands with the bosses, continuing the trend of the recent months which was char-

acterized by an increase in the workers lack of confidence in the deliberative commissions of the bosses, by an intensification of the process of resignation of the "stewards" of the CNS, etc. We have already indicated the importance we gave during the whole previous process of building the movement, to deepening those unequivocal signs of the fermentation of a class response to the new deepening crisis of the capitalist dictatorship which is continuing to make progress within the working masses, as the Central Térmica struggle itself showed. We have also indicated the relative softening of your attitude, along with that of all the groups in the so-called far left, in regard to the "stewards," the agreements policy Now we can confirm it in the disappearance from your propaganda and agitation of one of the fundamental slogans raised in the struggle of the Térmica workers: *the election of commissions, with binding mandate, by the assembly of all the workers as the only representative body of the workers to confront the boss.*

Instead of spreading one of the lessons of Térmica—the workers rejection of proposals to elect "stewards" from the [fascist] unions to negotiate with the boss, instead of counterposing a representative commission democratically elected and controlled by an assembly and calling for others to follow their example as one of the basic means to the advancement of unity in the workers ranks—you pass over those activities, you suppress any reference to them, allowing the PSUC faction in the Workers Commissions to give their version of the events without carrying out any battle against the PSUC's assertion that the Térmica workers fought for the election of legal representatives in the CNS [fascist unions]. Your silence only benefits the Stalinist leadership.

We sincerely believe that the *abandonment* of this slogan—including its exclusion from your "tendency platform in the Workers Commissions"—only means another step in the direction of adaptation to different aspects of the policy of the Stalinist leadership that has hegemony in the Workers Commissions, a direction that does not invalidate, as we will see, a prolongation of the leftist turn made a couple of months before the split.

The abandonment of agitation around the slogan "For the dissolution of the special repressive bodies" has the same meaning. In this case as well, the assassination of Manuel Fernandez by the forces of the Armed Police put it on the agenda. The broadest masses took it up and raised it, together with other demands, in the mobilizations in solidarity with Central Térmica. The PSUC faction in the Workers Commissions, which has constantly rejected it, *could not oppose its inclusion in the agitational leaflets of the Workers Commissions.* Of course, presented with the evidence, you did not hesitate to defend it against the reformists and to integrate it into your agitation. This can only make us happy since it expresses the rooting of and permits a greater spread of a class-against-class line. Nevertheless, in order to clarify things, we must remind you that *this had specifically been one of the concrete points of argument within the LCR.* You summarize your position on this slogan in one of the documents approved in your congress ("Class, Liga, Commissions") in the following way: "as with all transitional slogans, this one does not flow from the immediate experience of the workers movement: we revolutionary Marx-

ists have not drawn it from the masses. It is not possible to explain it outside of a process of permanent revolution and in close relation with workers militias. If we were to decide that the taking-up of this slogan by the proletariat is a presently necessary precondition for the consolidation and generalization of the workers' struggle, it would have to be part of the program. But it is very doubtful that it would be. Between the slogan, 'Police out!', which is a concrete and felt need of the class, and its 'dissolution . . . ' there is an important leap, a change in experience that it is difficult to believe the workers have already gone through." The Bessos mobilizations, only three months after your faction's congress, obliged you to re-incorporate this slogan in your agitation. And the Bessos "leap" in this regard was simply to more forcefully mold a concrete and present need of the masses, a need that has been present in their explosions of generalized struggle from Burgos until today. In conflict with your ultra-leftist arguments—in order to fight for the dissolution of the special repressive bodies one must raise the idea of militias—reality has shown the validity of the method traced in the Transitional Program: it is through the struggle of the masses *for their demands* that the proletariat and the masses will advance the level of their confrontations and the development of their instruments of struggle—among which are militias.

A final point regarding your intervention in the April mobilizations: the proposals you made *regarding the organization and centralization of the mass movement.*

The scope of the movement that was unleashed, the immense propensity of the masses to go into struggle, raised the need, which the workers' and youth vanguard deeply felt, *to unite the efforts of the different working-class factions and organizations in order to centralize, coordinate, and give new impetus to the struggles.*

Because they based themselves on this need of the movement, our comrades of the Barcelona Provincial Committee got a good hearing when they proposed *that the different Worker Commissions unify and take the initiative in coordinating the representative bodies of other sectors of the struggle, in order to push common work-stoppages, assemblies, demonstrations . . . and for their centralization in a day for general action.* Through this they directly put all the workers parties and groups on the spot.

In this situation the PSUC faction in the Workers Commissions found itself obliged to convoke the "Local Coordinator Committee of the Workers Commissions." This was attended by representatives of the "Sector Commissions" and the "Commission Platforms." [Local Coordinator, Sector, and Platforms are three separate Worker Commission—citywide—coordinating bodies controlled by Stalinist, centrist and syndicalists respectively.] Thus great numbers of direct representatives of the factory were brought together. And although a totally unified coordinating body was not established (the presence of "Sectors" and "Platforms" was only through a representative), an important step was taken in this direction. The participation of militants and representatives from faculty, undergraduates, teachers and neighborhood commissions in the sessions of the coordinating committee tended to concretize the proposal that we had made within the workers movement, the student movement, the teachers movement . . . and in our general propaganda. This proposal

was not new.

From the beginning of the year we had been waging a tireless battle for it. What was your attitude in the face of this problem?

During the first week of mobilization, your provincial organ distributed two leaflets. While the leaflets called for the masses to conduct work-stoppages, to demonstrate, to elect committees, etc., there was no mention whatsoever of the Workers Commissions. There wasn't the slightest reference to the organized working class. There wasn't even an allusion to the leaderships of the CP, the Workers Commissions, etc. You showed a left-opportunist style like the Mao-Stalinists of the PCE (I) [Communist Party of Spain (Independent)] have displayed for years. Meanwhile, the above-mentioned coordinating meeting materialized and you had to attend it.

But your presence in the coordinating committee, achieved by faked representation that was laughed at by a large part of the vanguard, only serves to remind us that during eight months of discussion, and later in your split congress, you rejected this alternative as the principal organizational form of the united front of the workers vanguard. In its place you proposed "boards" of political groups and workers organizations that would allow you to "move toward" the centrist and leftist groups outside the Workers Commissions.

The victory, though partial, under worker and popular pressure, despite the policies and interests that divide the proletariat, has not made you change your attitude.

Suddenly in a declaration entitled "Toward the General Strike," you called for overcoming *the "insufficiency" of the coordinating committee of the commissions through a coordinating body of elected committees. At that moment there was not a single elected committee in all of Barcelona.* In this way you continued the old error of the visionaries who, already in 1931, shouted in the streets of Madrid "All power to the soviets!" when there wasn't a single soviet. At that time it was the CP following the "third period" line that did this. No, comrades, it wasn't a question of counterposing ideal organizational forms to those that already exist, those that the class has already come up with. On the contrary, it was a question of using the existing forms to *advance the action of the masses* and, through this process, to stimulate the rise of superior organizational forms for leading the struggle. Through this whole dynamic, your irresponsible line showed itself clearly.

The advance in the mobilizations, the spread of the class-struggle positions among an ever larger layer of working class and youth fighters, would have required and made possible the rise of unified leadership bodies capable of democratically encompassing the totality of the masses in struggle: the committees, elected and subject to recall by assemblies, and their coordination. But this was a process that had to be concretely pushed, instead of dedicating oneself to making abstract propaganda about it.

The concrete way to confront the collaboration policy of the reformist leaderships, who have time and again rabidly opposed advancing superior forms of proletarian united front, was to strengthen the inferior forms of united front in the Workers Commissions, converting them into a coordinating center of the struggle of other sectors of

the population, cementing this unity on the basis of a line of class independence. This means converting them into *a lever for direct action and for the democratic organization of the masses*, training the proletarian vanguard in its role as leader of the struggle of all the oppressed in Spain.

In our tendency debate you aimed all your artillery against this conception of the workers commissions, counterposing to it workers commissions as organs of struggle for a platform of economic and democratic demands taken directly from the struggle for them, thus giving them a *markedly trade union* character. From this it did not surprise us that you would propose the incorporation of the political parties as such into the unified coordinating committee of the Workers Commissions and the representative bodies of the struggle of other layers. With this proposal, *you didn't aim to broaden the proletarian front* through the incorporation of sectors not represented in the Workers Commissions, inasmuch as the presence of all the political parties and organizations was guaranteed. You tried to give the coordinating committee of the commissions a "political level" that you denied to the commissions, by grafting the political parties and organizations onto it, above all by increasing the formal weight of the "new far left" in the leadership bodies of the movement, without regard to their weight in the class struggle.

Finally, *a new point of convergence with the CP's leadership.* In its Eighth Congress, the CP also abandoned the old definition of the Workers Commissions as a "politico-social movement" in order to assert that they are more "social" than "political." The process of unifying the whole vanguard in the Workers Commissions on the basis of workers' democracy and a line of class independence, with the commissions constituting themselves a center of coordination of the struggles of all the oppressed, establishing themselves at the head of the struggle of the masses to overthrow the dictatorship, *goes directly against the totality of the class collaborationist policy of the CP.* Defending the line of the "Pact for Freedom," which subordinates the proletariat to the policy of collaboration with the bourgeoisie, requires the CP to reduce the character of the commissions to a vague "social movement" in order to go from there to coordinating them with, and putting them under the leadership of, the bodies of a united front with the bourgeoisie, like the "democratic boards and coordinating committees," the "National Assemblies." The CP's battle to keep the Workers Commissions from playing a leading role finds a small, but not insignificant, supporting argument in your positions.

At a time when the CP is waging this offensive aimed at diluting the role of the Workers Commissions, conscious of the danger they pose to the policy of the pact with the bourgeoisie, your characterization of the commissions and your proposal to transfer the leadership and coordinating center of the movement to "boards" clearly suits them. You claim that through this you are advocating a greater representation for the "far left" groups. But it is the CP that takes advantage of it. It is the CP itself that, in the majority of cases, has taken the initiative in calling together "boards of socialist groups"—since this allows them to involve in action the few groups that are absent from the Assembly of Catalonia or from its democratic boards—

around specific slogans that form part of a rounded plan totally decided on and prepared in the "Organizations of the Pact." Under the direct pressure of the needs of the class struggle and reflecting in their midst the contradictions between these needs and the CP's political line, the Workers Commissions cannot easily lend themselves to the CP's game. The commissions break up the CP's gambit if they constitute themselves as the leadership and coordinating center of the struggles of other layers that the CP subordinates in its collaborationist boards and assemblies. This is what the CP leadership fears, not your "boards" which it can pull into its orbit.

IV. A Constant: Confusing the Working Class with its Leadership

In summary, the Bessos mobilizations in Barcelona have offered the clearest examples of the sell-out policy of the reformist leaderships and of the inability and ineffectiveness of the centrist alternatives to take on that policy. The CP-PSUC leadership, loyal to its pact with the bourgeois politicians of the Assembly of Catalonia, within its Eighth Congress perspective of winning over the "centrists," has betrayed the proletariat and popular masses as much as it could. The more it has had to radicalize its language and increase its spiel around the general strike as a result of the immense workers and popular mobilization, the more obstacles it has placed in the way of the concrete development of the struggle and of the necessary steps toward the general strike. First there were the obstacles placed in the way of convoking the coordinating committee of the commissions, and the sharp and explicit rejection of calling a day of struggle on the sixth. Then, when the general strike in Cerdañola and the struggle in numerous plants in Bajo Llobregat broke out on the sixth despite its efforts, it used all the means at its disposal to move the struggle back into the bureaucratic fascist channels of the dictatorship: calling actions in order to pressure the negotiating commission of the Provincial Pact in the construction industry and utilizing the movement to pressure sectors of the bourgeoisie and church. This did not prevent it from being forced, under the pressure of Bajo Llobregat and Cerdañola, to accept, at least in the coordinating committee, the calling of a general day of struggle for the eleventh. That was when the CP moved to a more open and shameless boycott of this day of action. The branches of the factory commissions where the CP has hegemony silenced the call, as did the National Commission of Catalonia, and the CP's own propaganda apparatus, abandoning the mass movement to its own devices after the call was already issued.

In this way, while the CP was carrying out a *very concrete* plan to liquidate the possibilities opened up by the large mass mobilization, what good was served by the blustering, without a base in the factories, that you carried on in the coordinating committee, making great proclamations about the general strike, while simultaneously scorning the concrete process by which the masses advance toward it, two basic elements having been the bypassing of the dictatorship's legal channels and the strengthening of the independent organization of the proletariat?

While the CP was using all its efforts to subject the

mass movement to the needs imposed by its policy of collaboration with "progressive" sectors of the bourgeoisie, the church and the army, hoping to subordinate the commissions to the organizations in the "Pact," hoping to place them under its leadership, what good were your general proclamations about creating coordinating bodies of elected committees and your opposition to the existing commissions taking on the tasks of a center for advancing and leading the generalized struggle of the proletariat and other layers, assigning this task to phantom "boards"?

In fact, you dedicated yourself to *covering up, with beautiful general "Trotskyist" phrases, the very concrete betrayals of the CP leadership's policy, abandoning this area of struggle until a better time.* You end up saying in your declaration that the CP's attitude to the sixth had been "vacillating" (!). Comrades, call things by their right name. Trotskyists never call betrayals vacillations. You can't really believe that the CP betrayals are vacillations, that its counterevolutionary policy is a contradictory policy. In another part of the same declaration you go on to assert that the commission at Central Tèrmica (a commission under the hegemony of the CP) carried out a class struggle line. . . . This is normal, it completely corresponds to the whole methodology of your thinking. You find yourself faced with the fact that in an area where the reformist positions dominate, at Tèrmica, a struggle takes place which you, like us, classify as exemplary. But as you have said many times, the spontaneity of the working class in our country, while in contradiction to communism, is not in contradiction to Stalinism and syndicalism. Conclusion: you have no choice but to pretend that the struggle at Central Tèrmica was led by a commission that had a class-against-class line.

Here we have a very concrete example of *your complete inability to understand the dynamic of the mobilization of the masses, the relationship with its consciously liquidationist leadership—in this case the CP—and the contradictions that this relationship creates within the workers organizations between rank-and-file militants and their leadership.* Here we have an example of *your complete inability to understand the revolutionary united front policy.* Here we have the basis for the *constant opportunist and sectarian swings in your policy.*

The impact of the struggle at Central Tèrmica expressed through the united and open commission is one example of the mobilizing value of those bodies, and of their necessity, through which the longing for unity and the profound combativity of the working class will flower. That's why, especially when this combativity comes to the surface, *despite* the predominance of the reformist leaders, a united commission can take important steps in pushing the struggle forward, as happened at Bessos. The beginning of combat can only strengthen the unity of the class, the confidence of the workers in their own forces, enabling them to break with the structure of the CNS—in spite of the orientation of the reformist leaders who urged the election of [fascist controlled CNS] union stewards—in order to resist the attacks of the armed police, massively taking up the defense of their struggle, *despite* the good pacifist advice of their reformist leaders. And all this could only broaden and consolidate the class-struggle positions within the commission, among the very fight-

ers who are under the influence of the CP or belong to it, increasing the contradictions between them and their leadership. And this dynamic that was in effect at Central Térmica, as previously at SEAT or at La Bazan, was repeated on a much greater scale during the explosion of generalized struggles, in the mobilizations in solidarity with Bessos, SEAT, in the general strike in Ferrol.

Understanding this dynamic is the precondition for an intervention toward the masses based on a revolutionary orientation through which ever larger layers of vanguard fighters will be won to the class-struggle positions, through which the best of them will be attracted to the Trotskyist line and organization, through which the positions of class collaboration will be driven from the workers movement, and through which we will win, step by step, our right to leadership.

On the other hand, failure to understand this dynamic, to *identify the mass movement with its leaderships and the leaderships with the rank-and-file*, can only lead you to prettify the sell-out leaderships. One example is the recent description of the CP's policy as "vacillating." It can only lead to opportunist capitulatory attitudes toward them on the one hand, or to sectarian attitudes toward a great number of fighters who still have confidence in the reformist leaderships and who will only discover their traitorous character in the experience of the struggle itself. Only through the struggle will these fighters understand that the alternative we propose is the only one capable of defending their interests until definitive victory over the class enemy. The promotion of "exemplary" actions outside the framework of the movement as a whole, the abandonment of the central body of the commissions to the CP, are good examples of the second case. Jumping back and forth between the two attitudes, or combining both of them, is your most characteristic trait. We have already seen this, and it will be repeated as long as you do not understand that if you really want to build the party, nothing will help you more than assimilating the Transitional Program that you have rejected.

V. New Forms of the 'Initiatives in Action' Policy

The magnitude of the CP leadership's betrayal was the main reason for the relative failure of the action on the eleventh, and for the progressive break-up of the movement before it had exhausted its full potential. The reaction of a broad layer of vanguard fighters who are open to class-struggle alternatives was in large part deflected by the positions of the right- and left-centrist organizations, making them incapable of taking on the liquidationist line of the CP-PSUC leadership. Thus, if the great scope of the mass movement had forced the creation of an embryo of coordination of the workers movement in Barcelona, the CP-PSUC's policy destroyed it by betraying the clear and immediate needs of the masses. The "Platform Commissions" were the first stop attending the meetings of the "Local," and were followed by the "Sector Commissions." This dynamic was felt within the Local Workers Commissions themselves, in which the different groups of the so-called "far left" tended to abandon the central coordination in order to concentrate on the organization and coordination of their own sphere of influence in geographic areas, outside the sphere of the reformist leader-

ship. Those are the perspectives that are deduced from "your" balance sheet of Bessos. This separation is expressed first in the preparation of the actions around May Day in Barcelona. The PCI and the MCE called the shots on this occasion. You were left to be dragged along by the plans of the "far left," entirely abandoning an important portion of the fighters in the Workers Commissions because they still have confidence in the leadership of the PSUC or still have not decided to abandon it, leaving the PSUC faction in the commissions with a free hand to consolidate their betrayal of the Bessos struggles, to put the final rivet in its work of liquidating the independent movement of the masses, and openly place the movement, which had already begun its ebb, under the leadership of the "progressive" bourgeois figures and bishops through the pact with them in the Assembly of Catalonia. But meanwhile the working class showed that it was not willing to lower its combativity one iota. On April 27 the work stoppages at SEAT began, following dismissals by the bosses. There were wildcat actions and workers assemblies in the workshops, then a total stoppage . . . police surrounded and occupied the factory and it closed on the thirtieth. At the same time the first actions of Hispano Olivetti, the gestation of the struggle at Papalera Española took place.

The leaders of the CP didn't lift a finger to convoke the Workers Commission at SEAT so that it could organize the struggle that had begun. On the thirtieth its fraction in the Local coordinating committee of the Workers Commissions made it quite clear that the only thing the committee needed to consider was its total support to, and preparations for the Assembly of Catalonia's meeting in San Cugat to commemorate May Day.

After Bessos, the workers' struggle made new advances in SEAT, Papalera, Hispano. It showed that the unity of all the vanguard fighters on the factory, branch, local level . . . could not be something that is postponed until the days of generalized struggle, but rather had to be permanently in force, preparing and giving a character to each one of the battles within a plan of struggle of the whole class that is accepted in a united way. Concretely, the necessity was raised of bringing together the SEAT workers by neighborhoods after the closing of the factory as was the need to spread solidarity activities and expand the struggle to other factories and sectors of the population, centralizing this entire effort in the preparation of a *central action in the streets . . . for SEAT, Hispano . . . against the dictatorship, giving this May Day a class-struggle content.*

The CP answered these needs by abandoning the struggle in the factories, in the universities, in the schools . . . in the streets, and throwing all its efforts into preparing a fraternization-of-classes May Day.

This provoked a strong and healthy reaction among numerous fighters, some of whom were involved in many of the April battles, against the policy of the reformist leadership. The "far left" could have capitalized on this development. But confusion and bewilderment had increased among these groups after the Bessos struggles as a result of their lack of a clear alternative for the needs of the mass movement and of their continual vacillations in the face of the CP's policy. The mass struggle went through a period of extreme difficulty giving rise

to a sectarian tendency, more or less acute depending on the situation, with respect to the whole of the organized workers movement. One of its manifestations was the call, by the PCEI and MCE, for a demonstration for May Day, which you yourselves recognized was "explicitly opposed to unity."

On the afternoon of May Day, 8,000 people answered the CP's call and met in San Cugat to hear the reading of a letter from the bishops of Catalonia. But the CP was not able to stop the workers and youth, who days before had closed the factories and confronted the forces of the police in the streets, from adding a postscript to the bishops' sermon "against all types of violence," by hurling bread wrappers and shouting class-struggle slogans. Nor did the police pay any attention to the chants for pacifism, nor did they respect their "accords" with the reformists not to intervene if they vacated the area rapidly and in an orderly manner. At the same time, in Hospitalet, 3,500 fighters demonstrated in response to the call of the PCEI-MCE.

What was your attitude toward the new situation of the worker and popular movement in Barcelona? Toward the SEAT struggle and the preparations for May Day? Toward the San Cugat meeting called by the Assembly of Catalonia?

In the first place, what stands out in your proposals is the absolute lack of connection between the development of the struggles in the factories, schools, etc., especially at SEAT, with the actions commemorating May Day in the streets, when the success of one depended completely on the success of the other. Clearly your proposal for minority demonstrations in the streets did not depend—at least in an immediate way—on the actions in the centers of work and study.

But the PCEI and MCE got ahead of you in calling a demonstration, outside the mass movement and "explicitly against unity." And you gave it, logically, all your support. The purpose was, as you explained in *Combate*, to extend it to include the entire "far left." Consistent with this, you did not propose it in the Workers Commissions, but rather called for the formation of a board of political groups, a board of the "far left" to prepare it, at the same time that you criticized the PCEI and MCE for "sectarianism" against other "revolutionary groups." Undoubtedly you thought that in this way the "exemplary" impact of this demonstration would be greater on the entire workers movement, and especially on the sectors that were that day, as a result of the CP's call, in San Cugat.

You presented the reasons for adopting this position better than anyone else in the issue of *Combate*. There you said, "Since the reformists had mass support for their public meeting, the struggle had to take other roads," roads marked by minority actions in the streets.

Broken down a little more, this reasoning seems to say: important sectors of the workers and youth are still under reformist leadership. They respond to the reformists' calls, participate in their meetings. Those workers and youth are mistaken. One must show them that they are being tricked by the reformist leaderships. One must show them in practice the real road of struggle. How? By supporting actions with a revolutionary content counterposed to actions with a reformist content. It is the revolution-

aries who have to assume this responsibility. At first it would appear that it is a question of actions called only by your organization. But no. It turns out that the concept "revolutionary organization" covers all groups to the left of the CP. Moreover, this makes it possible to broaden the "revolutionary action" and its "exemplary" value by including layers of the young worker and student vanguard that have "broken" with reformism and have a skeletal organizational form in the "far left" organizations as a whole.

Did you really think that this exemplary initiative was an alternative for the struggle of the workers at SEAT, at Hispano . . . ? Did you think that in this way vanguard workers who still have confidence in or follow the lead of the old leaderships would be shown which road to follow? Furthermore, did you think that in this way you could win to the Trotskyist program those fighters who through their own experience have broken at least partially with a class-collaboration line, when what you did was to adapt yourself to the deformations of the centrist groups that have part of this vanguard under their organizational control?

The proposal of our comrades [LC] in the Workers Commissions in the Barcelona Province was based on giving priority to the alternatives that answered the needs of the struggle the working class was carrying out in the factories—especially in SEAT, since its development was decisive for the whole movement in Barcelona—tying it closely to the proposal of actions in the streets. It is because of their hard work that the meeting of the SEAT commission on May Day, the first meeting since the beginning of the struggle, took place. And the development of the first plans to organize by calling meetings of the most conscious workers in the neighborhoods with the aim of preparing the broadest possible assemblies was also our contribution. Regarding the meeting at San Cugat called by the Assembly of Catalonia, we proposed sending a workers delegation to explain the situation and to propose plans of concrete struggle that were needed to advance the on-going struggles, while at the same time denouncing the collaborationist meeting taking place there, explaining its significance, and effects on the struggles. Regarding the demonstration called by the PCEI and MCE, outside the framework of the workers movement, our comrades did not have the slightest opportunity to discuss it, any more than the commissions did.

May Day passed, but the struggle continued. SEAT closed. Hispano continued. Iberia prepared itself for the struggle. Our comrades' proposal for neighborhood meetings met with success in Santa Coloma, San Adrian, and Hospitalet, bringing together the scattered SEAT workers to prepare and continue the battle. At these meetings worker picket squads were organized to spread the struggle to Hispano, to la Mina. . . . Against this "huge and not very productive task of organizing those workers who could be gathered together in the neighborhoods," you proposed the "meeting of the vanguard by zones," with the perspective, according to the declaration of one of your leaders, of organizing and coordinating the Workers Commissions by zones.

Leaving, for a moment, the divisionist aspect of this perspective for the commissions (organized by branches), what real purpose would zone meetings serve? As to your

participation, we are aware only of one leaflet—which caused quite a commotion in Barcelona—signed "SEAT Comision Obrera" [SEAT Workers Commission]. We suppose that such a crude *falsification* had the aim of giving a "mass thrust" to the "initiatives of the vanguard" unconnected with the efforts of the majority of the workers in the commissions. Falsified leaflets, fraudulent representatives in the Workers Commissions: this is the summary of your attitude toward the workers movement.

Thus, while in *Combate* No. 16 you deceitfully recognized the failure of zone meetings, the conclusions you drew tended to justify the basis of this activity: an orientation thought out in relation to the interests of the vanguard and not of the masses. This is your balance-sheet: "In general, the *far left* did not understand the importance of these assemblies of the commissions. The clearest example of this lack of understanding was provided by the *Encrucijada* group, which refused to support them because of the need for 'mass assemblies in the neighborhoods to give political orientation to the SEAT workers.' Such an alternative did not have, *in the concrete*, even the slightest possibility of being realized, as was shown in practice. In contrast, the Workers Commissions assemblies were the only meetings of workers that took place on the Sunday of solidarity with SEAT. Thus, the real choice consisted of deciding how one supports the SEAT struggle, with beautiful, unrealizable, slogans or with effective 'minority' meetings?" (*Combate*, No. 16, p. 25)

We leave aside the distortion that tries to maintain that the efforts of our members and of other fighters had no positive effect. The choice is not posed in those terms. The choice is posed between *a political orientation based on the material conditions and the pressing demands of the masses flowing from these conditions, coalescing the vanguard around these demands in order to win them, or, a political orientation defined in relation to the interests of the "new vanguard" which you want to win and existing outside the unfolding workers movement as a whole*, an orientation that leads you time and again to adapt yourselves to the "concerns of this new vanguard" and of the centrist organizations of every type that form its core. Your intervention in the Navarra general strike is another vivid example of this.

VI. What Were the Results of Your Intervention in the Pamplona General Strike?

The general orientation of your intervention in the Pamplona general strike was the same as in Bessos. The difference being that you had the possibility of putting your proposals into practice due to your important base in the ETA VI (majority) in this area's factories.

Since the end of 1972, the leadership of this organization moved toward the French section of the Fourth International and adopted the essence of your political positions in Spain. In line with these positions ETA VI has built around itself a "permanent tendency" in the workers movement based on a minimum 8-point platform.

For a long time the attitude of this tendency to the Workers Commissions in Pamplona was to limit itself to making proposals for struggle and waiting for a response from the secretariat of the coordinating committee (with

ORT hegemony) [left split-off from Catholic syndicalist], without ever forcing its compliance by carrying these proposals into practice where the tendency was strong. This type of activity, exerting "parasitic pressure" on the leaderships was the direct result of your opportunist concept of the "discipline within the Workers Commissions." Nothing could be done if it was not agreed to by the majority of the Workers Commissions. This type of practice could only end up making the great majority of the active militants around ETA feel revulsion toward the commissions. It encouraged a tendency toward ever greater separation from the organized workers movement, a tendency that was basic to the dynamic of your intervention.

With the outburst of the Motor Ibérica struggle, and the first appearance of solidarity activities, numerous working-class fighters, among them our [LC] comrades, raised the need for the commissions to centralize the work of advancing mass action. Nevertheless, the leadership that had hegemony in the Secretariat, the ORT, refused to undertake this task, repeating the broken record, "conditions aren't ripe." Faced with this situation the ETA VI leadership's attitude was to separate itself from the Workers Commissions in order to begin to build *its own groups* in the factories—the "*committees to support Motor Ibérica*"—in an effort to convert itself into the leader of the ranks of the "non-reformist" vanguard. We don't hesitate to call this plan an ultraleft aberration.

In this way, while our comrades proposed a concrete plan of struggle in various Workers Commissions, a part of which was the calling of a general day of struggle for June 9 (a proposal made a week and a half before the explosion of the struggle all over Pamplona on June 14). While they fought for this proposal's acceptance, the ETA VI comrades dedicated themselves to setting up *their own support committees* and proclaimed themselves the "temporary coordinating committee of the Workers Commissions." Against the rest of the class, they built their sand castle as a "pole of reference" and an "example" of what should then have been done. As they themselves have said, it was a question of "showing the validity of the revolutionary political line."

Of course the coordinating committee and the secretariat of the Workers Commissions did not fulfill the needs raised by the mass movement. Nevertheless, this coordinating committee of the commissions included numerous workers willing to fight and to organize their struggle. In the face of a "nonfunctioning" coordinating committee, in the face of a leadership that does not lead but rather betrays, the task was not to separate oneself from the Workers Commissions in order to build another coordinating body from the outside, even if it was expected to have a "temporary" character. This was to abandon self-sacrificing fighters and the Workers Commissions themselves to the bureaucratic leadership of the ORT, now with a much freer hand to contain the movement. In this sense, *your support committees were an aid to the ORT leadership.*

The same thing happened on the factory level. At Imenasa, during the whole period of the conflict, *two separate commissions* existed, one of them led by the ETA VI comrades. They should have been the first to support a policy of unifying the two commissions and through this point out to the new fighters within the commissions, and to all the workers at Imenasa, the inepti-

tude of the leaders who followed the ultra-opportunist ORT orientation, placing before them a class-struggle line, fighting in this manner to win the right to leadership. The error of the ETA VI comrades was to confuse the workers organized in the commissions with the leadership of this or that political group. This is a grave error.

Building support committees outside the commissions helped to open a deep breach in proletarian unity at the time when it was more necessary than ever for the development of the struggle. Such excuses as calling this a "prior step" in order to later strengthen the commissions are not valid. It is during the struggle that unity is achieved. That is when the workers can most completely see the bankruptcy of a political orientation and a leadership like the ORT. It is through this process that many of the newly-involved fighters (whose first impulse is to look to the commissions) or sectors that have up to now had confidence in their leadership will adhere to class-struggle positions because they, not the other positions, correspond to the needs of the mass struggle. It is through this process that we communists will win our right to leadership while we attract the most decisive and devoted fighters to our ranks.

With the spread of the struggle to all Pamplona, evidence of the uselessness of the "support committees" also spread, and little by little they were integrated into the Workers Commissions.

At this time, when the movement embraced thousands of workers organized by assemblies, what was needed was the election of strike committees from the assemblies and subject to recall by the assemblies. This the comrades of the ETA VI, and with them all the Imenasa and Esteban workers, understood. To the extent that the appearance of elected strike committees was generalized, it was necessary for them to meet together and to coordinate their activity with other similar bodies that arose in the struggles of other layers and classes in the population. But even if this generalization were not to take place—and it didn't take place—it was especially necessary for the existing elected committees to coordinate their activity with the Workers Commissions in those factories that did not have elected committees in order to spread their example. But even in this situation the comrades influenced by ETA VI, some of their most committed defenders and supporters, were unable to disengage themselves from the exemplarist orientation that had dominated their whole previous intervention, and that you had instilled in them.

Thus, these elected committees were counterposed to the Workers Commissions. They were presented as a grandiose and isolated example for the rest of the working class to imitate. These comrades wanted to "show the validity of the revolutionary political line" while locked in their ivory tower. Meanwhile, the leaderships of the ORT and CP tied up the struggle of the rest of the workers and the population, bringing it back into the dictatorship's channels and in this way preparing its liquidation.

The four-day general strike was a great working-class victory. It showed the failure of all the measures of the bosses and dictatorship from the CNS to its repressive apparatus, to contain and divide the workers. It also pointed up the failure and inability of their agents within the workers movement, and the organizations they control, to contain the struggle.

For the first time since the strikes in the mines in Asturias in 1962, the bourgeoisie was obliged to negotiate with the direct representatives of the workers, not with the CNS "stewards." To accomplish this a meeting was arranged in the CNS headquarters. The workers' representatives from Imenasa and Esteban, following the directives of ETA VI, refused to attend, giving the ultra-left argument that "it was incorrect to have a meeting in the headquarters of the fascist union." Once again, their absence only succeeded in weakening the positions of the workers' representatives who defended a class-struggle line against the bosses and the CNS betrayals. In spite of everything, the Navarra bosses got nothing out of this meeting. The class-struggle positions prevailed.

But the bosses returned to the offensive and called a second meeting. With the somersaults and vacillations we have already become accustomed to in your intervention, Imenasa and Esteban decided to attend the meeting this time. The leadership of the ORT wanted to end the struggle, saying "the masses are already tired," lining themselves up with the bosses' proposals. The ultra-opportunist line of the ORT was the main reason the victory was not more complete. Given the ORT line, the comrades influenced by ETA VI were absolutely unable to counterpose a program of general struggle for the whole Navarra working class.

Imenasa and Esteban, together with other factories where elected committees existed, were the last to end the strike and return to "normal" relations with the bosses. They provided an indicator of the Navarra proletariat's immense propensity to fight. Nevertheless, their isolation forced them to stop. Perhaps it would have pleased you more if they had continued their struggle, pointing out by themselves the road the rest of the working class and the oppressed should take. Their "example" would have been more complete. The consequences of such an orientation would have been also.

VII. An Impulse on the Road of Violent Minority Actions

Your lack of a general perspective with a concrete class united-front strategic line, to take on the "Pact for Freedom" line point by point, has been shown by the consolidation of a line of intervention based on partial, empirical responses, tail-ending each important event in the class struggle, responses which in the majority of cases are reduced to a series of minority actions with each surpassing the next in its degree of hysterics.

All have been governed by the idea, to which we will return, of the "dialectical connection between violent minority actions and mass violence," by the necessity of "showing the backward masses in practice" the need to arm themselves.

In some cases, while you have dedicated yourselves to mounting "exemplary violent actions," you abandoned the job of preparing the vanguard fighters to take on the tasks of self-defense within the mass movement, to take the initiative in forming picket squads to protect assemblies, street actions, etc. Instead of taking on the vanguard role that suits communists within the mass struggles, you have expected the masses to spontaneously follow your example. You have left the field open to the CP, which, much pleased, has imposed its pacifist line

on the workers movement. As the Central Térmica resistance and Pamplona barricades showed, it was the mass movement itself, despite all its existing limitations in this field, despite the legalistic and pacifistic line of its leadership, that has manifested a great propensity to defend its struggles in the face of attacks by the police-repressive apparatus of the dictatorship. It is precisely the vanguard, of which we Trotskyists form a part, that has shown its inability to organize mass self-defense as compared with the masses' "spontaneously" organized resistance of the recent period.

In other cases, your actions hardly coincide with the unfolding mass struggle. In general, they are an impatient response to an attack by the dictatorship by a handful of revolutionary militants who can't "wait" and who give up preparation of a mass response.

We will review a few of these actions.

Solidarity with Pamplona

At a meeting of the Local Workers Commission of Barcelona, in the midst of the Pamplona general strike and within three days of the SEAT fighters' trials, you proposed to "do something" in solidarity with Pamplona. You totally "forgot" about the SEAT trials and about the existing local conflicts, which would give greater breadth to a demonstration of solidarity with the struggle of the Navarra workers by tying in the struggle of the Catalan proletariat for its own demands and against the repression. On Monday the 18th, "a commando group of LCR militants attacked the Motor Ibérica warehouse in Pueblo Nuevo, burning eight *new* tractors on display there with molotov cocktails" . . . "was published by the whole bourgeois press" (note that appeared in your *Combate*, No. 17, our emphasis). The following day you promoted your own demonstration of unity in action with the "Bolshevik Leninist faction" attended by 60 comrades. On the twenty-third there was another similar meeting in Can Oriach, Sabadell.

How marvelous! Without doubt you continued to be compelled to show that you were the "most dynamic and the most active" on the "far left," compelled because the bourgeois press would give "publicity" to your "publicity stunts." Meanwhile, you abandoned the activity against the SEAT trials which culminated with 400 workers gathered and in front of the Labor Magistrate's offices, where our comrades carried off a demonstration that quickly went beyond the pacifism the CP would have liked to impose on it.

May Day in Madrid: taking a position regarding the FRAP action.

An action carried out by a picket squad defending a FRAP demonstration led to the death of a gangster of the Brigado Político Social (Político-Social Brigade) last May Day. Repercussions of this provoked a broad debate between the different working-class organizations and parties. Let's look at your balance-sheet of the action: "The criticisms we make relate to two fundamental aspects: on the one hand to the sectarian conception that FRAP has upheld of the demonstration itself, and on the other, to the type of technical armament used by the self-de-

fense pickets. With respect to the first point, this demonstration was one more example of the *sectarian character of the relations FRAP has with the workers vanguard and the far-left groups in general*. It is this sectarian policy, principally with respect to the Workers Commissions, that led the FRAP to issue a minority call for the May Day demonstration that, in the face of the police grip on the city, left its militants unable to make a *political* response to the repression that could come down on them.

"With respect to the second point, the fact that part of the technical armament utilized by the defense pickets (such as, for example, razors and knives) would have been more appropriate for individual defense than for the protection of a demonstration, can indicate an erroneous concept of practical methods for mass self-defense. In the latter case the objective is to guarantee the demonstration's ability to come together in a mass, to force the police to retreat and to prevent arrests, not to seek an *individual* confrontation with them. We don't deny the possibility of utilizing weapons for individual defense in the propaganda picket activity or in exemplary vanguard actions. However, we believe that in a public demonstration, and taking into account the movement's ability to understand at the present stage, the far left must advance and spread the use of armaments of the type used in the 1972 action by the LCR and other groups, the type of armaments used in the vanguard demonstrations in Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia this year: —despite their inadequacies which we must overcome." (*Combate*, No. 16, p. 13) Comrades of En Marcha! You are letting other "far-left" groups get ahead of you!

Since, because of your position on the violent actions of a minority, you are unable to make a political criticism of the organizations that at present favor the most spectacular "electrifying actions," you accept, in the manner of a lackey, the work of good "technical consultants" to Mao-Stalinist sects like the CP(ML)-FRAP.

The position of our comrades in Madrid was very different. As they explained in a local declaration, the fundamental criticism to make of the comrades of the CP(ML)-FRAP was not a criticism of their "sectarianism" against "the workers vanguard and the far-left groups in general." This would lead one to believe that a demonstration in which all the groups of the far left participated, thus broadening the radius and the effect of the exemplary action, would have been correct. Nor should it be a criticism of the type of arms used.

The criticism to be made, our comrades said, was: "above all by neglecting the tasks that would make a demonstration of this type possible, you turn your backs on the needs of the workers and oppressed whom you claim to defend." "Centralized demonstrations — publicly called — are a necessary part of the political-organizational building of a day of generalized struggle: a unified and centralized plan for written agitation; the prolongation of the combatative thrust of the factories and quarries, carrying on a discussion about the objectives, forms of struggle, and organization of the movement in the workers assemblies; regular functioning of the factory commissions holding broad meetings and assemblies, organizing stoppages and walk-outs in well-thought-out demonstrations, dividing the responsibilities for organization and for the preparation of self-defense among the different

forces represented in the coordinating committee of the commissions and similar bodies "

Actions against the dissolution of the Ligue Communiste (French Section of the Fourth International)

Against the attack of the French bourgeoisie and its government against the French Trotskyist organization, the Ligue Communiste, an attack against the whole workers movement and against the whole oppressed population, you cried: "It will not go unanswered." So you decided to throw stones at two offices of Credit Lyonnais, feeling satisfaction at having complied with your "internationalist" responsibilities.

You criticized us, in *Combate* No. 17, for our refusal to "participate in a common plan of actions against French centers and institutions (. . .) as well as to sign a joint communique of the two organizations."

Let's take this point by point. Certainly, we refused, and we will continue to refuse, to participate in "plans of action" like the one proposed (two molotov cocktails at the Credit Lyonnais), because we thought and we still think that these are not the kind of actions required by internationalist solidarity with the ex-Ligue Communiste, with the French working class and people. We thought, and we still think, that this attack by the French bourgeoisie against democratic rights required and made possible a defense of these rights by the Spanish workers movement, which has itself suffered so much from the consequences of fascism. We thought and we think that the solidarity of the Spanish workers movement could be aroused "by linking it directly with *the fight against the dictatorship and the governments like the French government that support it*. The French government has detained many revolutionary and anti-Franco militants and organizations who sought refuge in France, even delivering them to the Spanish police. It has also recently declared the ETA illegal in France. *Such a campaign cannot be separated from the defense of the thousands of emigrant compañeros working in other capitalist countries*, for whom this new attack is another addition to a whole body of ultrareactionary legislation to which they are subjected." The dissolution of the Ligue Communiste did not affect only Trotskyists, it affected the entire Spanish workers movement. Therefore we made an appeal to all workers organizations, especially the Workers Commissions, to express their solidarity with the emigrant workers, with the French workers movement, and with the Ligue Communiste. We also carried on propaganda and explanatory activity in the work and study centers. This work of promoting solidarity within the workers movement would undoubtedly have had a greater effect in practice than it had (speak-outs, broad meetings, etc.) if you joined with us and other vanguard fighters instead of walking away to carry out "symbolic actions."

Secondly, a clarification. We never refused to sign a joint communique. On the contrary, we were even ready to sign the one you presented to us. We simply asked to include *three* modifications. Two involved adding emphasis on the *danger* implied by the French government's measures *for the entire worker and popular movement* and the need to *develop a broad mass response to fight against it*. The third referred to the slogan "For the Socialist

United States of Europe." You limited this slogan to the capitalist countries of Europe. We asked that it be broadened to include the *bureaucratically degenerated workers states*. (It is notable how this "limitation" is a consistent error.) You refused to accept these, while you corrected on your own the third proposed modification in the leaflet.

The basic thing, nonetheless, is the tendency in your interventions as a whole to geometrically increase violent minority actions. And with time this recurrent practice has risen more and more to the level of a political line for your organization. The article entitled "Self-Defense and Revolutionary Violence in the Twilight of Francoism," an article in *Combate* No. 16, which we are including as an appendix, offers as of today the most finished presentation on this subject. It deserves to be treated in a separate chapter.

VIII. Your 'Right to Violence'

The opening paragraph of your article "Self-Defense and Revolutionary Violence . . ." reads: "The worker and mass struggles that have unfolded since Burgos, the actions of ETA V in Euzkadi [Basque area], the 'Hammer and Sickle Collective's' action in Zaragoza last November, the execution of a 'social' [member of the Political Police] in Madrid' this May Day, are all different manifestations of the characteristics that the confrontation between classes is taking on in the period of the twilight of Francoism."

After we got over our first indignation caused by reading this, a great doubt seized us. How is it possible that militants claiming adherence to historical materialism can so happily mix together the actions of the workers and other layers of the population in Burgos, Ferrol, SEAT, or Bessos, the whole body of experiences and advances they have assumed on all planes, including self-defense, with the *petty-bourgeois terrorist* actions of the ETA V, "Hammer and Sickle Collective," or FRAP?

There is *not a single common feature* between the kidnapping of Huarte or the blowing up of the French embassy in Zaragoza by tiny groups of nationalist or radicalized student militants, and the confrontations of the Bessos workers with the police or the attack on the Armed Police's jail by masses of workers in Bazan or Ferrol. So why this amalgam? Why introduce confusion? We find only one answer: the need to justify your thesis on violent minority actions having nothing to do with the unfolding mass movement or its needs, nor with preparing the masses for the decisive confrontations with the bourgeois state.

Your line of reasoning is very simple. Unfortunately it has nothing to do with Marx's method. It is reduced to the following: the masses will not be able to confront the increasingly hard repression of the dictatorship, unless the "new vanguard" defines and begins to put into practice a line of armed struggle against the Francoist repressive apparatus. And this in turn depends on you, "the most advanced segment of the new vanguard," showing the vanguard in practice the validity of this orientation by taking the initiative in carrying out actions.

We cite your documents: "The preparation of the new vanguard for new battles, the need to combine the spontaneity of the movement and conscious organization of

its struggle, not only make it possible, but require, that its most advanced segment adopt a firm policy in order to be able to hasten the explosion of the prerevolutionary crisis that will put the destruction of the bourgeois state on the agenda. In this sense, *far from counterposing 'minority violence' to mass violence, the former is a precondition, always in relation to the experiences of the movement, which makes certain that the movement will take it up in practice.*" (Emphasis added.)

Do you really believe that multiple examples of violent actions, armed or unarmed, of a minority have assumed the role not only of a "precondition," but also of an aid for the advance of the movement, for raising the level of consciousness, organization, and defense of the masses in the fact of the dictatorship's repressive blows?

We are not going to refer to your "violent initiatives" since, as of this day, despite your being the "most advanced segment of the 'new vanguard'" they have not gone beyond four broken windows or eight gasoline-scorched tractors. Nor have they had a greater repercussion than your dearly beloved publicity notice in some newspaper.

It is interesting, on the other hand, to ponder the significance for the mass movement of actions like the kidnappings of Zabala and Huarte, carried out by ETA V commandos with the expressed desire of linking them to the struggle of the Precontrol and Torfinasa workers respectively. In each case, the kidnapping at first resulted in the granting of workers demands. But, also in both cases, as soon as the boss was freed, the workers saw the demands they had obtained taken back from them and their leaders arrested, without making the slightest gesture to prevent it, *although they had been fighting for those demands for months.*

This type of action, besides aiming the entire repressive apparatus of the dictatorship at a particular struggle, does not lead to a greater acceptance of direct combat methods and mass resistance *because the masses develop only through their own experience, not by contemplating the exploits of brave militants.* Despite the wide popularity and sympathy which greeted the ETA V actions in the Basque country, the masses did not go beyond playing the role of simple spectators. As one of the ETA leaders on trial at Burgos in 1970 said: "The masses applaud us from the balcony."

In the same way, actions like the one that caused the death of the French consul at Zaragoza, or the execution of a "social" on May Day in Madrid, served only to provide the dictatorship with justifications for intensifying repression against the proletarian and popular struggles, for undertaking roundup operations against their leaders and the working-class organizations.

With this we are not lamenting the execution of a cop, nor the punishment of exploiters. Nor do we refuse complete and unconditional defense of these militants against repression. But we Trotskyists cannot approve these methods which stem from impatience and despair in the face of the magnitude of the tasks posed, in a situation where no strong revolutionary party exists that could channel individual heroism toward advancing the revolutionary proletarian struggle.

What is more, the quoted sentence seems to indicate

that by carrying out such armed minority actions one can "hasten the explosion of the prerevolutionary crisis." No minority action, audacious though it might have been, has been able to jolt the dictatorship, nor make the capitalists tremble, as have the general struggles of the proletariat, from Granada to Pamplona. This is the central task of the Trotskyists: participating in and advancing the battles of the masses, taking the initiative in preparing the self-defense of the masses. We have full confidence in the capacity of the proletarian and popular masses to resort to the highest forms of defense through their own actions.

On the other hand, only deep contempt for and lack of confidence in a proletariat that, starting from nothing, starting from the complete destruction of its organizations and the physical annihilation of its vanguard, has been able to more and more forcefully resist and confront the dictatorship, to the point that the dictatorship had to retreat at Burgos and was brought to its present state of bankruptcy, can be behind statements like: *"Without initiatives in action in the field of self-defense, of revolutionary violence, by a Leninist organization, the movement and the broad vanguard that has appeared in the recent period will not feel themselves capable of advancing, of staying the assassinating arm of the dictatorship."* (Combate, No. 17, article cited, emphasis in original.) That is, the Francoist dictatorship will stay in power as long as En Marcha does not make progress in its revolutionary violence "initiatives."

Behind this statement is a method that insists, until it gets blue in the face, that the masses are backward, a method that confuses the masses with their reformist leaderships, a method that is defined by adaptation to the centrist and leftist components of the broad vanguard, to their backwardness and inability to respond to a rise in the struggles which goes beyond them on all levels, *beginning with that of violence.*

It is obvious that the *growing* capacity of the mass movement for resistance still does not measure up to the needs imposed by the continued existence of a strong, centralized, and constantly reinforced, repressive apparatus. But it is also obvious that this very reinforcement of the repressive apparatus is a response to an ever greater eruption, like a lava flow that can still be temporarily dammed up but not cooled down nor prevented from opening new channels and mixing with the lava that pours, hotter with every blow, from other breaches, flowing in wider and wilder currents that overrun bulwarks erected against the previous flows. The ultraleftist loses sight of the direction of the great torrent that is growing, that engulfs one area after another, that sometimes seems to disappear, only to be reborn in a more explosive form. He sees how the dictatorship's boot continues to raise a mud dam before one current, and anguished by the spectacle, which appears isolated from others, he runs off in desperation to form his "strategy" of armed struggle.

We Trotskyists cannot for one moment lose sight of *the totality of the process that is unfolding under the dictatorship.* We must assess the extent of the limitations that the dictatorship imposes on it, and *we must point out why these limitations are not being overcome, despite the willingness that the mass movement has shown*

in this direction. A movement that, in its mobilizations, has shown it can move ahead of its vanguard layer in this area.

But instead, you exclaimed: "the movement and the vanguard will not feel themselves capable of staying the assassinating arm of the dictatorship" if the Leninist organization, which is us, does not take the initiative in armed actions, if we don't overcome the technical deficiencies of the FRAP, which, by executing the police with individual hand weapons and by being very sectarian in calling for these initiatives, has demonstrated that the FRAP is not the "adequate instrument." We hope with all our hearts that you will have as little effect in this area as in all others.

For us, the argument is just the reverse. We recognize our backwardness and the backwardness of the entire vanguard in comparison to the experiences in resistance and "spontaneous" self-defense that the masses have gone through in the last period: a backwardness the masses have paid a price for, a price they didn't have to pay in every case, in the course of the actions during which they flexed their muscles in the period of the decline of Francoism. *Without confidence* in the capacity of the masses to "advance and to stay the assassinating arm of the dictatorship," without learning from each step taken by the masses that shows their present or potential capacity, we would not be able to prepare ourselves to intervene in every battle as their vanguard. We could not take the initiative and place ourselves at the head of all aspects of the struggle, and concretely the preparation of self-defense, and in this way advance the construction of the Leninist organization. We would not be able to help speed up the masses' ability to respond, to minimize the inevitable costs and sacrifices in this development (the greater the organization's experience in self-defense, the smaller the costs and sacrifices); nor would we be able to educate and select and educate in this process and in direct connection with all our other activities the cadres of a revolutionary vanguard that will, in the heat of the confrontations leading to the overthrow of Francoism and new upsurge that will follow, become transformed into the party of the armed insurrection and of the revolutionary civil war against the bourgeois state.

We want to conclude by saying, to avoid any possible "misunderstanding," that the quoted article represents only the view of the writer, that this article very accurately expands on resolutions already approved by your Second Congress: "It would be very dangerous for the proletariat to hope for a period in which it would be able to tranquilly and calmly prepare itself for the final assault, or to have faith in any incorrect extrapolation of the cliché of 1917 that would reduce armed confrontations with the army solely to the final moment of the revolutionary crisis It is necessary to begin from the real development of the class struggle and, in Spain, after experiences like Burgos, SEAT, Ferrol, Vigo, etc., this means that the preparation of a victorious armed insurrection would have to combine revolutionary work within the army to break it up and win the soldiers over to the camp of the proletariat, with armed self-defense of the masses . . . and the armed actions of the vanguard tied to the development of the mass movement." (Our emphasis, *Resolution on the Building of the LCR as the Section of the*

Fourth International in Spain, approved at the Second Congress of the LCR.)

IX. And in the End, Is this Policy Helping You Win Hegemony Over the 'New Vanguard'?

Your whole intervention has been based on the rejection of the Leninist method of party building through a revolutionary orientation toward the masses, winning the best worker and youth vanguard fighters, showing them that the Trotskyist program provides the only answers to the needs of the working class. Building the party in the course of the struggles themselves and exposing the sell-out policy of the reformist leaderships and showing, through the growing practical participation of the communists within these struggles, our ability and our right to lead.

In contrast, you have defended an orientation aimed at "winning hegemony within the new vanguard" on the basis of a political line of intervention flowing from the "concerns" of this "new vanguard," concerns expressed by some of its "centrist" and "leftist" components and unrelated to objective needs and the real situation of the workers and popular movement as a whole.

Your objective has been—is—to build this "new vanguard" on the basis of "revolutionary initiatives" carried out in opposition to "reformist actions," thus showing the great majority of workers and youth who still have faith in the reformist leaderships the true path to the revolution.

But this "new vanguard," if by this we understand radicalized sectors of the student youth and elements of the working-class youth that have broken with the reformist organizations, is found to be made up of Mao-Stalinist, Mao-spontaneist, Populist, pseudo-Trotskyist organizations like PC(ML), PC(I), MCE, BR . . . that as a whole form what you call the "new far left." By defining your political orientation in relation to the "new vanguard," adaptation to its right and left centrist components is absolutely inevitable, and will not only prevent you from winning numerous worker and student youth to the Trotskyist program, but also from a fruitful dissemination of the Trotskyist program and policy in this area.

Examples of this are the minority actions in solidarity with Ferrol or Pamplona, the proposals for "armed actions of the organization" . . . , "initiatives" aimed at showing the "new vanguard" in practice the correctness of your line while having nothing to do with the unfolding worker and popular movement. This practice has been systematically carried out in trying for unity in action with the "new far left" groups with the aim of outflanking the reformist leaderships' policy of holding the struggles back (tactic of "unity in action of the revolutionaries to outflank the reformists"). As of today, however, other groups are leading the ranks of the "new far left." You have to more and more content yourself by giving support to their "initiatives" and "spectacular acts" outside the mass movement, while at the same time criticizing them for their sectarian attitude toward "other new far left groups" and correcting one or another of their technical shortcomings, as in the PCI-MCE demonstration in Barcelona and the FRAP demonstration in Madrid, both on May Day. You unfortunately demonstrate how this is also reflected on

the level of organizational alternatives, by trying to bring together the "new far left" in organizations to counter sections of the workers and youth organized by the reformist leaderships (structuring commissions by zones, calling for struggle committees outside the Workers Commissions, boards of political groups . . .) and counterposed to using the Workers Commissions as the coordinating center of the oppressed on the basis of our workers united front alternative.

But every upsurge of worker and popular struggles, every generalized explosion, is a great blow to sectarian arrogance toward the worker and popular movement as a whole. Left aside by each rise in the struggle, you desperately seek to tie yourself to the car of the mass movement. Then, unable to explain to yourself the contradictory relations between the struggle of the masses and their reformist leaderships, you begin to adapt to these leaderships, abandoning goals and the methods of struggle that since the end of 1970 have been the basic constituents of the radicalization of the workers vanguard and of its confrontation with the Stalinist leadership (your position on the "stewards" collective contracts, slogans like "dissolution of the special repressive bodies" . . . analysis of the Assembly of Catalonia). At the same time, you keep your conscience clear by continuing "revolutionary initiatives" separate and apart from the movement.¹

Has this whole policy permitted a greater rooting of the Trotskyist program and organization among the broad layers of the student and working-class youth radicalized by the sharpening crisis of capitalism and Stalinism? Has it allowed you to correctly respond to the willingness to reject the class-collaborationist policy of the CP? The present "relationship of forces" within what you call the "new far left," its evolution toward more and more opportunist positions, clearly show us this is not the case. Moreover, we believe the LCR's policy, which you continue to reinforce, has helped the rightward drift of the centrist and ultraleftist currents, currents that maintain thousands of ideological ties to Stalinism, which prevent important sectors of youth from going beyond an initial break with the reformist organizations.

As proof of the charge we refer to a very concrete fact: the evolution of the Trotskyist positions within the ETA VI organization. The worker and youth vanguard has the right to see what you have covered up with triumphant proclamations on this question with the publication of a fusion agreement with this organization in the pages of your *Combate*.

X. The ETA VI's Evolution Toward the Fourth International

In the first place, it isn't necessary to stress the fact that Euzkadi constitutes one of the most advanced centers of recent worker and popular struggles in Spain. It is also one of the places where the crisis of the CP has been sharpest, worsening at the end of the 1960s, and where it has the biggest problems getting back into the movement. In this situation an extraordinarily radicalized workers vanguard was forged, and important sectors of it were influenced and organized by the ETA VI.

We must ask ourselves: what explains this influence and penetration, which is notable in some areas?

Without a doubt we must answer that the explanation lies in the healthy *reaction of the grouping that became ETA VI to the petty-bourgeois terrorism* that was traditional in ETA. *They broke with the previous pure-and-simple nationalism audaciously taking up many of Lenin's basic positions on the national question, and, more generally, sought a working-class orientation in Marxism.* In this search, part of the leadership and many members of ETA began to draw near to basic elements of the Trotskyist program and to the Fourth International. Despite the confusion existing in this organization after the Fifth Congress, in spite of a political line which we must classify as centrist, these advances were sufficient to account for the influence and penetration we spoke of.

By September 1971, ETA VI had already raised the question of intervention in the Workers Commissions. Nevertheless, ultraleft reflexes remained that led ETA to center its work in the already dying centrist ploy of building their own "factory committees." This activity aided the counteroffensive the CP was preparing in the North, presenting itself from the end of 1971 as the standard-bearer of unity in the workers movement. The CP supported the so-called FOUC (Frente Obrero Unitario y Combativo—Unified and Combative Workers Front), winning forces with which to once again get some Workers Commissions rolling which were dominated by its line from the beginning.

The fact that, meanwhile, part of the ETA leadership had been won to the Fourth International by the French Ligue Communiste didn't imply a basic change in approach to the Workers Commissions (an attitude that on the LCR's part continued to be ultraleft and sectarian on a national scale). Even at the end of 1972, ETA continued to reject support to a line of unification of the Workers Commissions, while it continued its intervention in the "factory committees."

At the same time in Navarra, the crisis of the ORT's opportunist policy in the commissions was becoming more clearly obvious to an extensive layer of radicalized working-class militants. ETA VI and the LCR had strengthened their relations which, since that also refers to us, were conducted by members of the En Marcha tendency. What did you do in this area, En Marcha comrades, faced with a situation of growing fragmentation of the workers movement? In place of suggesting a line for ETA supporting unification of the different Workers Commissions, for centralization of the movement on the basis of class struggle, you educated them on the line of counterposing some commissions to others, of the super-opportunist observance of the discipline in action imposed by the ORT's faction in its commissions, which limited ETA VI comrades for quite a time to simply making proposals.

The similarity between the methods with which you conducted the debate in our organization which you promoted in ETA VI is astonishing. Superfactional bureaucratism and extreme scorn for workers democracy summarize the nature of these methods.

At the very same time you were preparing the split in the LCR, two positions had been crystalizing in ETA VI. One was supported by you, and the other, though it originated in the break with nationalism and militarism by the whole of ETA VI, was consolidated around

circular and eclectic positions with regard to the international currents that claimed adherence to Marxism. These positions reflected the lack of a real debate within ETA VI. In this context, what did you do, En Marcha comrades, besides desperately exert yourselves to make sure they wouldn't be aware of our positions? You favored an ultrabureaucratic method of "quick decision" within the ETA VI: instead of making a calm and prolonged discussion possible and creating the best conditions for an open confrontation between the different positions in which all ETA VI members could participate, you intensified attempts to line up for your positions the recruitment circles outside the organization, and in the same spirit bombarded them with your documents. We are perfectly familiar with these methods: they are at the center of your entire policy. The result was the split at the end of 1972 of a so-called "minority" tendency, but one that numerically represented the major part of the organization [ETA (Mino)]. What was the basic reason these members left? It was a reaction to your bureaucratic methods. How did these members leave, En Marcha comrades? *They rejected Trotskyism along with these methods. In many cases they were rabidly anti-Trotskyist, without any knowledge of what Trotskyism is.*

But let's continue. Once outside ETA VI, these militants rapidly fell victim to the effects of two years of centrist practice in the organized workers movement, a practice that your policy prolonged with a tactic of partial criticisms of the ORT which presented no real total alternative to the ORT. These militants were disarmed in the face of the ORT's right-opportunist pressures. The result is that recently the "minority" of ETA VI has been dissolved with most going to the ORT, enlarging the ranks of the still vigorous right wing of your beloved "new far left."

However, ETA VI continued to have roots in the workers movement, especially in Navarra. The explosion of the general strike in June of this year offered an excellent opportunity to replace—or at least seriously undermine—the ORT leadership, which was then crudely revealing its infamous politics. By then, En Marcha comrades, your ties with the leadership of the ETA VI were clearly consolidated. Their militants put your line into practice in an exemplary way. What was the result? The result was that the vanguardist line of your intervention, its sectarianism with respect to the entirety of the workers move-

ment, its inability to expose the ORT leadership, *made it possible that today the ORT can capitalize on the June struggles with the "far left's" orientation clearly out of the running.*

Comrades, it is time you drew up a balance-sheet of your attempts to "conquer the vanguard by a policy of initiatives in action." Do you believe that this policy, now free from the hindrances of our "archeo-Trotskyist" dogmatism, has allowed you to make progress in the spread of Trotskyism? We believe that this policy is taking you further from Marxism and from the working class.

You might reply that, in exchange for certain concessions—of course tactical—this policy allows you to put yourself at the head of the "far left" and win over their militants, whom you would later reeducate. This is also false. ETA VI was an organization that moved away from petty-bourgeois militarism and sought, in a confused but sincere way, an orientation toward the working class. As a result of having close relations with you, *you reintroduced into it the road of minority "initiative" they tried to break from.* The result is that the "new far left" organization with the most roots in the factories of Euzkadi today not only no longer bases itself on the working-class movement, but directly and indirectly aids the evolution of the right-centrist currents, in some cases fierce adversaries of Trotskyism and the Fourth International.

Comrades, draw up your balance-sheet.

With Leninist Trotskyist greetings,
Carmen, Manolo, Salvador, for
the Political Bureau of the Liga
Communista (Sympathizing
Organization of the Fourth International)

September 30, 1973

1. It is interesting to observe the logic of the ultraleftist group's evolution from the end of 1970 to the present in order to understand the evolution of the LCR up to 1972, an evolution that today you are intensifying. We refer to this evolution in an article sent to the magazine *Quatrième Internationale*, organ of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, entitled "Build the Party on the Basis of the Transitional Program."

APPENDIX: Self-Defense and Revolutionary Violence in the Twilight of Francoism (Combate (LCR) No. 16, May 1973, organ of the LCR (En Marcha tendency))

"A revolutionary victory can become possible only as a result of long political agitation, a lengthy period of education and organization of the masses. *But the armed conflict itself must likewise be prepared long in advance.* The advanced workers must know that they will have to fight and win a death struggle. They must reach out for arms, as a guarantee of their emancipation. In an era as critical as the present, the party of the revolution must unceasingly preach to the workers the need for arming themselves and must do everything to assure the arm-

ing, at least, of the proletarian vanguard. Without this, victory is impossible." (Leon Trotsky, *Whither France*, Merit Publishers, 1968, p. 35. Emphasis added.)

The worker and mass struggles that have unfolded since Burgos, the actions of ETA V in Euzkadi [Basque area], the "Hammer and Sickle Collective's" action in Zaragoza last November, the execution of a "social" [member of the Political Police] in Madrid this May Day, are all different manifestations of the characteristics that the con-

frontation between classes is taking on in the period of the twilight of Francoism.

No vanguard organization, no revolutionary militant can ignore the need to respond to this real requirement of the movement: in order to go forward on the road of struggle toward the overthrow of the dictatorship, in order to respond to the legal and paralegal gangs of capitalism armed to the teeth, revolutionaries must determine the practical measures which can serve to educate the movement in self-defense, in its preparation for the decisive armed conflict with the bourgeois state.

Only reformists and opportunists can remain silent, under the cover of "pacifism" or abstentionism, on this question. It is up to the revolutionary Marxists to define a correct line in this field, a line which, avoiding spontaneism as well as ultraleftism, begins to be carried out by the vanguard organization itself, spurred on in the Workers Commissions and taken up by the mass movement in its confrontations with the armed gangs of the bourgeoisie.

From Burgos to San Adrian: The Lessons of These Struggles

To adopt a Leninist position on the question of violence requires that revolutionaries constantly assimilate the experiences accumulated by the mass movement in its own struggles. Understanding the lessons that can be drawn from the great struggles of the working class is a necessary precondition for the vanguard's definition of its tasks, and its ability to predict the tempo of events and the forms of the prerevolutionary crisis.

In this sense, from Burgos to San Adrian, one general characteristic stands out in all the big fights: in the mobilizations of the Basque people in December 1970, in the fight launched by the SEAT workers in October 1971, in the Ferrol general strike in March 1972, in the heroic struggle of the Vigo workers in September 1972, and, above all, in the large movement organized around the fight of the San Adrian workers in Barcelona; *more sectors have had practical experience in self-defense, and a mass vanguard is forming which wants to popularize methods of self-defense that are placed on the agenda by the needs of the movement itself in order to advance along the road of struggle against the dictatorship.* At the same time the dictatorship responded to the workers' just demands with the assassination of militants who were found at the head of the struggle and with police occupations of the cities. "We ask for bread and they answer with bullets"—this is the cry of protest that is spreading among the masses in the face of the dictatorship's bloody repression.

But this progressive utilization of self-defense methods by important layers of the movement has suffered from a basic weakness: *the worker and student resistance to attacks by the repressive forces has appeared more as a spontaneous product of their combativity than as a task foreseen and prepared for by the vanguard through its unified groups or through a systematic education of the movement.* The principal responsibility for this basic weakness of the movement falls on the reformists who for many years, by sowing legalistic and pacifist illusions within the vanguard, prevented the assimilation of these lessons

that logically flow from the experience of the masses themselves.

The attitude of the bourgeoisie toward these struggles, toward the greater combativity and politicization of the movement, has also been significant: by reinforcing the repressive apparatus of the dictatorship, by encouraging the activity of fascist gangs, by systematically repressing the vanguard, it is demonstrating that it is ready to use all necessary force to prevent the explosion of generalized struggles and to wipe out every embryo of a general strike against the dictatorship.

It is during a period of sharp confrontations with the dictatorship that the question of violence takes on a decisive role. The weaknesses evident in these areas in the most recent struggles requires the vanguard to reject its spontaneism and put forward a political response which, overcoming obvious limitations, moves the movement forward while the revolutionary crisis is ripening.

The intensification of the ETA V activities in Euzkadi and, on another level, the rise of groups like the "Hammer and Sickle Collective," reflect the understanding—however limited it might be—of the need for armed activity by the vanguard and for the denunciation of the capitulatory role of the reformists on this question. Our criticisms of the strategic orientations of these groups, of their lack of systematic work in the organized workers movement, must not obscure the fact that they constitute in reality a manifestation of the concerns that run through important sectors of the mass movement. At the same time, the incorporation of self-defense tasks and protection of demonstrations, by part of the far left, shows an important advance in their consciousness of the need to take practical steps in this direction.

The preparation of the vanguard for new battles, the need to combine the spontaneity of the movement with conscious organization of its struggle, not only make it possible, but require, that its most advanced segment adopt a firm policy in order to be able to hasten the explosion of the prerevolutionary crisis that will put the destruction of the bourgeois state on the agenda. In this sense, far from counterposing "minority violence" to mass violence, the former is a precondition, always in relation to the experiences of the movement, which makes certain that the movement will take it up in practice.

Precisely because the tasks of self-defense must be directly tied to the restructuring of the mass movement and to the maturation of a political vanguard within it, because the revolutionary Marxist organization must show the way for this vanguard through its own initiatives, and because all of this work is directed toward the central objective of the *generalized arming of the proletariat*, revolutionary Marxists must develop systematic work around three fundamental tasks:

1. *To explain, spread, and put in practice methods of mass self-defense, and make the Workers Commissions play a central role in this regard:* by organizing defense squads for strikes and demonstrations, by creating permanent struggle detachments, by giving them the technical armament required for every use, the Workers Commissions will have to educate the working class about the necessity for armed self-defense against the repressive violence of the dictatorship. The organization of mass self-defense will be directly linked to the struggle for demo-

cratic rights, for the dissolution of repressive bodies and special tribunals, for solidarity with all the victims of the repression, for the crushing of the fascist gangs and support to vanguard initiatives which contribute to the advance of the movement.

2. To decide, in relation to each concrete situation and to the concerns of the vanguard, *which armed propaganda initiatives the revolutionary organization should undertake, actions tactically capable of inflicting defeats on the reaction*, in order to give the movement confidence, to educate it about the need to destroy the bourgeois state. The revolutionaries will tie this task to pressing for solidarity with workers' struggles and with victims of repression, and to the spread of our general revolutionary and anticapitalist propaganda.

3. To carry on antimilitarist work: Put forth, inside the army, a program of basic rights for soldiers and support to all victims of military repression; and outside the army, principally among the young workers and student youth, educate them on revolutionary antimilitarism, on the fight against the bourgeois army, and on the work of disintegrating this key institution for armed defense of capitalist interests.

The combination of these three tasks can only be assured on the basis of the autonomous activity of the vanguard organization itself: the present weakness of the Workers Commissions, their control by reformists, the backwardness of the reformists with regard to the enormous task that the present and future battles require, prevent revolutionaries from limiting or subordinating their practical work to what the commissions can presently accept. *Without initiatives in action in the field of self-defense, of revolutionary violence, by a Leninist organization, the movement and the broad vanguard that has appeared in the recent period will not feel themselves capable of advancing, of staying the assassinating arm of the dictatorship.*

In the same way that we reject any narrow propagandism in the struggle to win political hegemony in the new vanguard, educating it in revolutionary violence requires practical demonstrations by the revolutionary Marxist organization of the validity of our orientation; to form struggle detachments of the vanguard, and to press for

them within the Workers Commissions. These actions must be aimed at a single objective in the immediate period: prevent police occupations of the cities, wipe out the fascist gangs and defend the assemblies and demonstrations. This must be done in opposition to reformists and opportunists who, using the mistakes made by ultraleftists as a pretext, deny the need for armed initiatives of the vanguard (*against fascist gangs, against heads of the repression, against institutions of the dictatorship or symbols of capitalist exploitation, etc.*). It is this present disorientation of the movement, the confusion of its most advanced sectors in the face of reformist demagoguery, that calls for even more intense activity by the revolutionaries, accompanied by mass work, in order to show that the way toward the revolutionary general strike, toward destruction of the bourgeois state, is through preparing, from today on, the proletarian vanguard and the whole movement for the armed conflict that will inevitably take place.

At the same time, against all the objectively pacifist views on work inside the bourgeois army, revolutionaries must center their work mainly outside the army in the present period: *only when the masses show their willingness to arm themselves, when the vanguard is already armed*, and when a generalized fight against the dictatorship and the bourgeois state has decisively altered the relationship of forces in favor of the working class, *can a revolutionary opposition among the troops against the dominant military caste appear.* In order to begin to create these favorable conditions, it is necessary to initiate this work among the youth and to continue clandestine work among the troops that can come into the open when the mass movement needs it.

The lessons of the revolutionary period of the 1930s in Spain are very instructive for the young workers vanguard that will lead the big struggles that will break out. The teaching of these lessons will combat pacifist illusions which the reformists sow in the movement by bringing back to mind the heroic events that made it possible to wipe out the reaction and begin the Spanish revolution in July 1936. This is one of the reasons the masses will destroy the dictatorship, to avenge all their class brothers who died for the socialist revolution.

Regarding the Positions Taken by the Ligue Communiste in the Legislative Elections of March 1973

Letter to the Central Committee of the Ligue Communiste (French Section
of the Fourth International) from the Central Committee of the Liga Comunista

Comrades:

We want to inform you of some differences we think we have with your characterization of the Union of the Left and the tactic you carried out regarding it, in accordance with positions expressed in the Political Resolution passed at your Third Congress [See SWP Internal Information Bulletin No. 6 in 1973 pp. 71-75.] We are familiar with these positions through *Rouge* and through articles of a well-known leader of the majority of the United Secretariat.

For you, the Union of the Left is not an interclass pact, but rather a "total reformist alternative" which, you added in some documents, has a "class-against-class" dynamic. For us, what is involved is an *embryo of a Popular Front*.

For you, the vote for the Union of the Left was a *class vote*. In our opinion, a class vote is only a vote for the candidates of the workers parties, determined by the class character of these organizations, as opposed to the programs of their sell-out leaderships. A vote given to a class collaboration electoral bloc, composed of the Stalinists, the Social Democrats, and the Left Radicals, cannot be considered a "class vote."

It is important to make clear to you that, despite not being able to deal with all these problems with the required breadth and depth of analysis, we can state that this is a discussion of greater scope than just relating to the adoption of one or another electoral tactic. We don't believe that it could be examined on this level. *What are under contention are some fundamental principles among which the struggle in the Fourth International must differentiate*. We believe that the tactic adopted, especially in the second round, and *the justifications that you have publicly made of them*, opens the road for a break with those principles. Therefore, because of the repercussions that this error can have in the political orientation of the Ligue Communiste, as well as in the orientations of other organizations in the Fourth International, the Second Congress of the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria (LCR), today the LC [Liga Comunista], sympathizing organization of the Fourth International in Spain, delegated to the Central Committee the task of systematizing our positions, which we believe must be incorporated into the debate going on in the International.

I

As is asserted in your analysis, the legislative elections of March 1973 have taken place in a situation characterized above all by the inability of the French bourgeoisie to reestablish the relationship of forces between classes that existed before May 1968. It is the proletariat that, in those five years, has unceasingly gained ground against the class enemy, although its battles have not yet come together in large-scale explosions of generalized struggle.

This advance has been cutting into the bourgeoisie's margin of political maneuver. After the fall of De Gaulle, the French bourgeoisie, caught between the deepening of

the international capitalist crisis and the rise in the workers' combativity, wanted, in the face of the combined situation, to come up with a series of "integrationist" plans and to increase the selective repression, with the perspective of installing a strong state. But the balance-sheet that the majority [bourgeois] coalition presents since the 1969 referendum is sad.

This balance-sheet shows the complete failure of the desire to make the workers "participate" in the management of the "new society"; the inability to stabilize the educational front; the incorporation of urban salaried layers in the struggle, as well as some sectors (though small) of the traditional petty-bourgeoisie that had supported De Gaulle; the explosion of contradictions in reactionary institutions *par excellence* like the army and the police. And, through all of this the break-up of the majority coalition, tied to a growing weakening of its principal supporters and personalities who have been tainted by the most turbulent political and financial scandals.

The first result of the wave unleashed by May 1968 was the fall of De Gaulle. But, at the same time, the repercussions on the working class of the French CP's sell-out explains the fact that the working class had to go through a period of recouping its confidence in its own strength, in social struggles before reaching the political level: through partial struggles, before deciding to pass on to generalized action. This process has been expressed in a rise in the combativity in the work centers, through a succession of extremely sharp conflicts like the strikes at Joint Francais and Girosteel. And, most recently, some facts point to the possibility of moving to actions of the whole class. The mobilizations in February 1972, which were unleashed after the assassination of Overney, were one of the first signs of this.

The reformist leaderships *have not failed to take this possibility into account*. In the performance of their tasks of providing a cushion for the growing crisis of the regime, they have had to *outdo themselves*, trying to prevent the workers' and popular struggles from intensifying their tendencies toward mass direct action and rediscovery of the road of the confrontation of the whole class against the bourgeoisie and its state.

The CP and SP, after having divided this rising combativity and having put the brakes on it as much as they could, after having frontally counterposed themselves to the proletarian methods of combat that began to develop in many of the struggles in the recent period, have been obliged to step up their effort to channelize this potential for class struggle into the ballot box, trying to strengthen the perspectives of the "peaceful and democratic roads" in the consciousness of sectors of the mass that began in action to go beyond the logic of these roads.

The Common Program established by the leadership of the CP and of the "new" SP in June 1972 appeared as a clear attempt by these apparatuses to base themselves on the aspirations of the masses for a unified struggle capable

of "changing life," in order to divert them, to blunt the latent, profoundly anticapitalist edge in such aspirations and adjust them to the rails of a "unity" that respects not only the bourgeois order, but also basic elements of the Fifth Republic's institutional framework.

For the first time in nearly thirty years, the proletariat saw its two traditional parties united. *This was the basic thing in the eyes of great masses of workers*, in whom a strongly *contradictory* attitude was expressed. On the one hand, this fact opened the possibility for a strengthening of the desire for united struggle and of its elevation to the level of the question of power, to put an end to a government of swindlers, thieves, and mafiosos. The Social Democracy's abandonment of its traditional machinery of alliances, in a turn aimed at recuperating its forces and social base, which was made possible by the present "peaceful coexistence of three," helped this dynamic along. It has been helped along by the fact that today sectors of the workers support the SP who, as opposed to what happened during the Cold War, are in favor of unity in action with the CP.

But, *at the same time*, this attitude of large sectors of the masses contains the *most dangerous illusions* regarding the possibility of the real satisfaction of their aspirations within the framework of the Unity of the Left, *without breaking the ties with the bourgeoisie embodied in its program and in the presence of the Left Radicals*.

Only a small portion of the worker and youth vanguard openly rejected the alternative offered by the reformist leaderships. Therefore, we agree with you that the situation required the revolutionaries to utilize the elections in order to convert them into a tribune for a vast campaign *for the revolutionary program*, aimed at projecting, to the maximum degree, the class alternative of the proletariat to the crisis of the bourgeoisie, and to cause the greatest possible discrediting of the agents of the bourgeoisie within the workers movement. In no case could the rejection of the roads of peaceful and gradual transition to socialism by part of the radical elements of the proletariat and youth justify the adoption of an abstentionist tactic, like the one supported by some ultraleft groups, among them "Revolution." The arguments regarding the capitalist omnipotence and stability which this group cited to justify its positions reveal its fundamentally *opportunist* roots. In this as in other cases, "leftism" has been nothing but the expression of the *fear of some opportunists of succumbing to the dangers and temptations of "integration" by the bourgeoisie*.

To our way of thinking, one had to open up a campaign to bring all the fighters, individual militants and workers organizations, both trade union and political, face to face with the needs of a class-against-class fight, breaking with the bourgeoisie on all levels, in order to confront the bankruptcy of the Fifth Republic. But, beyond that objective, one had to open a way out for them, a perspective which could really satisfy the elementary and basic demands that are trampled on by the Gaullist mafia in the service of Big Business. This implied defining a line of unmasking, on all levels, the CP and SP leaderships' fraudulent response to the needs of a unified proletarian front in daily action against exploitation and oppression and in action aimed at bringing down Pompidou and his henchmen. To the sell-out leaderships' strategic line of united front with the bourgeoisie, concretized at this time in a Union of the Left that is *unable to even fight Pompidou*, it required counterposing the *revolutionary strategy of the class united front*, able to polarize the oppressed masses of the city and countryside around the

proletariat. It required counterposing to the Common Program of the Union of the Left the direct action of the masses around a system of elementary economic, democratic, and transitional demands, culminating in the slogan of a government able to achieve them, a Workers Government without any politicians representing the bourgeoisie, based on the independent mobilization of the workers and controlled by them. But *to define* the immediate objectives and the *goal* of the present struggles also required formulating the *methods* which the proletariat must rely on. It requires counterposing to the electoralist and peaceful roads, that go with the policy of unity with the bourgeoisie, the proletariat's methods of direct action, beginning from the experiences of the recent period, stressing the importance of the democratic organization of the struggles and the organization of self-defense, etc., as the *only methods that can cement the unity of the class in struggle*. In this context, the *battle for the defeat of the bourgeois candidates* was able to acquire its meaning as a tactical episode in the development of struggles through which the Ligue Communiste will be able to build the party, through whose mediation the proletariat can unify itself as a class. It was a tactical episode that was important for intensifying the struggle *for the class independence of the proletariat*, the motor force of its unification, for the great struggles as well as the small ones. We Trotskyists should have stressed that the deeper the break of the masses with the bourgeois politicians and politics, the greater the possibilities of bringing down the regime.

The appeal directed at the mass parties of the proletariat to break with the radicals, as a necessary step along the road of pushing the mobilization of the masses, on the basis of a program of complete class independence with respect to the bourgeoisie and abandoning the conciliationist program signed in 1972, did not mean that the Trotskyists *could either harbor or feed the slightest hopes that the CP and SP would be willing to cut the connections that, in one form or another, convert them into agencies of bourgeois politics in the proletariat or other layers*. Trotsky taught the communists of our country that "the workers united front is only conceivable under the banner of communism." It is inseparable from the conquest of the majority of the class to revolutionary politics and from the elimination of the reformist leaderships from the workers' ranks. But we Trotskyists do not hope to achieve those objectives through simple propaganda or through insults against the sell-out leaderships. While the basic sectors of the class continue to have faith in these leaderships, we must systematically demand that these leaders answer the needs raised by the class struggle, confront them with the tasks that *they would have to accomplish if they speak in the name of the proletariat*, at the same time that we push, in propaganda and practice, the class line that will really unify the proletariat, without waiting or subordinating our efforts at independent mobilization to the attitude of the reformist leaderships.

Obviously this orientation carries with it many dangers. In our days, the OCI [Organisation Communiste Internationaliste—Internationalist Communist Organization, the French Lambertists] seeks to make everyone swallow an opportunist policy of bending to the traditional reformists, similar to that which Trotsky called "conciliationist centrism" in reference to the German SAP [Sozialistische Arbeiter Partei—Socialist Workers Party], in the name of the revolutionary strategy of the class united front. Beginning from the general postulate that the working class will first put the test to its mass parties, as well as from the

obligatory character of the utilization of the tactical methods of the united front, they subordinate their entire political activity to these questions. Their "united front strategy" is reduced to propaganda in favor of the unity of the traditional organizations and in favor of a government of these organizations, instead of putting *in first place* the revolutionary program of unification of the proletariat as a class against its present leadership, the achievement of which is impossible without building the party.

Thus, at the same time the OCI launched an absurd attack against the Ligue Communiste, calling it an organization manipulated by the French CP and the bourgeoisie, they concentrated their entire campaign around the radicals, leaving the program of the Union of the Left on a totally secondary plane. But the ties between the reformist leaderships and Big Capital were not restricted to the alliance with the Radicals. They were expressed in the objectives and methods of struggle that were present in the Common Program itself, even before the Radicals signed it. The revolutionary campaign had to raise a class alternative, the most concrete possible, at all levels against that of the reformist apparatuses.

The concretization of this "class-against-class" line in the electoral tactic meant: *in the first round*, calling for a vote for the candidates of the Ligue Communiste, the only political organization able to consistently defend the revolutionary program; *on the second round*, establishing a clear line of class demarcation in the face of the bourgeoisie, calling for a vote for the candidates of the CP and SP while explicitly opposing a vote for the Union of the Left.

This is not the tactic adopted by the Ligue Communiste. These are not the political positions that underlie it.

II

The line that you have adopted in the first round is a line of affirming "a revolutionary current in opposition to the program of the Union of the Left" (Political Resolution of the Third Congress of the Ligue Communiste—Addendum On the First Round Vote). Its concrete form was to call for a vote for the candidates of the "far left," i.e., for the candidates who "reject the electoral and peaceful road to socialism." (Ibid.) This meant being able to call for a vote for "the candidates of the AJS [Alliance des Jeunes pour le Socialisme—Youth Alliance for Socialism, Lambertist youth group], and certain candidates of the PSU [Parti Socialiste Unifié—Unified Socialist Party] or 'independents' (with approval of the Central Committee)."

Despite the rejection by this same resolution of support for a "common political front" of the different components of the far left, given that it "would lead to confusion and would be in contradiction" with a line of clarification on the "far left," the tactic adopted is not much more clarifying.

The orientation adopted for the first round is the consistent application on the electoral level of one of your general tactical axes of party building: the axis of "*unity in action of the revolutionaries*," aimed at "*pressuring-out-flanking*" the reformist leaderships who are predominant in the workers movement.

Consequently, in the first round, instead of the assertion that only the revolutionary program that the Ligue Communiste fights for can build the unification of the proletarian front in action against capitalism and its state, you assert a line of unity with the so-called "far left" groups on the basis of an agreement that does not strongly establish a revolutionary demarcation line with regard to

the reformists. This is because not all the organizations that are against electoralism and pacifism have broken, in the majority of cases, with a concept of revolution by stages. It doesn't mean that they have programmatically cut their ties with the bourgeoisie, which leaves them open at any moment to the possibility of a capitulation to the Stalinist leadership. This is the same criterion that, in Latin America, leads to an adaptation toward "those who fight with arms in hand" and who, overnight, pass over with all their baggage including arms in hand to the camp of the bourgeois nationalist governments.

You must recognize, comrades, that the tactic adopted in the first round, falls precisely into the error you wanted to avoid. It is confusionist and does not aid the process of clarification in the slightest, beginning with the clarification of the militants influenced by the centrist and ultra-left currents.

The tactic adopted on the second round apparently presupposes a 180 degree turn. From a line of "unity of the revolutionaries," it moves over to supporting the pact of the workers organizations with the bourgeoisie.

You have based this tactic on a characterization of the CP-SP-Left Radical accord in the Union of the Left not as a Popular Front-type accord, but rather as a "total reformist alternative," whose class character is given it by the hegemony of the CP in the Front. The principal arguments that make up this characterization, systematically laid out in the Political Resolution of the Third Congress of the Ligue Communiste, and in different articles by Comrades P. Frank, H. Weber, and D. Bensaid, all restate the specific differences between the Popular Front of 1936 and the present Union of the Left in order *through these differences to conjure away their common essence: their electoral bloc, class collaboration character*. The principal arguments advanced to deny the interclass character of the Union of the Left, with which we are in total disagreement, are:

a. On the level of objectives: the Union of the Left puts forward the perspective of an advance toward socialism;

b. Regarding the composition and leadership of the Union of the Left: politically and socially the Left Radicals don't represent anything; the hegemonic character of the CP in the bloc; the refusal to characterize the SP as a workers party.

We also do not agree, finally, with the method used for the adoption of one or another attitude on how to vote with regard to the Union of the Left, a method based on the breadth of the hopes for unity that the masses place in it, an opportunist method that has nothing to do with Trotskyism.

III

Comrade P. Frank, in the article entitled "Against the Program of the Union of the Left," after showing that there are no fundamental differences between the content of the Union of the Left's program and that of the Popular Front of 1936, indicated that there were differences on "two essential points."

The first is that "The Popular Front had as its only objective to prevent fascism from coming to power." Today, however, the leaders of the CP and SP must maintain, under the pressure of the aspirations of the masses, that this program, seen as running for a period of five years, will promote democracy and with it will prepare the road toward socialism in a relatively short period of time. The same sentiment is put forward in the assertion in the Political Resolution of your Third Congress, according to which "the CP-SP agreement is not one of a Popu-

lar Front type which ties the CP to the coat-tails of a bourgeois party. For the first time it is actually being obliged to open up some sort of socialist perspective."

In the first place, since those superficial arguments are used as one of the "essential" facts in defining the class character of the Union of the Left as different from a Popular Front's, we remind the comrades that this is not the "first time" that a class collaboration electoral bloc or governmental bloc asserts that it places itself within the perspective of socialism. M. Thorez in France, and Jose Diaz in our country, pushed fronts that were programmatically "more advanced" than the Common Program of the Union of the Left, which, according to your own words, not only is written explicitly within the framework of the bourgeois state, but even of the Fifth Republic, within the context of the defense of institutions of the semipresidential regime. Moreover, they presented the Popular Front to the masses as a tactic to defeat fascism and to *advance through this in the struggle for socialism*. Moreover, until the end of the 1930s, the Stalinist parties continued carrying out a systematic, although abstract, propaganda for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Second, these positions reflect a *restrictive* conception of the Popular Front, one that was strongly criticized by Trotsky in the last years of his life.

Since the Seventh Congress of the Communist International established the Popular Front tactic, the Stalinist parties have pushed it in all the countries of the world, giving it the most diverse and successive changes of form. They have taken the form of alliances of the proletariat with sectors of the "national," "progressive," "democratic" bourgeoisie, etc., they have offered the most diverse anti-fascist, anti-imperialist, national liberation, or moving toward socialist perspectives. But the essence of these coalitions has not been defined by whether they fly the flag of the fight against fascism or the enticement of socialism. The essence of all of them has been, and is, the concretization of a line of class collaboration on all levels, the subordination of the proletariat to the bourgeoisie. Therefore Trotsky could say that the Popular Front is the principal question of the proletarian class *strategy* in this period.

This is what Trotsky emphasized when he refuted, in an intransigent form, the POUM's arguments, based on the specific differences or the "special national situation," in order to justify its participation in the Popular Front. Of course, there are differences with the Ligue Communiste. The POUM called the Popular Front by its name. You have confused it with a workers front.

The basic argument of the majority of the Ligue Communiste for voting for the Union of the Left is systematically presented in "What is a Class Vote?" (*Rouge*, December 16, 1972), which develops the bases of the resolution adopted by the majority at the Third Congress of the LC. It says:

"Journalistic considerations aside, the class nature of the Union of the Left must be analyzed. One cannot fail to see that the Union of the Left differs from classic front experiences (Popular Front, the Liberation) in that it does not represent an alliance of classes between the proletariat and a leading section of the big bourgeoisie under the leadership of the latter, but a general reformist alternative on the part of the traditional workers' movement. There is no party in the Union of the Left that really represents big capital, such as the Radical party in 1936 or the MRP [Mouvement Républicain Populaire—Popular Republican Movement] in 1945. The 'left-wing Radicals' and the SP are relics and marginal groupings, not par-

ties of the big bourgeoisie. It is the CP, a reformist workers' party, that has hegemony within the Union of the Left today. The conditions that have been imposed upon it are those of the CP. *It is this hegemony of the CP over the alliance as a whole that gives it its class nature, and not the presence of this or that bourgeois politician.*¹

"The ruling class in its entirety is making no mistake about this. No section of it today supports the Union of the Left. On the contrary, as it is constituted in 1973, the Union of the Left is leading to a class polarization: on one side, the working class (represented by its political and trade-union organizations, the CGT, the FEN [Fédération de l'Education Nationale—National Education Federation], the CFDT [Confédération Française et Démocratique du Travail—French Democratic Confederation of Labor], etc.), polarizing various petty-bourgeois layers; on the other side, the various sections of the ruling class, also polarizing various layers of the middle and petty bourgeoisie. This is why the ruling class fears and fights the dynamic involved in the Union of the Left. The latter does not today constitute a 'bourgeois standby solution,' even though the bourgeoisie may find itself compelled to rally to it in case of a catastrophe, just as it resigned itself to having the CP in the government in 1945."

The Common Program of Government, signed by the CP and SP in June 1972 is, from the beginning, the Stalinist and Social Democratic leaderships' intention to conclude a pact with Big Capital, guaranteeing the subordination of the interests of the proletariat to the preservation of the bourgeois order. From the beginning the alliance between the CP and SP is based on a plan of class collaboration. The adherence of the radicals to this plan confirms its character and its possible dynamic.

Comrade Henri Weber asks: Why would the Big bourgeoisie have itself represented by the relics of the Radical Party? Out of masochism?" We ask: Why does the Union of the Left put them up as candidates? To fight the bosses? No. To broaden the number of votes? Also no. Well then, what is the role of the Left Radicals in the Union of the Left? Simply, *they are the guarantee offered Big Capital that the bloc formed on the basis of the Common Program of Government is ready to respect the bourgeois order*. At the same time they are *the bridge toward other sectors of the French bourgeoisie in order to be able to establish a pact with them, a coalition government alternative capable of safeguarding the capitalist system from the rise of the proletariat and the popular masses*. It is in this sense that we have classified it as an embryo of Popular Front.

Of course, French Big Capital is not interested in an immediate way in an alternative of this type. The present situation, although critical, has not reached the extreme of having to resort to the formation of a Coalition Government in order to contain the revolutionary process of the masses. Day by day, it prefers to exhaust all the possibilities that are offered it by the framework of the Fifth Republic. *But this does not mean, comrades, that the Union of the Left does not constitute a possible governmental alternative for the bourgeoisie*, as is stated in your documents. On the contrary, it can be the final hole card played by the bourgeoisie in order to confront the growing intensification of the workers' and popular struggles and the sharpening of the crisis in its present structures of domination.

But the Union of the Left is not only the embryo of an alternative that Big capital can play *tomorrow*. *Already today it plays a basic role within the worker and*

popular movement: the role of imposing a program adjusted to the liking of the bourgeois politicians on broad sectors of the workers and popular movement, through the mass workers organizations that participate in the pact. It plays the role of cutting off the forms of struggle, in order not to frighten the bourgeois clientele, inculcating illusions regarding the parliamentary and peaceful roads in the worker and popular masses, cutting off the transition to direct mass action in the work and study centers, in the streets.

Thus the role that the interclass pact between reformist workers organizations and the Left Radicals plays today is the role of *an obstacle to the advance of the masses* that would be opened by the imposition of the proletariat's own objectives, methods, and forms of organization. *It is in this concrete form that Big Capital, while it continues to be tied to the Fifth Republic, already today uses the Union of the Left in order to put the brakes on the rise of the workers through a bloc in which it exercises its political domination. It matters little that the bourgeois forces "are few" and "little representative." It is Big Capital that holds on to hegemony in the bloc formed by the Union, not the CP. This is what determines its class character.*

You should have taken into account the METHOD that Trotsky used to analyse the 1936 Popular Front in Spain. This is masterfully summarized in "The Lessons of Spain: The Last Warning." In one of its fundamental sections he says: "Politically most striking is the fact that the Spanish Popular Front lacked in reality even a parallelogram of forces. The bourgeoisie's place was occupied by its shadow. Through the medium of the Stalinists, Socialists, and Anarchists, the Spanish bourgeoisie subordinated the proletariat to itself without even bothering to participate in the Popular Front. The overwhelming majority of the exploiters of all political shades openly went over to the camp of Franco. Without any theory of 'permanent revolution,' the Spanish bourgeoisie understood from the outset that the revolutionary mass movement, no matter how it starts, is directed against private ownership of land and the means of production, and that it is utterly impossible to cope with this movement by democratic measures.

"That is why only insignificant debris from the possessing classes remained in the republican camp: Messrs. Azaña, Companys, and the like—political attorneys of the bourgeoisie but not the bourgeoisie itself. Having staked everything on a military dictatorship, the possessing classes were able, at the same time, to make use of their political representatives of *yesterday* in order to paralyze, disorganize, and afterward strangle the socialist movement of the masses in 'republican' territory." (*The Spanish Revolution* (1931-1939), Pathfinder Press, 1973, pp. 309-10).

In contrast to the method used by Trotsky, the method the majority of the LC uses to determine the political hegemony of one of the parts of the alliance over the whole of it is a *bourgeois, sociological, apparatus method*, based on the numerical weight and organizational capacity of the CP. From this it is asserted, in fact, that the organizational hegemony of the CP somehow gives something of a "working class essence" to the Union of the Left. This "essence" of Stalinism transforms a pact with the Social Democracy and the Left Radicals (between whom no differentiation is made in some documents, like the one cited) into a bloc with a "class-against-class" dynamic.

The character of the Stalinist organizations is working

class. But it is not this character, whatever size the CP might be, that we Trotskyists take into account in order to determine the content of the alliance that makes up the Union of the Left. What we have to take into account is the *class character of the political line of the Stalinist parties*, a political line that converts them into *agents of the bourgeoisie on behalf of the Soviet bureaucracy* within the workers movement.

It is for all these reasons that a vote for the Union of the Left is not a class vote. It is a vote for an electoral plan of class collaboration. It brings sections of fighters who want to break with it or have partially broken, back within the boundaries established by the class collaboration policy of the reformist leaderships. It expresses an internalization of the pressure exerted by the Union of the Left in the ranks of the Trotskyists and in the whole of the so-called "far left."

On the other hand, a CP-SP vote is *qualitatively* different. It is a vote for the workers parties in which the great majority of the working class has confidence and by which it is organized through the large mass unions and, at the same time, it is *a vote against the probourgeois political line of their leaderships*. It thus establishes a line of division between the working class and its organizations on the one hand, and the bourgeoisie and its parties on the other, helping to show the workers what side of the dividing line their leaderships are found on—the side of the bourgeois order.

The slogan the Trotskyists put forward in the voting in the second round should have been, therefore, to call for a vote to the workers parties, explicitly counterposed to a vote for the Union of the Left, to a vote for its electoral plan. It should have called on the proletariat and the popular masses to vote for the candidates of the CP and SP, and not to deposit even a single vote for a single bourgeois candidate, not a single vote for the Left Radicals.

But behind the characterization that the Ligue Communiste majority has made of the Union of the Left and of the role that the CP plays within it, we believe that there is a broad polemic that affects a great portion of the present debates within the Fourth International.

In a contribution by Comrade Germain to our founding discussion, he did not show himself to be very much in agreement with the Transitional Program, according to which the Communist International's definitive movement over to the side of the bourgeois order has taken place. The movement of the bureaucracy from a centrist policy to a counterrevolutionary bourgeois orientation is, nevertheless, the point of departure for the founding of the Fourth International. This is again confirmed in his document "The Bureaucracy," in which he speaks of the "centrist *balance*" of the policy of the Stalinists up to our time. Even today, in the "Draft theses [on Europe] submitted to the Tenth World Congress (Fourth Since Reunification)" subtle differences are established between the counterrevolutionary role of the Stalinists and Social Democrats. While on the one hand he speaks of the "counterrevolutionary and procapitalist nature" of the Social Democracy's politics, on the other hand he refers to the "neo-reformism" of the CPs.

Thus it is not strange that the Ligue Communiste, educated through these positions, would have systematically characterized the CP as "less counterrevolutionary" than the SP, at the same time it has rejected the working class character of the Social Democratic organizations, defining them for some time as bourgeois parties.

The characterization that your Third Congress makes

of the SP *only worsens* the decision adopted with respect to the Union of the Left. Referring to it, the Political Resolution says: "A heterogeneous party—both in terms of the currents it contains and in terms of the conflicting perspectives which coexist within it—the SP today can be defined neither as a bourgeois party, nor as a working-class party which is bourgeois because of its weak implantation in the working class. The important thing for us is the function which the SP—incapable as it is of reconstituting itself simply on the reduced parliamentary terrain of the strong state—is fulfilling within the workers movement through its alliance with the CP."

In this paragraph, one of the arguments used to deny the SP a class character is that of its scarce implantation in the proletariat. Against those criteria, which form part of the same apparatistic method (based on the numerical and organizational weight) that is used to assert that the CP has hegemony in the Union of the Left, we say it is *impressionist* to negate the working-class character of either Stalinist organizations or Social Democratic organizations on the basis of the counterrevolutionary role of their politics; just as it is to determine this nature by its conjunctural implanation, by its composition, or by the presence of bourgeois leaders, like Mitterrand, in the SP, and more generally, by the concrete situation in the organization at a concrete time and in a specific country. As we said in one of our documents approved at the Second Congress: "*The class nature of these organizations is derived from the historic and social roots that join them to a basic current of the workers movement on an international level.* Thus, not even the European Social Democratic parties' advanced state of social-imperialist degeneration (expressed by a process of substituting on their leadership levels cadres who come out of the state bureaucrats in place of those from intellectual circles tied to the apparatus, or the representatives of the trade-union bureaucracy) allows one to speak of their loss of their working class character, which is present in the ties that they continue to maintain with the class on the trade union level and on the electoral level, through which they express on the most elementary level the class instinct expressed by voting for a workers party and not a bourgeois party" ("Build the Party on the Basis of the Transitional Program").

Nevertheless, after rejecting the working class character of the SP, the majority of the Ligue Communiste's leadership have had to become real jugglers in order to present this position in such a way as would permit you to justify a vote for the Union of the Left. You have found the justification in the following reasoning: *The SP ends up playing a role as a working class party through its alliance with the CP.*

Thus Tisserand asserts, clearing up the last lines of the cited Political Resolution, in relation to the role that the SP plays through its pact with the CP: "Today, until the elections, it is the agreement with the CP that prevails. In the conditions under which it has been concluded, not only does the agreement not mark the hegemony of the bourgeoisie within the Union of the Left, through the intermediary of the SP; even more it gives the SP a political function that, if it is perpetuated, can profoundly influence its class character."

The capacities for proletarian regeneration imparted by Stalinism have reached this extreme!

The final rationalization through which it was finally decided to vote for the Union of the Left is presented in a systematic manner by Comrade D. Bensaid in the article

entitled "The Third Congress of the Ligue Communiste": "We have explained that, in case the electoral campaign should express a profound unifying current among the workers around the Common Program, we do not hesitate to call for a vote on the second round for the Union of the Left, at the same time that we denounce the dead-end of the perspectives that it attempts to offer.

"Consequently, certain journalists have not held back from licking their lips saying that the obstinate leftists of 1968 have become moderated. They are totally mistaken.

"A small group, unable to weigh directly on the course of events, concerned above all about educating its militants and close sympathizers, might have been able to propose abstention. We are already able to raise the question in another form. We think that an electoral victory, even limited, of the Union of the Left will be perceived by the workers as a change in the relationship of forces between classes in its favor, as a stimulus for the struggle. We also think that such a result will be able to precipitate the crisis in the politics of the majority.

"In these conditions, if we are in favor of calling for a second round vote for the Union of the Left, it is because we feel ourselves strong. Conscious that it would not involve a real solution, but rather an aggravation of the present tensions between classes, we are disposed to assume all the consequences with our presence in the struggle. We are disposed to play a motive role in the sense of going beyond the legal framework in which the Union of the Left is trying to keep itself." (Daniel Bensaid [*Rouge*, No. 184, Dec. 16, 1972.]).

But Lenin and Trotsky have shown on many occasions that we communists cannot guide ourselves by the illusions of the masses as Comrade Bensaid does in this article, but rather by *their real needs*. It is in relation to these needs that we define our entire line of activity. As Trotsky showed in the discussions around the Transitional Program, this is the difference between communism and reformism. To adapt oneself to these illusions of the masses in the Union of the Left does not mean reworking and giving form to the class' profoundly revolutionary aspiration for unity, but rather to the bourgeoisie's policy of holding back and dividing the class, achieved through the agencies of the bourgeoisie in the workers movement. It means an adaptation to the policy of the reformist leaderships.

Communists must know how to clearly distinguish the positive aspect that the working class' desire for the unity of its ranks has, a unity that is needed in the immediate battles as well as in the struggle for power. Communists must base themselves on this desire in order to root out the illusions in the Union of the Left from its midst, counterposing a "class-against-class" line to it, to the divisive roads of a united front with the bourgeoisie.

On the other hand, the position of the Ligue Communiste majority had the effect of sanctioning a class collaboration pact, of calling on the working class to give its votes—and with that its confidence—to bourgeois candidates like the banker Filippi, presented by the Radicals. Politically it is opportunist. The arguments that underlie it revise fundamental elements of revolutionary Marxism.

The Trotskyists were obliged to reject the reformist plan. And this rejection had to be concretized in the vote formula. It meant telling the electorate of the CP and SP: "Demand of your leaders that they break with the bourgeoisie, that they break with the Left Radicals." We know that the reformist leaderships are never going to be willing to break the ties that bind them to the bourgeoisie. But the

great majority of the working class and the popular masses do not know that yet. It will be to the extent that this need is impressed on them that growing layers of the working class will understand the sell-out character of the old leaders, the need to build a new revolutionary leadership, a task to which the Fourth International is committed.

IV

And, once again, what is on the table is the problems of building the Fourth International.

The defense of a class-against-class line, against the reformist apparatuses' policy of class collaboration, in all areas of the class struggle, is the battle through which the Trotskyists have defined themselves in the face of all the other currents in the workers movement. No matter how small the Trotskyist group might be, no matter how small its weight might be in the determination of the events of the class struggle, it must take on, from the first days of its formation, the struggle for the unification of the proletariat on the basis of the revolutionary program. It must intervene in every one of the events in the class battles, fighting to have the masses advance in this direction. There is not one policy for when a group is small and a different one for when it is numerically larger, as Comrade Bensaid tells us in the cited article. What does vary is the practical possibilities for carrying it out, its scope. Today the Ligue Communiste was able to put up a hundred candidates in the French legislative elections. It has been able to carry out an electoral campaign that has culminated in a meeting in which 7,000 people came together in Paris. If by contrast the French Trotskyists had been a smaller group, if they still would not have had sufficient strength to put forward their own candidates in the elections, this would not have meant, as Comrade Bensaid tells us, that in their oral and written propaganda, in their intervention, limited though it might be, it could have proposed abstention.

Comrade Bensaid does not believe, as Trotsky did, that we communists must go forward in building the party through the struggle for a policy established in relation to the needs of the masses, as they are derived from the material contradictions of the capitalist death agony. He believes that we must establish our policy in relation to the relationship of forces existing between our apparatus, the revolutionary apparatus, and the reformist apparatuses.

Our experience shows us that perhaps in this way we can "build our organization" as a centrist abortion. But we will not be able to go forward in building the parties of the Fourth International.

At first glance, the fact that the same comrades who not long ago wrote or took up the "critical" defense of the document "Is the question of power posed? Let's pose it!" (French Internal Bulletin No. 30; see SWP Internal Information Bulletin no. 6 in 1973) can today put forward a line like the one set out in the Ligue Communiste Third Congress Political Resolution seems striking.

In reality, there is no reason to be surprised. The basic content of said document feeds on the Ligue's confusing the working class and its organizations on the one hand, with the reformist leaderships on the other. This is the ideological sap that gave birth to the thesis according to which "the French working class is spontaneously Stalinist" that was defended in your First Congress and that even appeared in recent internal bulletins. It is interesting to point out that our En Marche faction applies this thesis creatively to Spain, asserting that "the spontaneity of the working class is not in contradiction to either Stalin-

ism or syndicalism."

The underestimation of the processes of crisis that are shaking the Stalinist parties and the scepticism with respect to the revolutionary capacities of the working class are the immediate consequences of all those plans of action present in Bulletin No. 30. From this also flows the scepticism regarding the possibility of building the revolutionary party in the midst of the struggles of the class and the search for "tactical," "dialectical," etc. (shortcuts that make it possible to resolve the problem outside the weak "classical" roads), i.e., outside the archeo-Trotskyist method sketched out in the Transitional Program.

But this method is only the present day expression of an old idea that Marx and Engels tirelessly repeated. It is certain that without the building of the revolutionary party the working class cannot constitute itself as a class. But this also means that the building of the revolutionary party, the building of the Fourth International, *is the task of the working class, and not the "special" and "separate" task of some "revolutionaries."*

If we don't think in this way, we are not going to find any other solution for the building of the party than to conceive of it as a process outside the struggles of the class—whose natural political expression is the reformist apparatuses. We are only going to have the choices of "initiatives of the revolutionaries" or tailendism with respect to the opportunist leaderships. We sincerely believe that your electoral policy in 1973 has combined both choices.

This policy has only concretized the general tactical orientation of the United Secretariat majority, in its document on building revolutionary parties in capitalist Europe: "to win political and organizational hegemony within the new vanguard with a mass character" through a "policy of initiatives in action" adopted to the concerns of this vanguard, with the goal of transforming it into a "shock force" and an "adequate instrument."

In general, this policy establishes that the Trotskyists must today content ourselves with dealing with the bulk of the proletariat, controlled by the reformist leaderships, through a practical activity that is divorced from the development of the struggles of the class, that is embodied in autonomous initiatives capable of pulling along the new vanguard. Expressing itself in the renunciation of the systematization of a united front policy, it implies a serious dose of sectarianism toward the workers controlled by the reformists. But it means, at the same time, that we Trotskyists make the workers responsible for the failure of their struggles, that we don't give ourselves a policy that effectively denounces, at each moment, the fundamental responsibility of the opportunist leaderships for those failures.

Of course, in the mentioned document, they don't neglect asserting that we Trotskyists must resort to "credible unity initiatives." The documents of the Ligue Communiste tell us that this policy of "unity in action—outflanking the bureaucracies" requires, in order to be effective, that it be based on unity with the various components of the "far left" (Bulletin No. 28). Your tactic in regard to the elections shows us the banner behind which these united activities with the "far left" are achieved: the banner of the lowest common denominator of the left and right centrist organizations participating in the actions. In this case it was "to be against the electoral and peaceful roads."

All these questions have played an important role in the debates and the crisis in the LCR. In May 1972, after having rejected the line of class united front since

it was founded, the LCR was forced, in the face of the crumbling of the entire previous orientation under the blows of the class struggle, to carry out a fundamental change.

Comrade Bensaid played a very important role in this change: scarcely a year after having rejected a policy of united front (until the day we would be a strong party), Bensaid advised us in May 1972 that *wewere now already able to develop such a policy*. And it was the same Comrade Bensaid who counseled us to explain this "turn" through a "change in the relationship of forces between the LCR and the reformists." If we had not developed this policy before, it was because we were a small group "concerned above all with educating its members and sympathizers."

These absurdities don't stand up. The Encrucijada tendency began to crystallize when a group of comrades argued that, according to Bensaid's logic, if the police detained a few dozen militants and sympathizers, something that is perfectly possible in our country at any time, it would probably change the relationship of forces between revolutionaries and reformists and we should have to return, if we were consistent, to our old ultraleftist orientation.

As the discussion progressed, we saw that these positions did not stem from isolated political errors.

The support to the seven points of the Provisional Revolutionary Government [of South Vietnam], which included a call for the formation of a governmental coalition with sectors of the Vietnamese bourgeoisie, went on to confirm it. The present situation in Vietnam raises the need for the revolutionaries to fight for a workers and peasants government, based on the revolutionary mass movement that is daily fighting imperialism and its puppets, on the democratic organizations of this movement. This government is the only one capable of creating a context for the real exercising of full political liberties in Vietnam, the only one in which elections to a free constituent assembly are possible, which allows the exercising of the right of self-determination for the Vietnamese people. Since all the factions of the Vietnamese bourgeoisie are not interested in and are brutally opposed to this process, the LC's taking a position of support for the coalition government proposed by the PRG does not correspond to the needs for the advancement of the revolutionary process in Indochina. It can only correspond to an adaptation to the political line of the North Vietnamese leadership (which you characterize as the Bolshevik Party of our times).

The policy you have adopted with respect to the Union of the Left is one more step, a grave step, in the development of these positions within the Ligue, although it runs up against the opposition of important sectors of the organization.

But the development of these positions does not remain limited to the framework of the Ligue Communiste. We all know the weight of the French section over the European sections of the Fourth International as a whole; the LC's role as the most advanced point, with strong influence over the policy and activity of less developed sections; its specific weight in the development of the general political orientation of the United Secretariat majority leadership.

The example closest to home for us is the immediate adoption of the method used by the French Ligue Communiste to characterize the Union of the Left, by the splitters' faction here to analyse the Assembly of Cata-

lonia, the organizational concretization of the Spanish CP's "Pact for Freedom."

Thus, in their *Combate* No. 15, the En Marcha comrades, in analyzing the Assembly of Catalonia, claim that the Spanish CP has hegemony in it, that its political line is dominant, not the bourgeoisie's, since the bourgeois politicians in the coalition are not representative of any sector of Big Capital, the bourgeoisie all being on Franco's side, while the numerical and organizational weight in the Assembly basically falls back onto the CP. Finally they go on to evaluate the Assembly of Catalonia in relation to its inability to mobilize the masses, as the fundamental criteria for characterizing it.

These analyses as a whole leave the doors wide open to the comrades of the splittist faction's possible participation in the Assembly of Catalonia or other similar machinations, in the event that—naturally!—it "mobilizes the masses." And the Assembly of Catalonia can make mass calls and meetings through the use of workers organizations with roots in the class, like the COs [Comisiones Obreras—Workers Commissions] over whom the CP still maintains leadership. The recent meeting held in San Cugat del Valles, called by the Assembly of Catalonia, at which between 6,000 and 10,000 people were in attendance, is an example. We note that in this case the En Marcha comrades continue to be inconsistent with what they write in their *Combate*.

It is absolutely necessary to begin a thorough-going discussion around the significance of the Ligue Communiste's recent positions and their relation to the overall political orientation. The totality of arguments that have come up in the debates at the Third Congress to justify voting for the Union of the Left are not new in the Ligue. On the contrary, it is their materialization in practice. The same basic conceptions of the LC on the united front policy, which have served as the basis for a leftist policy with respect to the workers movement as a whole, are those that today have blessed the voting for a class collaborationist projection.

The discussions on the role played by the CP in the alliance, on the character of the SP, which has never been clearly stated by the Ligue, show the need for broader discussions on the character of Stalinism and Social Democracy. And these cannot simply be satisfied through a "clarification" from Comrade Germain, when things have already gone so far. Not only the Ligue's leadership, but all the militants, must carry out a thorough-going discussion on these questions, which allows a new leap forward in the building of a revolutionary party in France.

This is because these debates as a whole reflect a general lack of understanding of the dynamic of the relations between the working class, its organizations, and its leaderships, a dynamic that forms part of the theoretical baggage of the Trotskyist movement. They are linked together in the debate around the building of the party, in the very development of the proletariat's struggles against the bourgeoisie under conditions of the death agony of capitalism and the crisis of revolutionary leadership. It leads to questioning, misunderstanding, or abandoning the method of party building based on the Transitional Program, which leads to tactics of party building such as the "initiatives in action." It falls within the fundamental pre-Congress discussion for the Tenth Congress of the Fourth International.

Letter to the Political Bureau of the French Ligue Communiste

By the Central Committee of the Liga Comunista

Comrades,

At the request of the Second Congress of the LCR [Liga Comunista Revolucionaria] (at which the name Liga Comunista was adopted), we must express to you our shock at the attitude you publicly adopted regarding the congress of the En Marcha faction [Underway] which took place a few months ago. [See Appendix: Greetings from the Ligue Communiste to the Convention of the En Marcha faction of the LCR, December 1972] This public statement of attitude was, to our way of thinking, a transgression of the most elementary norms of democratic centralism, and is fraught with grave consequences because of its repercussions on the prestige of Trotskyism as well as the serious implications that this procedure has in the present context of the international debate.

We think that it is the duty of every member, and even more so of the leading bodies of any section or sympathizing organization, to form an opinion on the internal problems of other organizations which are sections or sympathizing organizations of the Fourth International as soon as the available facts constitute a sufficient basis for making an evaluation. In this sense, an understanding that the comrades of the En Marcha faction took direct inspiration from your own positions, we must consider it positive that you promptly showed your appreciation of the positions approved by the congress of En Marcha as a "profound political clarification," a clarification decisive for building the revolutionary party in Spain, etc. Since you thought it, it was your duty as members of the International to state it, and to carry out a political battle within the International to try to convince the International as a whole of the correctness of the positions maintained by En Marcha and yourselves as against those we defend.

Unfortunately, you decided to defend your positions another way. In effect, you adopted two positions which we consider to be incorrect. The first refers to the justification given for the split in the LCR. The second refers to the public endorsement which you gave to the split and to the congress of En Marcha *against* another faction that looked to and still looks to the Fourth International just as much as En Marcha. You publicly justified the split.

As for the first, in your public message to the En Marcha Congress you expressed the opinion that the split of the LCR had been the price of the "political clarification" which you greeted. The price, you said, "perhaps could have been less . . . if the International had been able to devote greater efforts to its development in Spain." But, in fact, inevitably it had to be paid. In your words: "without doubt, the especially difficult conditions for building a revolutionary Marxist organization under the Francoist dictatorship, in the absence of any Trotskyist tradition, in the face of a precipitous rise in the class struggle, *left few possibilities for choice.*" The underlining is ours, and we think it is not possible to misinterpret it. It implies that, in fact, the road to the construction of the section of the Fourth International in Spain passed through the split consummated last December.

This affirmation places a grave responsibility upon you, especially when you consider that your message

deliberately ignored the other faction [Encrucijada] (a majority, by the way, but we won't go into that because it is clear that in order to endorse the split you had to refuse to recognize this fact) which considered itself, and still considers itself also part of the Fourth International. In other words, your message considers us as an element that is foreign to the International.

This is absolutely consistent with the parallelism you establish between us . . . and the Lambertist faction which left the Comunismo group [predecessor to the LCR]. You didn't even bother to tone down that parallel in the slightest.

You were perfectly aware of the international implications of the debate taking place in the LCR, of its place within the debate opened in preparation for the Tenth World Congress. And the conclusion that you draw is to simply declare as foreign to the International those who maintain positions that are counterposed to yours, and to justify the split carried out by those who agree with you, extolling it as an indispensable step and "a fundamental stage in the building of the Spanish Section of the Fourth International."

To us this attitude appears completely inadmissible. But, at least, it could have been raised within the International, as the opinion of the leadership of the French section, and submitted for the decision of the leading international bodies.

But on the contrary, your attitude goes much further in that factional dynamic. Instead of adjusting yourselves to democratic centralism you wasted no time in publicly expounding your posture. The International Executive Committee, after hearing the allegations of the En Marcha tendency and the Encrucijada tendency right before the split, thought it inconvenient to express for the time being an opinion on the crisis of the LCR. Nevertheless, only a short time later, the leadership of a section permits itself to express publicly (a) its support for the congress that consummated the split, and (b) to publicly assert that this split had proven to be a necessary step in the construction of the Fourth International, ignoring in that public statement the other faction as if it had nothing to do with the International . . . by decision of the French section of the International.

Having this procedure before us, a procedure which looks monstrous to us, we only wish to pose two questions:

1. Is this the way you conceive of contributing to the construction of the section of the Fourth International in Spain? Undoubtedly, one "argument" which might have had some weight in your decision to send such a message would be the advantage of backing the En Marcha faction with the prestige of the Ligue Communiste at the moment when that faction split. Perhaps you thought that with such a "coup of prestige," you would be able to reinforce the "profound political clarification" carried out (according to you) by En Marcha and thereby open the eyes of the broader vanguard which fights against the dictatorship of Franco.

For our part, we believe that after we proved the weakness of En Marcha's political positions, positions which

you inspired. En Marcha could not stand a deepening of the debate. The leadership of En Marcha had to split as the only way of keeping the supporters it still had, so you jumped in, utilizing arguments in defense of the split line of En Marcha.

We think that when one tries to aid the political presentation to insure a victory of those positions, by resorting to "coups of prestige" or, to speak clearly, to factional maneuvers, the result can only be to accumulate obstacles on the path of the construction of the party. Because it is not simply a question of making a "revolutionary pole" "appear" by *whatever means necessary*. The banner which we Trotskyists ought to raise within the vanguard and in front of the masses is not just any banner that "causes a sensation." We ought to raise the banner of Leninism, a program centered on the building of the party, of the International. Carrying out a split in order to cut short a debate is no Trotskyist credential in the eyes of the vanguard of Spain. Support like yours to a split, bypassing the International, breaking the organizational framework of the International, can only diminish the prestige of the International among the vanguard in Spain. Your attitude forced us to respond, also publicly, explaining the reasons for your extemporaneous intervention in support of En Marcha. Where does this dynamic lead? We hope you don't try to justify it by referring to the peculiar conditions of the Francoist dictatorship, since it is precisely these conditions that make the vanguard particularly sensitive against splits and factionalism.

We believe that given a little bit more perspective due to the time that has passed, you ought to reconsider the meaning of that attitude, taking into account what would have happened if before the split the various members of the International had rushed to proclaim their exclusive recognition of one of the two sides, considering the other as a foreign body. With this we come to the second question we ought to ask you.

2. Where does this method lead? Where is the International going if the various sections begin to adopt the procedures of the French leadership?

Before anything else, it is necessary to state that under any circumstances, an occurrence as serious as a split demands that the first concern of the whole world organization be to assure maximum political and organizational clarification. This is impossible if the strictest maintenance of democratic centralism is not observed, carrying out the discussions and polemics within the International and leaving it to the leading bodies of the International to initiate any public position on the split. We believe that the fact that we are not dealing with a section but rather with a sympathizing organization does not alter the spirit with which the question should have been approached, because what was at stake was precisely the construction of the section of the Fourth International in Spain. The fact that we are dealing with an organization which, as you point out, "will have to confront tasks much more difficult in the coming years than those with which most of the European sections of the Fourth International will be confronted," only makes the gravity of your attitude more striking.

But what gives alarming proportions to this attitude is the framework of preparations for the *Tenth World Congress* and the *international tendency debate*. Within that framework, a section with the weight of the French section, a good number of whose leaders have important responsibilities in the International, launches itself into defense of its political positions resorting to those kinds of methods, taking the authors of the split in Spain under its wing,

and supporting them in this fashion, throwing democratic centralism and the International overboard. This implies grave threats to the development of a political debate of the importance of the one now before us.

Having suffered in the flesh from the abominable consequences of these methods through the actions of the En Marcha splitters' faction and through your own interventions in Spain, we cannot but call to your attention and to the attention of the International the necessity to break with such methods that are contrary to democratic centralism. This is an indispensable condition if the international debate, through which the Fourth International should advance, is not to be frustrated.

This is why the Second Congress of the LCR (today the Liga Comunista) considered it important that we put this criticism before you and notify the United Secretariat of it.

For our part, we cannot help but establish a relationship between your message to the En Marcha congress and attitudes adopted by some of you before and after that act.

The message was the crowning touch on a whole series of interventions by various leaders of the French section during the process of development through which Communismo and the LCR progressed. These interventions determined our course, and were in many cases decisive. Far from praising the French section for its internationalist eagerness, we consider your intervention pernicious because of the series of "political" solutions offered and the methods that time and again flowed from those solutions. In this sense we understand that insofar as those comrades who intervened in the LCR were involved, their hailing of the split of the LCR as largely inevitable was nothing other than justifying their own work.

This is not the place to make an analysis of the successive intervention of those comrades, from the moment when Comrade J. advised us, regarding the debates taking place at the time of the founding of the LCR, not to deal with a whole set of principled and strategic questions, which, because they weren't clarified in time, accumulated political contradictions which finally resulted in the crisis of the last year. You know the fundamental criticism which we make: instead of transmitting to us the fundamental points of revolutionary Marxism which was indispensable in order to build a Trotskyist organization on firm foundations in Spain, you tried to overcome our initial ultraleftism by specific "tactical" corrections giving rise to more intricate combinations of left and right opportunism. Here we can only refer to a couple of landmarks in this process.

On the one hand, during and after the first Congress [January 1972], Comrade R., without being able to offer us the political basis for overcoming the impasse that congress represented, instead actively participated in the organizational confrontations which occurred. No political clarification came from any of the counterposed organizational blocks . . . nor was there any such clarification forthcoming from Comrade R. Perhaps Comrade R. had his own motives for trying to get a "loyal" faction inside the LCR. This would be consistent with the understanding of members of ETA VI that a fusion was proposed not with the LCR but rather with "one part" of the LCR . . . a conviction which was held way before the split in the LCR. Perhaps Comrade R. saw it necessary to break with the "exaggerated" ultraleftism of the LCR. Nevertheless this problem could only have been resolved correctly by putting forward fundamental Trotskyist positions and concretizing them on key points, such as Workers Commis-

sions. It could never be resolved by trying to construct a faction willing to follow each tactical twist and turn of the Ligue Communiste in the student movement. Nor could a solution be reached through supporting the bureaucratic organizational methods of an organizational bloc which at that time maintained positions opposed to the Workers Commissions (as did the rest of the LCR).

On the other hand, we have to remember the role played by Comrade Jebrac in the very initiation of the crisis. Toward the end of March 1972, this comrade pointed out the convenience of a "tactic" of united front in the Workers Commissions. This drop of water made the whole glassful of contradictions overflow. It was the "catalyst" for the appearance of diverse proposals for which entry into the Workers Commissions was a common denominator. But the suggestion of Comrade Jebrac was very representative of certain political positions. The comrade maintained that the organization had to be told that the turn was a tactical advance dictated by supposedly new circumstances and did not imply any change in orientation. But the LCR was an organization founded in opposition to the Workers Commissions. And precisely because we followed the advice of the French comrades, the LCR had rejected, at the time of its founding, united front politics. The rectification of the attitude toward the Workers Commissions was absolutely necessary. But the only non-opportunist way of doing it was to rediscuss the political foundations of the LCR and above all the conception of the construction of the party, starting from the forgotten Transitional Program and the strategic orientation of the united front which it implies. And that was the way one part of the leadership posed the question. When confronted with this, Comrade Jebrac limited himself to giving a light varnish of consistency to the positions previously taken by the Spanish Commission, which meant passing over to a new form of opportunism in regard to the Workers Commissions. The crisis of the LCR exploded precisely at the moment when, following the positions of Comrade Jebrac, a part of the leadership refused to acknowledge the importance of this debate, of reexamining the political positions we had been following and assimilating the Transitional Program, which we had never done.

That is how tendencies came to be constituted in the LCR. After meeting with both of them, Comrade Jebrac suggested to the En Marcha comrades that they agree to prepare for a congress, not to resolve the political problem that had been posed (for them a debate on the total politics of the LCR was still unnecessary), but rather to resolve the organizational problem of the division within the Central Committee! The refusal to debate was still operative. The comrades of En Marcha tried to maintain it, but found their position rejected time and again until they opted for "resolving the question" by holding the splitters' congress.

We did not have concrete facts about the participation of Comrade Jebrac or other comrades of the Ligue Communiste in this last step, because naturally we did not know the content of the intense discussions maintained between the French comrades and the En Marcha tendency during the months preceding the split. However, your message throws a clarifying light on this question and leaves very few doubts about the responsibility of a number of comrades of the Ligue Communiste in the split of the LCR.

But then, *what we are dealing with is not, as the message asserts, a situation where the International could not devote more efforts to its development in Spain. What is in question is the character of the efforts made by some*

leaders of the International and above all by Comrade Jebrac in relation to developments in Spain, efforts which include the message of the Political Bureau of the Ligue Communiste to the Congress of En Marcha.

And it is definitely true that the problem of the split cannot be considered from the point of view of the "especially difficult conditions for building a revolutionary Marxist organization under the Francoist dictatorship, in the absence of any Trotskyist tradition, in the face of a precipitous rise in the class struggle." On the contrary, we have to consider the whole question from the point of view of how Trotskyist traditions are imparted to new organizations tied to the precipitous development of the class struggle. We have to analyze the split from the point of view of how debates between different lines within the International are resolved, including under the conditions of Francoism. Precisely one of the points for which we Trotskyists criticize the Stalinists, syndicalists, and various centrists is that they use the dictatorship as an excuse to eliminate democracy in the workers movement and democratic centralism inside the parties, in order to preserve their erroneous political orientations. You know as well as we do that if clandestinity imposes certain restrictions on exercising some forms of democracy, that only sharpens the need to have a real flesh-and-blood preservation of the fundamentals of workers democracy, of democratic centralism in the party.

Definitively, the intervention by Comrade Jebrac and others, and your message, give a dangerous international scope to the splitting attitudes of the En Marcha faction of the LCR as a method for "resolving" a debate without developing it, as a method to "defend" political positions in which one lacks confidence.

We still must refer to two things that took place after the split. For one thing, we should point out that we were amazed to find out, from the mouth of Comrade R., that the Ligue Communiste maintains special relations with En Marcha on various levels, *including the economic*, by virtue of belonging to the same international tendency. We were unaware of such an economic dimension to tendency relationships.

One word on the document "Scission dans la Liga Comunista Revolucionaria" ["The Split in the LCR"] by Comrade P. Rops, published in the *Bulletin de Sociologie Internationale* [French internal information bulletin on international questions], No. 2, May 1973 (which is dedicated to expounding the positions of En Marcha). We do not object in the least to the fact that the comrades of En Marcha share with Comrade Rops the defense of their positions. Nevertheless, we must make our protest against the falsifications included in the article by Comrade Rops perfectly clear, falsifications which are strange coming from the pen of a comrades who has abundant knowledge of the real development of the crisis in the LCR. So Comrade Rops asserts with respect to the question of the Workers Commissions: "The 'La Liga en marcha' tendency had taken the initiative toward the necessary turn; at first 'Encrucijada' was opposed to the turn on the question of workers commissions and later agreed to it but for other reasons." Comrade Rops, like others, knows very well that if we leave aside the proposals of Comrade Jebrac and others from the Spanish Commission, the initiative for such a turn came not only from the future leaders of the En Marcha tendency but on the contrary came simultaneously, from both, as did many other things.¹ At any rate, this happened more than a month and a half before tendencies were constituted. When these were constituted, the turn toward the commissions was a

question accepted by the whole Central Committee. So it is false to say that the Encrucijada tendency was ever opposed to the turn toward Workers Commissions. The only thing that is true is that the reasons for the turn were always presented in different ways. What does Comrade Rops think he is doing by making declarations that don't have the slightest foundation in reality? Perhaps the same thing as the sowers of "information" throughout Europe, who classified us as Lambertists as well as assuring that we were on the verge of disintegration.

Nevertheless, at least Comrade Rops recognizes at the end of his article that the "LCR-Encrucijada is today clearly within the International." This cannot comfort us, after the message to which we have referred. But the comrade explains this in his article saying, "The adherence of the leadership of the 'LCR-Encrucijada' to the international minority and the expulsion of the Lambertist tendency that had been formed within Encrucijada permit them to eliminate certain political ambiguities." We cannot help but rejoice that Comrade Rops has eliminated his political ambiguities, but we want to make it perfectly clear that for our part there was never any ambiguity insofar as our being within the framework of the Fourth International. The comrade knows perfectly well that from the first until the last document of the Encrucijada tendency, before the split of En Marcha, and afterwards, all our documents clearly indicate this fact, and moreover, the documents carried titles like "Why we belong to the Fourth International." This is not the way to justify attitudes like those expressed in the "greetings."

And even more, the "benevolent" attitude of Comrade Rops still has some shadows when he asserts that it is possible to conceive of a future fusion between the two organizations "to the extent that the LCR-Encrucijada really applies itself to the construction of the Fourth International." It is all right for the comrade to be in disagreement with the way we are applying ourselves to constructing the Fourth, but in spite of all the organizational and political deficiencies, he knows that the LCR, today

the Liga Comunista, struggles daily against Francoism and capitalism and for the construction of the Fourth International. Another question is the "partial elimination of the differences as they were expressed at the moment of the split," an elimination that the growingly opportunist course of En Marcha does not make easy. But this will have to be relegated to an international debate, a debate which has to be developed at all costs, and for whose development it is indispensable that factional attitudes like those signified by the "greetings" you sent to the congress of En Marcha not be repeated.

The fundamental objective of this letter is to underline the necessity that this debate be allowed to develop without being impeded by such methods. We hope that your attitude in this debate will be different from the one you have had, and the promise to publish a bulletin in response to the one we cited above has given us hope that this will be the case (you will shortly receive the contents of the bulletin). Within the context of this hope, we must make very clear the necessity for you to publicly rectify the incorrect assertions that you made in the public message to the congress of En Marcha. In the same manner we hope that Comrade Rops would also rectify the false statements we have just pointed out.

Revolutionary Greetings,

June 20, 1973

1. Since it demonstrates the obstacles that reality imposes upon falsifiers, it is worthwhile to reproduce what the comrades of En Marcha say in their "Resolution on the crisis of the LCR," a document approved at their Congress: "The possibilities for emerging from this impasse appeared when, almost unanimously, although by different roads, the Central Committee reached an initially correct conception about the Workers Commissions thereby laying the basis for a thorough-going break with the sectarian stance toward the organized workers movement that we had maintained until then."

APPENDIX: Greetings from the Ligue Communiste to the Convention of the En Marcha Faction of the LCR, December 1972

[The following has been translated from the March-April 1973 issue of *Combate*, organ of the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria of Spain (En Marcha tendency).]

Comrades,

We warmly greet the Second Congress of the LCR. We are convinced that it means a decisive step toward the building of the Revolutionary Party in Spain, a fundamental stage in the building of the Spanish Section of the Fourth International.

The LCR has just been noticeably weakened by the split of an important part of the organization, which has involved numerous militants and cadres. The LCR has, therefore, paid a heavy price for the political clarification that has just been achieved, imposed on it by its own development, which made the sectarian ultraleftist orientation it maintained in its early days untenable.

The price perhaps could have been less—just as the formation of the Lambertist grouplet that left the ranks of the Comunismo group could have been avoided—and the errors could have been avoided, particularly if the International had been able to devote greater efforts to its development in Spain. But, without doubt, the es-

pecially difficult conditions for building a revolutionary Marxist organization under the Francoist dictatorship, in the absence of any Trotskyist tradition, in the face of a precipitous rise in the class struggle, left few possibilities for choice.

If your First Congress had been primarily marked by the application to join the Fourth International, this Second Congress must permit the solid structuring of an organization which will have to confront tasks much more difficult in the coming years than those with which most of the European sections of the Fourth International will be confronted.

And this would only be possible on the basis of the profound political clarification you have just achieved during the debate between tendencies.

We know how decisive the building of the Spanish section is for the International as a whole. In this task, in which the main responsibility falls on you, we commit ourselves to lend you our militant support.

Long Live the LCR!

Long Live the Fourth International!