

PRESENT: Adair, Aubin, Brewster, Claudio, Duret, Frej, Karl, Manuel, Melan, Otto, Roman, Stateman, Susan, Walter

IEC PRESENT: Dunder, Windsor

GUESTS: Allio

- AGENDA:
1. Proposal from representative of "Public Faction of LC" of Spain
 2. Spain--Political Situation
 3. Spain--Fusion Process of LC and LCR
 4. Australia Fusion Process
 5. International Press
 6. Reorganization of the Center
 7. Congress of Swedish Section
 8. Italy
 9. World Congress Preparations
 10. Bureau Report

Chair: Dunder

1. Proposal from representative of "Public Faction of LC" of Spain

Aubin reported the request from Comrade Pablo of the "public faction" to attend the United Secretariat meeting and to explain the positions of his organization.

AGREED: To invite Comrade Pablo to make a presentation to the United Secretariat under the agenda point on the fusion process in Spain; and to appoint a United Secretariat delegation of Aubin, Manuel, and Stateman to meet with him separately to urge the "public faction" to participate in the fusion process between the LCR and the LC.

2. Spain--Political Situation

Manuel reported on the situation in the working class after the Moncloa Pact, and on the December 11 trade union conference of the LCR, which drew 2,300 workers.

Discussion.

3. Spain--Fusion Process

Manuel reported on the progress of fusion of the LC and LCR. The first fused Central Committee meeting of the two organizations will take place the weekend of December 17-18, and the first congress of the fused organization will take place in early May.

Discussion.

MOTION: The Tenth World Congress of the Fourth International (Fourth since Reunification), held in February 1974, unanimously adopted a resolution on "measures to help maintain unity of the Fourth International." Among the measures listed, point 3 of this resolution specified:

"3. Adoption of a general formula to determine status in the following special situation:

"In countries where adherents of the Fourth International are divided into two or more groups acting publicly apart from each other, no group shall be recognized as a section, but all groups shall be recognized as sympathizing groups. But if the groups in any of these countries fuse before the next world congress, the International Executive Committee is empowered to recognize the

united group as a section.

"These are exceptional measures not to be taken as setting a precedent of any kind. It is not the purpose of these measures to encourage splits by giving minority groups the hope that they will receive recognition from the International if they leave a section and set up a public formation."

These recommendations were applied to the Trotskyist movement in the Spanish state where up until now there had existed two sympathizing organizations of the Fourth International: the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria (LCR) and the Liga Comunista (LC).

An indisputable majority of the participants at the fourth congress of the LC, reversing the decisions of the third congress, decided to accept the proposal of immediate fusion adopted by the last congress of the LCR.

This reunification thus brings to an end the split in the Fourth International forces which occurred in 1972.

Confirming the legitimacy of the decision taken by the fourth congress of the LC;

Noting that the LCR agrees to put this fusion into practice immediately;

Knowing that there is unanimous agreement concerning the modalities of the reunification and the preparations for the first congress of the unified organization, which will be called the LCR;

The United Secretariat of the Fourth International:

Sends its warmest greetings to the Trotskyist militants now together in a united organization representing the Fourth International in the Spanish state;

Proposes to the IEC to recognize the reunified LCR as the section of the Fourth International in the Spanish state (this will be done through a poll of IEC members);

Considers that the LCR, while awaiting this formal recognition, can legitimately represent itself publicly as the section of the Fourth International in the Spanish state, given the incontestable character of this reunification;

Appeals to all the militants who claim allegiance to Trotskyism and the Fourth International to join the ranks of the reunified LCR.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY *

Presentation by Pablo of the "Public Faction of the LC"

4. Australia Fusion Process

Dunder reported on fusion process between the Socialist Workers Party and the Communist League of Australia, which will be ratified at a fusion congress in mid-January.

Discussion:

MOTION: The Tenth World Congress of the Fourth International (Fourth since Reunification), held in February 1974, unanimously adopted a resolution on "measures to help maintain unity of the Fourth International." Among the measures listed, point 3 of this resolution specified:

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"In countries where adherents of the Fourth International are divided into two or more groups acting publicly apart from each other, no group shall be recognized as a section, but all groups shall be recognized as sympathizing groups. But if the groups in any of these countries fuse before the next world congress, the International Executive Committee is empowered to recognize the united group as a section.

"These are exceptional measures not to be taken as setting a precedent of any kind. It is not the purpose of these measures to encourage splits by giving minority groups the hope that they will receive recognition from the International if they leave a section and set up a public formation."

In keeping with these measures, at the 1974 World Congress two sympathizing organizations of the Fourth International were recognized in Australia: the Socialist Workers League (now Socialist Workers Party) and the Communist League.

The last conferences of the SWP and the LC have adopted resolutions favoring fusion of the two organizations and the last national committee plenums of the two organizations, held jointly, have voted for the fusion to be consummated at a joint conference in January 1978. In the meantime virtually all of the internal functioning and mass work of the two organizations is being carried out jointly.

Assuming that these decisions are ratified by the memberships of both organizations, this reunification will bring to an end the split in the forces of the Fourth International which occurred in 1972.

The United Secretariat:

Welcomes this fusion process and sends its warmest greetings to the Trotskyist militants now operating together in a united way in Australia;

Once the fusion conference takes place will propose to the IEC to recognize the unified organization as the Australian Section of the Fourth International (this will be done through a poll of IEC members);

Considers that after this conference and while awaiting formal recognition, the unified organization can legitimately represent itself publicly as the Australian Section of the Fourth International.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

6. International Press

Aubin reported on proposal to combine the English edition of Inprecor with Intercontinental Press. The joint publication will be

produced in New York. The British comrades have agreed that all European subscriptions and bundles will be sent out from London after being air-freighted from New York. The English Intercontinental Press-Inprecor will contain a core of material agreed upon by the Bureau as well as additional material prepared by the staff in New York. The French comrades will take responsibility for the production of the biweekly French edition of Inprecor-Intercontinental Press, under the supervision of the Bureau; the Spanish comrades will publish a Spanish edition, under the title Perspectiva Mundial, and the German comrades will publish a German edition.

MOTION: To approve the report.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

7. Reorganization of the Center

Stamman reported on Bureau decisions to establish two sub-committees of the Bureau: (1) an editorial board, which would be responsible for preparing proposals for the Bureau on the core material for the international journal and supervising the editing of this material; and (2) an administrative committee, which will be responsible for preparing Bureau meetings, for making sure all mail is answered, and for general organization of the work of Bureau members. The Bureau has begun an attempt to work more closely with the various existing commissions in order to facilitate greater integration and centralization of this work. Comrade Susan has been added with Comrade Allio to the Women's Commission, and Comrade Claudio has been assigned for the Bureau to help relaunch the Arab Commission. The Bureau proposes that we move toward less frequent meetings of the United Secretariat, which could then be better prepared and more broadly attended. In order to do this, the Bureau should be delegated the right to issue political declarations on important events by majority vote.

MOTION: To approve the report.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

8. Congress of Swedish section

Windsor reported on sixth national congress of the Swedish section, held in Stockholm December 8-11.

Discussion

9. Italy

Duret reported on discussion in Italian section surrounding the resignation from the GCR of Comrade Caronia, who was a member of the Political Bureau and editor of Bandiera Rossa. The report described the current state of the Italian section, the discussions that took place at the GCR Central Committee meeting in mid-November over the future of the organization, and a discussion between a delegation from the Bureau and the Political Bureau of the GCR at the beginning of December. Also reported was the request of the LSR of Italy to establish fraternal relations with the United Secretariat. (A written report will follow in a future mailing to IEC members.)

Discussion

MOTION: Considering that the LSR has expressed the desire to establish regular relations with the United Secretariat;

Considering that the LSR adheres to Trotskyism and wants to be

part of the Fourth International;

Considering that the GCR (Italian Section of the Fourth International) has expressed its agreement with the establishment of relations between the LSR and the Bureau of the United Secretariat;

The United Secretariat decides to establish direct relations with the LSR, with the modalities of these relations subject to the agreement of the GCR.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

10. World Congress Preparations

a) MOTION: To approve the submission to the International Internal Discussion Bulletin of "A Call for the Formation of an International Tendency" by Letourneau, Nemo, Seldjouk, and Ulysses of the French LCR.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

b) MOTION: That Comrades Walter and Celso be assigned to prepare a draft of the World Political Resolution for the next world congress.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

c) MOTION: That Comrades Aubin, Duret, and Stateman be assigned to prepare a draft of a resolution on Europe for the next world congress.

For: 13 (Adair, Allio, Aubin, Brewster, Dunder, Duret, Frej, Otto, Roman, Stateman, Susan, Walter, Windsor)

Against: 0

Abstaining: 1 (Claudio)

Not voting: 0

CARRIED

d) MOTION on timing and determination of agenda of world congress:

The call for the Eleventh World Congress (Fifth World Congress Since Reunification) and subsequent decisions by leading bodies of the International have opened the pre-world-congress discussion on the following questions:

- 1) World Political Situation
- 2) Portuguese Revolution
- 3) European Perspectives Document
- 4) Women's Liberation
- 5) Arab Revolution
- 6) Balance Sheet of the Indochinese Revolution
- 7) Organizational Norms of the Fourth International
- 8) Resolution on "Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat"
- 9) Latin American Revolution

Obvious contradictions have appeared between the need for a serious political preparation of, and a thoroughly democratic discussion on, the questions before the world congress among the ranks of the International on the one hand, and the growth of the movement and relative weakness of the International's apparatus on the other. This contradiction has already led to consecutive postponements of the world congress date. It will lead to new postponements of the world congress if we maintain the position that all the above-mentioned questions have to be voted upon at that

For obvious internal and objective reasons any further postponement of the world congress would be harmful to the movement. The Eleventh World Congress (Fifth Since Reunification) is set for January 1979. It should be fully authoritative, i.e., preceded by national conventions or conferences which will vote on the resolutions submitted for world congress voting, where delegates are elected on the basis of these votes, and which have been themselves preceded by a democratic discussion in which all documents submitted to the IIDB before the cut-off date have actually appeared in English, French, and Spanish.

It is clear today that this priority cannot be realized if the world congress has to vote on, and the delegates have to be elected on, documents on all the above-mentioned questions.

Therefore, the United Secretariat recommends that those questions on which the world congress will have to vote are separated from those on which the discussion remains open, but upon which the vote will be taken at the first meeting of the International Executive Committee after the world congress (this IEC to be preceded by a three-month discussion in the sections).

The United Secretariat will make a precise proposal on this division (four or five points to be voted upon at the world congress, the others at the IEC) at the latest six months (June or July 1978) before the world congress. This decision will be made upon the basis of the state of the political and technical preparations at that time.

The journals publishing the Eleventh World Congress (Fifth World Congress Since Reunification) materials will include the draft resolutions (with information on their exact status) on those questions which are submitted to the IEC vote, provided they have been previously adopted by leading bodies of the International. There will be provision for the publication of counterresolutions. The final decision on this will, however, depend upon the decisions of the normally elected leadership bodies of the Fourth International.

Discussion

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

11. Bureau Report

a) Colombia. Duret reported on Bureau decision to send a delegation composed of Comrades Riel, Enrique, and Pepe to attend the December 9 Central Committee meeting of the Colombian PST, at which questions related to the fusion process between the PST and LCR were to be discussed.

b) Venezuela. Stateman reported on receipt of a letter from Comrade Antonio, a member of the United Secretariat from Venezuela, proposing his resignation from the Fourth International (see attachment A).

AGREED: That the Bureau should try to contact Comrade Antonio and urge him to reconsider this course.

AGREED: To substitute Comrade Manuel for Comrade Riel in the delegation (also including Comrade Pedro) asked by the last United

Secretariat meeting to make a trip to Venezuela to find out more about the current situation of the section. (The decision to send the latter delegation was inadvertently omitted from the minutes of the October 29-31 United Secretariat meeting.)

c) United Secretariat representatives or messages to congresses of sections. Dunder reported.

AGREED: That Comrade Dunder be the United Secretariat representative to the convention of the New Zealand Socialist Action League in late December, and that the Bureau send United Secretariat greetings to the January fusion convention of the Australian Communist League and Socialist Workers Party, and send a message or a representative to the congress of the GRS of the Antilles, also scheduled for January.

d) Repression of comrades in Chile, Costa Rica, Greece, and South Africa. Aubin, Stateman, Claudio, and Walter reported.

AGREED: That the Bureau should immediately send out a circular containing the up-to-date facts and urging the sections and sympathizing organizations to organize protest campaigns.

e) Recognition of new sections.

AGREED: To add the Mexican PRT to the poll of IEC members on the recognition of new sections as proposed for Spain and Australia under points 3 and 4 of this agenda. (In the case of Canada, the other country where a fusion has taken place, the fused organization automatically became the section, since one of the fusing organizations was previously the section.)

f) Dates of future United Secretariat meetings.

AGREED: To set the next two meetings of the United Secretariat for January 27-29 (the date previously set was January 28-30), and March 31-April 2.

Meeting adjourned.

ATTACHMENT A

1. Letter to the Membership of the Venezuelan PST, Venezuelan Section of the Fourth International

Dear Comrades,

There have been no fundamental changes in the class struggle in Venezuela in the past year. But the party has gone through big changes, so many that it runs the risk of missing out on the next electoral opportunity. No one has felt these changes more than you comrades. First, a few weeks before my trip to Spain, you could notice that with every passing day there were more demands from the leadership, a leadership which, in the absence of a political orientation, was becoming bureaucratized and was calling for activity by the membership without any precise objective or plan. To this was later added a policy of entrism in the MAS, which, while difficult to understand, at least would bring our members into closer contact with Venezuelan socialist militants. Third, while noting that we were losing militants, they failed to put out the Internal Bulletin and they stopped publishing Voz Socialista. Fourth, the leadership launched a campaign called the "organizational revolution," an internal campaign that was said to be a battle against "sectarianism," the height of all evil. Fifth, at the present time you are doing what you can in the MAS, you don't know very much about what is happening in the rest of the party (because of the "tabicamiento" / the lack of communication and information among militants of different cells and leadership levels that is usual in conditions of clandestinity -- translator /), in the TB, or in the international. It is very difficult to recruit people only through Revista de América. From time to time, a leader comes to give you some directive, to change the line, or to tell you some gissip; but in general you see little centralization, even less internal democracy, and no balance-sheet of the experiences that you are engaged in ... and if you ask one of the leaders, he will tell you that everything is going well in the MAS and even better in the international. In a short time, probably members of the Executive Committee will begin to charge you, first with making some errors, and then with responsibility for the crisis -- because what is happening in Venezuela is a very grave crisis, in spite of the fact that the TB sect doesn't realize it.

A SELF-CRITICISM ON TWO POINTS. I committed two errors in relation to the Venezuelan party. The first was to have left for Spain, leaving the future of the Venezuelan party in the hands of the TB leadership, and I will explain later why. The other error was to have proposed to the TB that it was necessary to send to Venezuela a "good comrade to build a team," when what was necessary was someone with a high political level, capable of arming the party and leading it in its entrism work. Where did the error lie? It lay in not having chosen the required comrade in relation to the political tasks posed in regard to the MAS. I based myself on an abstraction. This is my part in the responsibility, and it is not a small one.

WHAT THE LEADERSHIP FORGOT. If the leadership had not been sickened by its own bureaucratism, looking for someone to blame for its own failures, it would have remembered the method, which took us years to learn through our activity in elections, strikes, demonstrations, campaigns, and even in determining the frequency of Voz Socialista. And it is a very simple method:

a) With or without the necessary political leader, the party must discuss and clarify its line toward the MAS without forgetting any of the smallest tactical details. For example (while not giving it too much importance), it was decided that the best thing was to reach an agreement with Pompeyo [one of the two main leaders of the MAS -- translator] to "help the MAS grow." Very good. But then this must be communicated to the whole rank and file, the political debate must take place, the policy is adopted for a determined period (and must not be changed every week), accepting the risk of being wrong, and everyone must apply it loyally. Having decided this course, it would have been good to sell Revista de América in the newsstands, and to organize ourselves through secret internal bulletins while firmly applying the line and the agreements. That is to say, we engage ourselves in an experience in a Bolshevick and centralized manner and not in a slipshod way.

b) We study our course and make any necessary changes at the leadership level or at the level of the ranks, following from the adopted line.

c) To draw a balance-sheet of the course followed by the party, you must do so seriously, to be able to draw the fundamental lessons which would allow us to move ahead at the least possible cost, always following from the adopted line and preserving the gains we have made over years of struggle. Trotsky said that those who are unable to preserve such gains are incapable of making new ones.

As one can see, these are elementary questions. It is the political line that must determine organizational measures. This is a methodological line of gold; whoever does not follow it risks breaking their neck, and even worse, breaking the necks of others as well.

MORENO HELPS THE VENEZUELAN LEADERSHIP. Without clarity and politics, without learning anything from the experience up til now in the MAS, without drawing a real balance-sheet of the course of the party, Moreno advised the Venezuelan leadership to carry out an "organizational revolution"; that is, an internal campaign, full of mudslinging, against sectarianism (not against the bureaucratism which has resulted in a paralysis of the leadership, among other things) which is said to be something like the original sin of the party. And the comrade who is implicitly charged with being responsible -- implicitly because these "Bolsheviks" didn't dare to write it -- is Comrade Antonio, the quintessence of sectarianism. Of course the Venezuelan leaders grabbed onto this explanation because it absolved them of any real responsibility.

According to this "non-balance-sheet," we have adopted a false conception of party building. We only had a general political intervention in 1973, when the elections allowed us to grow. We lived on generalities. For five years we have been merely defending principles. We have been working on the basis of moral imperatives rather than on the basis of the class struggle as it really exists, etc. In brief, pure sectarianism. And what policy follows from this view of our history? Obviously primarily internal measures, that is, raising the political level of the leadership through making them study, broadening the leadership with new comrades, defining tasks that are "possible," and being less demanding in regard to our level of activity, especially for the leadership itself. (This was the aspect of the organizational revolution that they applied the best.)

Watch out, comrades! Moreno is going to say that he had nothing to do with the organizational revolution. He is going to have to burn

all the main graphic texts of the Boca de Uchire School, which say: "The consolidation and implementation of the tactic of the organizational revolution, the present characterization of the situation of the party, and the projection of party-building tasks are the central problems around which the participation of the leadership of the TB has provided the main orientation and leadership."

RESULTS OF THE NON-BALANCE-SHEET AND OF THEIR ORGANIZATIONAL REVOLUTION. Before dealing with the results of the organizational revolution, let me respond to these slanderers, even if it is only on a few central questions.

We have not "adopted" any conception of party building that is different from the Bolshevik one. Whoever thinks otherwise must prove it, which no one has done until now. Memory is short and selective -- even that of the Venezuelan leadership. The reason for our growth in '73 was not our electoral policy. We grew because of our policy of launching the youth organization, on a decidedly "low level" line, ultrasectarian toward the MAS. If up to October 1976 we were doing nothing but defending principles, why did such an "experienced" comrade as Moreno characterize us as the exemplary party of the TB and repeat this many times inside the Colombian Bloque Socialista and everywhere else? If we were doing nothing but repeating generalities, how could we produce the analyses we made at our congresses, in Voz Socialista, and in the Internal Bulletin about the successive governments, including the CAP government, about Copei and the various bourgeois formations, about the MAS and the parties of the left, about the Fifth National Plan and its implications for the mass movement, about our political answers, about the 1st of May, or about our intervention in the most important struggles of the workers movement, from the metal workers to the social workers. If we were a sect that acted according to "what should be" (if the revolution didn't have something to do with "what should be," revolutionary parties would be useless), how could we have succeeded in growing from a group of 40 comrades (the situation at the time that Comrade Nestor, precursor of the organizational revolution, left us) to 400 comrades -- half of them in the workers movement -- in a little more than one year? Or maybe they were all just "loosely organized"? If we had "subjective and moral" criteria for the building of the leadership, who is the genius who can explain how comrades like Ludovico, Ulises, or Carlos -- who can hardly be characterized as "superactivists" -- were placed on the Secretariat?

I won't continue posing questions because the list would be endless and sterile and the Executive Committee is not interested. Probably what they think but of course don't say is that we should have been carrying out entrism since the elections of 1973. Perhaps. But the first congress explicitly rejected this line and no one, absolutely no one, has proposed anything different since then. If that is what they think, then why don't they discuss it clearly and stop their evasions? Why don't they say that ever since then entrism has been the only valid national policy, and stop fighting the straw man of sectarianism? This way we could at least discuss the policy of entrism "sui generis."

That we committed errors of all kinds in the past years is obvious. Neither the class struggle nor our level of experience helped us very much to avoid propagandism; we were isolated from the Fourth International and the TB, while the MAS was not at all interested in a united front policy with us. So anyone, even Chicho himself, can find errors of propagandism, sectarianism, and sindicalism. However, all these general truths have prevented the leadership from seeing its own bureaucraticism, which has been the concrete obstacle that has precipitated

the concrete crisis. But as Marxists we know that each party has a specific development in each concrete country and that its limits can only be overcome in the heat of its intervention in the class struggle and not in a chemical laboratory like the stillborn organizational revolution. Finally, Moreno and his Venezuelan friends did not take seriously Trotsky's advice that the one place where you cannot jump over stages is in the building of the party.

So, without a moment's hesitation, they launched the battle against sectarianism, which, as Trotsky has said, is mistakenly identified by all the political weaklings with Bolshevism. "Consistent with" its analysis, the leadership began to study and give speeches, stopping its supervision of the activity of the middle-layer cadres and the regions as well as of the concerns and activities of the rank-and-file comrades; stopping all centralization and education and limiting itself to making propaganda for the organizational revolution; and broadening the leadership with new comrades capable of swallowing the philosophy of "live and let live." So in a short time, after the previous endless months of bureaucratism and superactivism, all the elements of Bolshevism -- which were the most precious gains of the party -- were lost. And when anyone tried to resist, such as Andrés, he was shut up rapidly by giving him back his post on the Secretariat.

Other results: a) Politically, their only new contribution is to say that the MAS came out of the PCV "from the right." This is as false as a wooden nickel. b) Over the past year, including during the organizational revolution, no new leadership cadres have emerged; and what is worse, Moreno wants to send out of the country the few leaders who remain. With what kind of phantom people do they want to build a national Venezuelan leadership? c) There is nothing more sectarian at one time and opportunist at another time than the work in the MAS. d) If you read carefully the tasks defined in the Boca de Uchire School you could see a tragic expression of "what should be," although no one could understand why the leadership doesn't feel it necessary to give an account to anyone of its compartmentalized ("tabicadas") activities.

But let us look at the consequences of the organizational revolution for our policy toward the MAS and in the leadership itself.

AN INCOHERENT POLICY. As is known, the policy adopted by the Executive Committee after a very short discussion is that at least from now until the elections of December '78, or until someone comes up with a new idea, we should advocate "socialist unity." I have nothing against this politically because I have not thought enough about it and because I am not in Venezuela to help elaborate it. But methodologically speaking, it was not necessary for Moreno to think much about it. We applied exactly the same policy in Spain in the preelection period. If we have a formula, why worry?

But even worse is the "tactical" line in the MAS. Without mentioning the past zig zags which discredited us before all the different factions inside the MAS (we went from being considered good militants to being seen as dirty maneuverers), our current line is a capitulation in face of the contradictions of the internal reality of the MAS. The schema of the prophets of the organizational revolution appears to be very dialectical: "We must work together with the 'social democratic' wing (Pompeyo) to help the MAS grow. How? By winning it and organizing Revista de América circles."

Revista de América can perhaps help to win over some of the sectors closest to Teodoro, but only through ultrapropagandist discussions

that would not bring us closer to the real activists of the MAS but only to charlatans. But in order to work with the so-called Pompeyo wing (which is the most popular-frontist, my dear Fernando) we would have to publish a different type of bulletin and above all to work like Bolsheviki in pushing forward and being the champions of this growth. The tragedy is that they are using methods that can in no way achieve the projected aims. The rank and file must continue to work with no clear perspectives. And you, members of the Executive Committee, can begin immediately to prepare your ideological rationalizations for your coming failures! Perhaps it will be to propose a break with the MAS for reasons of "principle." Or maybe it will be to claim that the rank and file of the party are incapable of applying such an ingenious line. Because this time you cannot blame Antonio. Or can you?

A LEADERSHIP WITH NO WAY OUT. On this point it is sufficient to cite two quotations from a letter I sent to a comrade of the party. "What the pedants call the organizational revolution has not only deepened the sectarianism that it is supposed to fight, it has wiped out the elements of Bolshevism achieved through five years of struggle. And this Bolshevism is a thousand times more necessary for a tactic as dangerous as entrism, where the centrifugal pressures on the party multiply, especially under the difficult conditions for building a proletarian party that exist today in Venezuela. . . ."

"If we wanted to explain what Moreno's organizational revolution meant for the Executive Committee, we would say that it consisted of giving in to the pressure of the Venezuelan petty bourgeoisie, which is unstable and lumpen, and to elevate it and its methods to the category of leadership. Under the old leadership, some of the comrades who most reflected this class were controlled. But today, even comrades who make off with party money, or people lacking any will or previously characterized as "non-members," are not only in the vanguard of the organizational revolution but are even on the Executive Committee. In addition to these moral invalids who have nothing to do with the workers movement, there are some old capitulators, and the always triumphalist advisors of the TB."

"It doesn't matter that these irresponsible comrades achieve some partial successes. They represent the reaction against Bolshevism in Venezuela and no temporary illusions of success will save them from bankruptcy. Because if they are simply the result of the organizational revolution, they will only lead to disasters. The only ones who will gain from this tragedy are the MAS and Moreno. The former will absorb the best militants and Moreno will have his unconditional and "monolithic" group (even if they are only 50 people) to continue his petty factional intrigues. As far as the workers movement is concerned, it will have lost, for the time being, a historical opportunity of having a leadership in Venezuela.

Fraternally,

s/Antonio
November 1977

P.S.: Watch out, comrades! The leadership will try to lie and slander me, including with personal gossip. The truth is that this letter only exists because not only have I been denied access to the ranks of the organization, but the Executive Committee refused to listen to my views with the sorry excuse that I had been engaged in factional work. Of course I have not approached a single comrade with any proposals whatsoever along this line. Therefore, the repercussions that these charges could have are completely the responsibility of the Executive

Committee. At the same time, since they didn't allow me to speak, I ask you to do what you can to circulate this letter among the membership of the Venezuelan section of the Fourth International.

2. Letter from Antonio to the United Secretariat Bureau

Madrid, 10-26-77

Comrades,

Through this letter I want to make known that I have broken with the BT. The fundamental reason for this decision is the liquidationist work carried out by Nahuel Moreno in the Venezuelan section of the Fourth International.(1) Regardless of other methodological and political differences, the other reason is that for me it has become an international sect having a worldwide line, including an ultrasectarian orientation, which is presently concretized in the "sui generis" entrism policy in the international Social Democracy, both in Spain and in Venezuela.

What is more, only three months earlier, the TB appeared to me as the only alternative solution able to give the International the revolutionary leadership which would transform it into a mass party. For this very reason, I am not ready to continue as a member of the F.I. This means that I resign from my responsibility both at the United Secretariat and IEC level. After thirteen years of activity as a Trotskyist, to stop being active is not easy at all. But, if I am to be honest, I must say that there is no other solution at the present time.

Till socialism, forever

s/ Antonio

3. "A Necessary Piece of Information" - by Andres Romero

On November 10 I was informed that the United Secretariat had received a letter from Antonio, dated October 26 from Madrid, violently attacking the Bolshevik Tendency. In summary fashion this letter announced his break with the BT, due to the supposed "liquidationist work" of Nahuel Moreno in the Venezuelan section, characterized the Tendency as an "international sect" that intervenes even on the smallest tactical problems of each country, denounced the supposedly generalized practice of "a very sui generis entrism" that capitulates to the Social Democracy giving as examples the cases of Venezuela and Spain, and, finally, announced that he has resigned from all responsibility both in the IEC, the United Secretariat, and, apparently, from the Fourth International as well.

This astonishing decision has, however, some links with previous events about which I want to inform all the comrades:

1. From the very day that Antonio joined the army on June 20 and decided on his own not to maintain any contact for security reasons, the leadership of the Spanish group and of the Bolshevik Tendency have not had any formal contact with him, except for a personal letter informing them that he would become active again in October.

2. While we were waiting for him in Madrid, we received information that, without any previous advice or discussion with either the Spanish group or the Venezuelan one, Antonio had made a trip to Venezuela, allegedly for purely family and personal reasons.

3. Despite this personal motivation for his trip, Antonio was informed by the leadership of the section about the national situation and the situation in the party. Given the differences that he expressed on mainly organizational and political questions, it was proposed to him that they should be discussed in such a way that he could enter into a dialogue and could find out directly the opinions of every member of the party. Using deprecating characterizations in regard to the Venezuelan comrades, Antonio rejected this proposal, saying that he only wanted to discuss these questions with the BT leadership.

4. Despite this, and although he had announced his immediate departure for Spain, Antonio spoke to rank-and-file comrades, making harsh attacks against the leadership and against the line followed by the Venezuelan section. This is why he was severely censured by the Executive Committee during a meeting in which he participated and in which it was decided to inform the leadership of the Tendency about his criticisms.

5. Despite his announcement that he was going back to Spain and proposed to have a discussion with Moreno in Madrid, Antonio did not make contact with the organization, and every effort to meet him has been in vain.

6. Comrade Yarak, who left Caracas the same day as Antonio, got in touch with Romero after having been in Madrid for some days. He told him that he had decided to give up his political activity. He then confirmed this decision in a meeting with Comrade Moreno, citing personal reasons, criticisms of the Venezuelan leadership, and methodological differences which he did not explain clearly. Yarak refused a proposal to discuss these questions in the Venezuelan section -- even though the leadership of the BT was ready to pay for a return ticket for him immediately -- and maintained this stand in spite of the fact that he had traveled to Venezuela and stayed there since June for personal reasons, having been advised by Antonio to do so, without having discussed it with the organization.

7. When we asked him to help us organize a discussion which could help to clarify the situation with Antonio, Yarak told us he didn't know where Antonio was living or what he intended to do and therefore he could not help us.

8. The situation remained at this stage until I found out that he had sent his letter to the United Secretariat.

9. The charges against the BT are so inconsistent that one can hardly respond to them. Suffice it to say that it is evident and can be proved that Comrade Moreno has been to Venezuela a number of times for very brief periods of time, and as far as I can see, far from being "liquidated," the section is on the way to overcoming strong sectarian features and to engaging itself in tasks that are more audacious and promising than ever. Concerning the charges of having capitulated or engaged in a sui generis entrism, or of having imposed from the center rigid tactical choices for every country, every comrade can answer this from his own current political experience. I also want to stress that this kind of charge only repeats what other deserters from our ranks -- such as Lucas [one of eleven comrades who recently resigned from the BT and its group in Spain to join the LCR -- translator] -- and the leaders of the IMT and LTF have said, at the very time when the growth of our forces and responsibilities increases the difficulties and requirements that confront every comrade.

10. As occurred at the last United Secretariat meeting, where Lucas's letter, full of calumnies and lies, was circulated, Antonio's letter is being used in a factional way by leaders of the International,

who use the corridors of the Rouge printshop to circulate rumors and false allegations against the BT.

This incident can be approached at different levels. On one side, there is the evident incoherency in the attitude adopted by Antonio, which may perhaps be explained by the grave personal and family problems which confront him. But I don't want to discuss this aspect of the question, especially since it concerns a comrade at whose side I have been active for many years and whose sacrifices and militancy will not be forgotten in spite of his present sorry attitude. One can make an evaluation of the facts and the concrete charges, about which I gave my opinion in point 9. But there is a much more important level, which concerns the reasons why these incidents have occurred at the present stage of development of the tendency and why this is the field in which the attacks against us are concentrated. This is the organizational, methodological, and moral alternative on which is based the heterogeneous block of our critics. This is a fight we want to have, not to answer a comrade who stayed in the middle of the road, but to defend both a Bolshevik political line and a party regime which is also at one with Bolshevik norms and able to build parties and cadres capable of dealing with the tasks of the Fourth International and its sections.

Andres Romero
11.11.77