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February 14, 1978

To National Committee Members and Organizers Attending the Plenum

Dear Comrades,

In preparation for the plenum World Movement Report, enclosed are documents concerning the current situation in the PST of Colombia and the Bolshevik Tendency. More documents will be forthcoming.

A. Documents concerning the situation in the Colombian PST.

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Comradely,



Gus Horowitz
SWP National Office

A communication dated January 20, 1978, was received by the United Secretariat from leading members of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST) of Colombia who formed the Proletarian Democracy Tendency. The communication appeals the disciplinary measures consisting of both temporary and permanent expulsions (suspensions, "separation from the party," etc.) taken against them by the majority of the Central Committee essentially for having called for the formation of a tendency and for having demanded a special convention to consider what to do about the crisis that threatened to split the party.

After hearing the reports of the comrades designated by the United Secretariat to attend the Central Committee and help the process of unification in Colombia, after studying the documentation, and after discussing the crisis in the PST and its ramifications, the United Secretariat reached the following conclusions:

1. In their decision of December 10, 11, 12, 1977, banning tendencies and factions, the majority of the Central Committee of the PST violated the provisions in the statutes of the Fourth International upholding internal democracy.

"The CC does not authorize the formation of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency or any other tendency or faction before the next pre-congress period after the presidential elections of 1978."

The statutes read as follows on this point: (Section VII, pt.29; letter g)

"g. Decisions are reached by majority vote. Minorities are duty bound to carry out majority decisions. Minorities, however, have the incontestable right to constitute themselves into tendencies or factions on the basis of a stated platform and to enjoy democratic rights such as:

"To present their views to the membership of their national section during the preparatory discussion period before national congresses.

"To present their views to the membership of the International through the Internal Bulletin during the pre-Congress discussion period.

"To be represented in the leading bodies with due consideration to their political and numerical importance. This does not mean that every minority, no matter how small, is entitled to representation on a leading body. Nor does it mean proportional representation for minorities. The Fourth International abides by majority rule and this includes the right of the majority to assure itself a working majority when sharp differences are involved. But it is also the duty of the majority to safeguard the rights of the minority and this means that a minority is not to be penalized for holding a minority position."

(This refers to the right to form tendencies and factions and not the form of the debate which remains the responsibility of the leadership.)

It should be observed that the majority of the Central Committee of the PST compounded their violation of the statutes of the Fourth International by banning only one tendency, the one formed by comrades critical of the practices of the majority of the Central Committee. For themselves, the majority of the Central Committee use a formation of their own, the Bolshevik Tendency, to promulgate their views.

2. In rejecting the call of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency for a special convention, the majority of the Central Committee also violated the provisions of the statutes of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores. The statutes read as follows on this point:

"The special convention of the party can be called at any time by one-third (1/3) of the rank and file members or cells, by one-third of the Central Committee (1/3), or by a majority of the Executive Committee. It cannot be held less than one (1) month after the time it is called."

This provision of the statutes has been met.

Citing association with the call for a special convention and adherence to the Proletarian Democracy Tendency as grounds for expulsion (other grounds were also cited--all of them of a flimsy or dubious nature), the majority of the Central Committee launched a purge that may well involve a majority of the ranks of the party.

The violation of internal democracy committed by the majority of the Central Committee have done serious damage to the PST and threaten to lead to still worse consequences.

The "separation" of Comrade Socorro Ramirez from the PST was a heavy blow to her presidential candidacy and to the entire electoral campaign of the PST and the Unidad Obrera y Socialista. News of the expulsion, as was to be expected, spread rapidly throughout Colombia, creating a first-rate political scandal much to the delight of the enemies of Trotskyism.

The purge of the party, involving hundreds of members, provided fresh bits of scandal for the use of enemies of Trotskyism.

The antidemocratic actions of the majority of the Central Committee set up fresh barriers to the unification of Trotskyist forces in Colombia (organized in the PST and the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria) and greatly lessened the attractiveness of the Trotskyist movement as a whole among the left. The old myth about Trotskyism being the same thing as Stalinism was given fresh currency.

Worst of all has been the effect on the party of the course followed by the majority of the Central Committee. Their anti-democratic procedures have led to the destruction of cadres and

now threaten to shatter the PST.

The Central Committee acts under the control of the top leadership of the Bolshevik Tendency, which intervenes directly in the decision-making process. Thus, the top leadership of this international faction bears responsibility for the acute crisis of the Colombian PST.

In view of the above facts and the refusal of the majority of the CC to abide by the statutes, the United Secretariat recognizes the validity of the appeal of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency. The positions taken by this tendency, it should be added, are in accordance with the principles of the Fourth International. This is clearly shown by the tendency's programmatic declarations and course of action.

The United Secretariat strongly urges the majority of the Central Committee to end its violations of the statutes of the Fourth International and the PST by withdrawing the disciplinary measures taken against members of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency, restoring them forthwith to their positions in the party, and holding the special convention called for by more than one-third of the membership of the PST.

RESOLUTION ON EDITORIAL PLUMA

The United Secretariat has been informed of the grave crisis that Editorial Pluma is now experiencing and of the many consequences that it has already had, particularly in Colombia.

1. The United Secretariat reaffirms the principle of the necessary separation between any autonomous commercial enterprise and the political organization.

2. The United Secretariat specifies that; on the basis of this traditional criterion, Editorial Pluma, which is a strictly autonomous commercial enterprise, has never been dependent on any body of the Fourth International nor is it linked to it in any way whatsoever. Moreover, no organism of the Fourth International has ever discussed or been consulted on the activities of Pluma.

3. As a result, the name and the authority of the Fourth International or any of its bodies cannot be invoked or used in relation to the present crisis of Pluma and its implications on all levels.

The undersigned, members of the PST Executive Committee, consider:

1) that in the past period, especially during recent weeks, it began to become apparent that there were comrades in the party who manifest their dissatisfaction with the PST's course and make accusations against the leadership, calling it bureaucratic, Stalinist, antidemocratic, disloyal, and functioning as a clique;

2) that the person who has most inspired and organized these criticisms has been Comrade Ricardo Sanchez, who has already been sanctioned for previous factional activities;

3) that the attacks made by these comrades reflect a phenomenon which is developing inside the organization: sectors of the organization reject any change and, because of their inertia or for class reasons, yearn for the old Bloque Socialista, a student and teacher organization that discussed a lot and intervened very little, a disorganized party in which an elite of leaders and members were doing whatever they liked;

4) that it is no accident that it is Comrade Ricardo who most inspires and organizes this kind of attack, and also no accident that, four months after having voted his sanction, he has yet to take a step along the basic line that would allow its reconsideration: to give up his past social milieu of café and bohemian intelligentsia and root himself both socially and politically in a milieu more favorable to his political and methodological development.

We decide:

to constitute ourselves as a tendency for the defense and the continuity of the Bolshevization of the party and to invite all delegates present at the convention to support the following points:

1. For the ratification of the general line of the policy adopted by the leadership of the party.

2. For the election of a totally homogeneous leadership in which the minority will not be proportionally represented, in accordance with the traditional statutory norms of the Fourth International.

3. In the event that we receive a majority at the convention, for the election of the comrades chosen by the tendency as the exclusive leadership of the party. If we don't win a majority, for the refusal to take any responsibility in the leadership in order that the full responsibility for leading the party falls completely on the shoulders of the new leadership.

4. All members of the tendency have full autonomy on the subjects to be dealt with at the convention, except for the "report on activities" and "election of leadership," points on which they pledge themselves to apply tendency discipline.

Members of the tendency reserve the right to admit new members. The tendency reserves its right to present new documents. This is a first draft which can be modified or supplemented in the framework of its general line.

5. It is possible, if not inevitable, that some comrades may reflect positions which tend to draw the party backward to an already bypassed stage, since they cannot or will not adapt themselves to a party which is recruiting a lot of workers, in which the leadership is selected fundamentally on the basis of its militant commitment

and not its polemical abilities, in which discussion is a tool for intervention and not a goal in itself, and in which there is genuine centralization and Leninist discipline.

6. It is necessary that the convention culminate the present stage of Bolshevization of the party and discuss in a sincere and fraternal way the criticisms made to the leadership by unsatisfied comrades, in order that our highest body categorically confirm its full and unconditional support to the present leadership's Bolshevization policy so that it can be further deepened after the convention.

TRANSLATIONLetter from Jaime Galarza to the Executive Committee and
Central Committee of the PST

Paris
November 5, 1977

To the Executive Committee and Central Committee of
the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores of Colombia

Dear Comrades,

I learned what happened at our convention from the internal bulletin. While I can see that progress has been made in many areas, I am disturbed by what I read in the bulletin because some of its assessments of the nature of the political struggle at the convention are surprising. They are so contrary to my ideas and convictions on the principles of party life that at first I simply rejected them out of hand. But I needed many more facts about the convention and it seemed to me to be a more responsible attitude to wait until I had a chance to obtain them. In the meantime there was no alternative but to accept this assessment, which for better or worse had come from the leadership of our party. Thus I accepted it with reservations at first. For that reason, I presented it as the report of the convention of the Colombian PST at the special meeting of the Bureau held in Brussels October 12.

We had the hoped-for opportunity a few days later to clear away some strong doubts and ameliorate somewhat certain very unfortunate things that were said in some paragraphs of this report, because at the end of last month several members of the

PST(C) in Europe had a meeting with Comrade Moreno. As we had hoped, Comrade Moreno reported what had happened at the convention and on some aspects of the internal situation in our party. Though his report was cautious and calm, some events at the convention which did not appear in the leadership's balance sheet added to the apprehension I already felt. Therefore, at that time and later I frankly told him how I saw the situation and what my fears were concerning what I saw as an attack on the unity of the party. At that time, however, I did not see the situation as being scandalous enough to make the political decision I had to make later.

The United Secretariat meeting in Brussels ended a few days ago. An important point of this meeting was the political situation in Colombia, the progress of Trotskyism in the country and the convention of the new Colombian PST. From the report I will present on this meeting, the comrades will be able to see in more detail what was said under this and other points of the agenda. The evaluation made by the USFI delegate in Latin America on the class struggle in the country and the strengthening of our party generally coincides with what El Socialista says. But what had been good news up to that point changed completely when I heard about what happened at our convention because I now have no doubt that undemocratic practices occurred at the convention. Concretely, the facts in this report were generally consistent with what I already knew. This did not, however, prevent me in my reply from rejecting the value judgments and personal appreciations of these facts by the delegate from the International.

Comrades, I am for Bolshevization and I have always been a champion of it if it means what I have always thought it to mean: building an apparatus to ensure the continuity and permanence of the party and, basically, a revolutionary policy; stabilizing the party's finances, and that all the members make the necessary contribution; establishing political and not intellectual criteria for membership; building an action party and, above all, educating the members in the method of shaping a day-to-day policy beginning with the interests of the broad masses. But I am against Bolshevization if it means domesticating the members to obey the apparatus and, in the final analysis, those who control it; if it means silencing discussion on the pretext that it gets in the way of activity; and above all if Bolshevization means getting rid of the Trotskyist criterion for membership, that is, that a member should have initiative, since his or her political personality and independence of judgment make it possible to be a principled person and an activist at the same time.

In a revolutionary party the efficiency of a functionary will never replace this key principle by which the party of Lenin and Trotsky was built. For revolutionary Marxism, it has long been clear that success, best results and peak efficiency are not the standards for deciding to change or not to change a policy. This is so elementary and obvious that it might look like I am trying to give you a basic lesson in Marxism. But this is not and has never been my intention. This is a time, however, when all of us must sincerely and frankly ask ourselves if we are using the same alphabet, because what is certain is that we have begun to speak different languages.

Thus, I cannot accept the strange theory that appears in your report on the convention: considering the internal political fight as an obstacle to the process of Bolshevization. Even less can I accept an attempt to cut off this political controversy by organizational methods. If all the political efforts of our party and its activism ends in this, I think that we would regretfully but with determination have to begin again. And this beginning would have to be at the same place in the road where we began to go astray: the disciplinary action against Comrade Ricardo Sánchez. I personally hoped that Comrade Sánchez would abide by the conditions that were imposed, and that it would be an experience with lessons to educate all of us, though in a negative way, about the tremendous political calamity of disciplining him for six months. Until a few days ago I ingenuously thought that it had been a political error which was part and parcel of the whole contradictory and difficult process that brought us into the ranks of Trotskyism. Now that I see the matter more clearly, I see that it was the beginning of the organizational maneuvers to silence, once and for all, the natural opposition to the real strategy of Bolshevization, which emerges clearly from all the ideological cover: liquidating the sector of the leadership of the Bloque Socialista which from the beginning raised its critical voice against the top-down methods of a very peculiar concept of democratic centralism. Paradoxically this is the sector which led the fight against political and organizational centrism and for Trotskyism and the Fourth International.

I say that the disciplinary measure against Comrade Sánchez was purely factional and bureaucratic inasmuch as two political assessments have not been made: that of the struggle against centrism, a fight in which Comrade Sánchez was the prominent political leader; and that of the same leader's activity in Europe on behalf of the then new Bolshevik Tendency. Only after these assessments will we be able to know for certain who the petty-bourgeois are--and not as we use the class characterization now, as a destructive epithet and the best way to avoid a necessary examination of a question. On the fight against centrism our memories are all fresh and there has not been enough time for an official history to distort--not the people but their roles. It is appropriate to begin on the question of roles. I wish to tell the comrades that perhaps out of the habit of my old profession I took on the job of establishing the case against Comrade Ricardo for his activities in Europe. For those who often like to use technical terms without knowing their real meaning, I would like to let

them know that my attorneyship has been in the good and real sense of the term, that is, one who looks after the interests of the community, in this case the party activists. After four months of checking here and there, my face is red with shame but at the same time I have the satisfaction one has in trying to correct errors when one feels he has made them. It can be said without any hesitation that there was never a better defender of the ideas of the BT in the International than Comrade Ricardo Sánchez. Everyone says so. But also no one was ever such an orthodox Leninist and Trotskyist in telling the truth in our own ranks as Comrade Ricardo. Everyone says this too. For some, however, this is rebellion, factionalism, and individualism.

The balance sheet of his activity is available to the whole party. There is the eyewitness testimony of all those who still feel proud of having belonged to and helped build an organization which is today the pride of Trotskyism and the Fourth International. In their name and in the name of all the members of our party who surely share this feeling, in the name of the moral authority I have for never having tolerated political revenge against anyone in eighteen years of activity as an active revolutionary, in my capacity as a member of the Central Committee of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores of Colombia, and for the foregoing considerations as well as many others which have no relevance for this letter, I ask the Central Committee and the Executive Committee of the Colombian PST to immediately lift the disciplinary measures imposed on Comrade Ricardo Sánchez and that he be likewise reintegrated into the Executive Committee.

Fraternally,
Jaime Galarza

Declaration of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency
and Counterreport on the Party Regime

Very important developments have just occurred in our International, in the Bolshevik Tendency, and in various national parties, especially in the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores in Colombia (former Socialist Bloc). In assessing the attitude of all the members and leaders of the International, these events are crucial. In the case of the PST, they are influencing its development in a decisive way.

The first outstanding item is the decision of the Leninist Trotskyist Faction and the International Majority Tendency to dissolve and accept a common framework of discussion in preparation for the Eleventh Congress of the Fourth International. This decision is a consequence, in our opinion, of a number of factors, the most important being a rise in the world revolution, mainly in Europe, and the resulting growth on an international scale of our world organization by hundreds and thousands of new members. This rise and growth poses an objective need to struggle unitedly to provide the Fourth with policies and a leadership conducive to centralizing the action of our movement on all levels. No one is under any illusion concerning the fact that the present leadership of the International, as well as that of the minorities, such as the dissolved LTF, are too limited politically to lead the Fourth. Likewise no one is under any illusion about the dissolution of factions necessarily implying unity of the forces in an automatic way, still less the disappearance of ideological-political differences, including in decisive matters. And we are aware that entering into the decision of the factions to dissolve was an attempt to seek political and organizational readjustments in face of defeats in the execution of certain policies.

But what is decisive, what we must assess as Marxists and Trotskyists, is the vitally important aspect of creating the best possible conditions -- through collective discussion, democracy, and common action -- to promote the greatest unity and centralization. All this must be done without impairing the necessary discussion, criticism, and formation of ideological groups or tendencies within the framework of the Fourth International. More favorable conditions are being created for developing a policy and an international leadership better fitted to deal with the necessities and possibilities demanded by the present course of the world revolution.

The second outstanding item is the contrast between this positive fact and the deep crisis that has struck the up-until-recently dynamic Bolshevik Tendency. The tendency was formed with the correct claim of offering political alternatives and a leadership in face of the picture of crisis presented by our world movement, especially with regard to orientation for building Trotskyist parties with mass influence in those countries experiencing revolutionary upsurges. The Bolshevik Tendency formulated criticisms of the initial drafts of the document on Europe approved by the United Secretariat that were, in our opinion, correct as a whole. It proceeded in an equally correct way in its criticism of the ambiguous formulations of the LTF on the course of the Portuguese revolution and its political attitude in face of the Black revolution in Angola. As a whole these differences, so burning in themselves, justified the proposal to form a new tendency within the existing framework of the International.

Nonetheless, the Bolshevik Tendency exaggerated the class character of the differences not only polemically but in practical conclusions. It

forgot to emphatically underline that the differences fell within the framework of Trotskyism and the Fourth International and it evaded a frank discussion in the leading bodies of the International, failing to present positive alternatives or to open the discussion in a collective way. It acted in a way that was not only factional but extremely sectarian, constantly alluding to the incurable or almost incurable character of the majority of the leaders of the International, including the present leadership of the SWP which it considered to be "living on its prestige" and compromised by involvement in morally condemnable affairs. It made Revista de América not only the organ of a public faction but a sectarian instrument of political combat. The necessity for a principled and vigorous discussion was unfortunately equated with McCarthyism, the IMT was branded as Pnunist, positions were misrepresented as in the case of the French LCR and the Spanish LCR (see the articles in Revista).

Comrade Moreno announced that a decision had been made to reply after the IEC meeting to the proposal to dissolve tendencies; the BT was transformed into a faction, which was equivalent to deepening still further the sectarian course that had been taken. In line with this, an image has been projected in the most demagogic way of the BT preparing to take over the leadership of the International; this was done at the last meeting of the tendency attended by delegates from the parties in Argentina, Peru, Panama, Venezuela, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, Ecuador (October 1977). In addition the thesis was offered that these tendencies had dissolved with the objective of forming an unprincipled united front against the BT and that the dissolution was a consequence of the pressure of bourgeois public opinion, mainly in Europe. We consider such a step to be most unfortunate and we hope that it will not be carried through in view of the new political situation that has developed in which the leaders of the BT can contribute to the discussions for the Eleventh Congress.

Proceeding further, the BT laid out tactical orientations, including some of the most detailed nature -- reflecting a paternalistic approach to national leaderships of certain parties (Spain, Venezuela, Colombia) that resulted in the withdrawal of one of the groups of the BT in Spain, the one led by Lucas, and the withdrawal of Antonio and Yarak from both the BT and the International. The case of Antonio merits special attention, since he was the main leader of the Venezuelan party and the main person in charge of work for the BT in Spain. Antonio was presented by Comrade Moreno as a model Bolshevik leader and the prototype of a genuine revolutionist. As shown by the documentation we have seen, Antonio was subjected to a process designed to destroy his good name and accused of setting up a faction against his own party. We lament Antonio's decision to leave the Fourth and we will try to get him to return to its ranks; but this does not prevent us from pointing out -- on the contrary it makes it obligatory -- that the causes of the situation in which Antonio found himself were rooted in the deep deformations in method employed by Comrade Moreno in relation to the construction of a party and the treatment of national leaderships. Antonio states in his letter of resignation: "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."

The leadership of the BT has not been guided by an effective collective leadership but has been exercised by Comrade Moreno in a personal way and with a paternalistic character. Changes in decisions, orientation of line, disposition of resources -- all of this is done outside of the leadership bodies, or with merely formal consultation. This dynamic leads to a practice of splitting national sections and an ultra-factionalist and sectarian conception of constructing the world party.

The third important event concerns the Colombian Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores which has undergone a significant growth. In addition a process of fusion has been opened on the basis of a political agreement that makes the fusion possible within the framework of a united electoral campaign. Despite this, the intervention of Comrade Moreno and a sector of the leadership of the Argentine PST in the Colombian PST by means of bureaucratic and administrative methods has created a situation that has come close to splitting the party and in fact threatens to liquidate the party. A systematic campaign has been opened designed to destroy leaders of the party through mechanically transposing the class struggle into the party and by administrative means artificially suppressing the ideological differences, characterizing these leaders permanently as petty bourgeois, making them appear to be ingrained factionalists, and promoting a campaign of monstrous personal slanders against them. On this aspect we would like to point out at least two scandalous cases: the effort to destroy the political character of Comrade Socorro Ramirez, promoted personally by Comrade Moreno, as was amply demonstrated before hundreds of participants (more than 300) at the recent congress of the PST. Comrade Moreno publicly branded the most important Trotskyist leader in our country and the indisputable symbol of the mass movement as a petty-bourgeois student type; he resorted in addition to threats and blackmail of all kinds and accused her of forming part of a secret faction against which he had organized a "pro-Bolshevization" faction. In addition he resorted desperately to trying to promote alternatives for the presidential candidate by means of flattering other figures. This attempt was roundly defeated by the spectacular reply of thousands of workers who came to hear Comrade Socorro and to speak with her as the presidential candidate, and by the adherence of the LCR (Liga Comunista Revolucionaria), the OCR (Organización Comunista Ruptura), and the URS (Unión Revolucionaria Socialista) to the campaign. Moreno even carried on this campaign of detraction internationally as has been confirmed by all the Colombian comrades who are members of our party in Europe. At this Central Committee meeting an attempt is being made to prolong the penalty imposed on Socorro which if successful would amount to a genuine expulsion. The same goes for the attempt, personally promoted by Comrade Moreno, to politically destroy Comrade Ricardo Sanchez. In his immense mountain of slanders, Moreno has gone so far as to portray Ricardo as a racist. Behind the back of the party, Moreno promoted the actual expulsion of Comrade Ricardo from his duties in the leadership of the PST. Moreno even barred him from attending the party congress to reply to the "new" charges mounted with respect to the secret faction led by Ricardo. Moreno's letter of "accusations" and slanders against Ricardo, which was shown to a limited number of members, its circulation being restricted, reduced to excerpts; but we are going to bring it to the attention not only of the whole party and of Colombian Trotskyism but of our world movement. In the letter the singular method is employed of calling the slanders "provisional," part of a "first draft." Comrade Ricardo is ready to have his conduct judged by a tribunal named by the bodies of the International and to accept the verdict pronounced by it. The political and moral vindication of our leaders is for us a matter of principle, as the tradition of the Trotskyist movement teaches.

A conception of deformed democratic centralism is being advanced that comes close to bureaucratic centralism, a conception similar to the one held by Zinoviev, bordering on the worst justifications advanced by the Stalinists. The metaphor "the party acts like an army" has been made the guideline of this conception. It is forgotten that the party acts like an army in an absolutely energetic and centralized way -- but in relation to the class struggle. And nothing is more foreign to a Leninist and Trotskyist party than the use of army language within it, or the concept of a camarilla implicit in the military. The notions of hierarchy and authority residing in the leading bodies are based on the political

reality of recognition by the party ranks. The authority emanating from these bodies is that given by a commonly respected policy. The recognition of Lenin's revolutionary leadership was based on his capacity, knowledge, energy, and experience and not on the fact that he belonged to a directing apparatus.

Moreno proceeded then to eliminate political discussion, branding it as swamp-like and studentist in character. Necessary information on the contradictions among the leaders was hidden from the party. Centralism was carried to unheard of lengths. The step was clearly taken of constituting a faction against the party. To this is to be added the fact that the Argentine members responded to their own leadership and in actuality constituted a parallel leadership above the leadership bodies and appearing as superimposed on the party. The party congress itself lost all political authenticity when it was declared to be "sui generis" (???), that is, abnormal. Abnormal because it was not proceeded by a normal democratic debate -- three months -- and because the documents themselves were presented, as in the case of the statutes and the Political Report, a week before the congress, and even on the opening day of the deliberations. Democracy was cut down still further when the congress was prevented from acting as a sovereign body and priority was given to the interests of a group that demanded absolute loyalty to these interests. With this objective, the phantasm of a secret faction was created and various comrades were manipulated, being fed all kinds of false information that converted them into sectarians. A political and organizational crisis was thus precipitated, and in face of a new avalanche of persecution against worker leaders and cadres of the leadership of the party the crisis acquired mounting dimensions.

It was forgotten that democratic centralism is defined as a dynamic reality dependent on the relation of the party to the class struggle. Likewise forgotten was the excellent teaching of Trotsky:

"The regime of a party does not fall ready-made from the sky but is formed gradually in the struggle. A political line predominates over the regime. First of all, it is necessary to define strategic problems and tactical methods correctly in order to solve them. The organizational forms should correspond to the strategy and tactic. Only a correct policy can guarantee a healthy party regime. This, it is understood, does not mean that the development of the party does not raise organizational problems as such. But it means that the formula for democratic centralism must inevitably find a different expression in the parties of different countries and in different stages of development of one and the same party.

"Democracy and centralism do not at all find themselves at an invariable ratio to one another. Everything depends on the concrete circumstances, on the political situation in the country, on the strength of the party and its experience, on the general level of its members, on the authority the leadership has succeeded in winning. Before a conference, when the problem is one of formulating a political line for the next period, democracy triumphs over centralism. When the problem is political action, centralism subordinates democracy to itself. Democracy again asserts its rights when the party feels the need to examine critically its own actions." ("On Democratic Centralism -- A Few Words About the Party Regime." Writings of Leon Trotsky (1937-38), page 90. Emphasis added.)

The concept of party practice fostered by Comrade Moreno deviates far from this precise methodological orientation. Hence a regime of administrative penalties and political persecution has become primary today in the PST.

But in addition a propagandistic and apparatus concept of the party has been fostered. Under the pretext of "Bolshevizing it" the apparatus

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has been placed above the party. The party has been converted practically into a business agency, having been subjected to three financial campaigns in one year, an unusual occurrence in a political party. One of Moreno's favorite phrases is "Finances are the thermometer of the situation in the party." Not the political line as Trotsky said, nor the party's rooting itself in the working class, nor recruiting new cadres ...but finances; such a conception of centralism, such apparatus deformations have also brought deformations in the application of the party's policies and the erroneous formulation of new policies for the mass movement. Today it is perfectly clear that vacillation and inconsistency were shown in the struggle against the reactionary politics of López, especially against the little constituent assembly which required, as it still does, systematic denunciation in the working-class movement. Today it is perfectly clear how totally mistaken was the characterization of the Civil Strike of September 14 as superstructural, and how mistaken was the failure to mobilize the party for broad and audacious engagement in the strike. Today it is perfectly clear that the dynamics of the mass movement were underestimated and opportunities like the national mobilization of November 18 were not grasped. If a balance-sheet is drawn of the main strike struggles in the past six months, we find ourselves facing the very unfortunate fact of the party's failure to participate in them. The case of the oil workers strike constitutes a direct accusation, since this strike represented a unique opportunity in the workers movement in recent years.

In face of these facts of political reality, we have presented alternatives that have been rejected and hidden from the party or misrepresented. The regime has even reached the point of censoring from the press political positions on national policies in the mass movement.

There is an extremely grave fact that involves the moral standing of Trotskyism itself. A campaign was launched in the name of the party to collect funds to aid in setting up the Pluma publishing house in Bogotá. In the leading bodies of the PST, Comrade Moreno held the ambiguous and contradictory position of saying that the publishing house was a party institution when it was a matter of collecting funds and saying that it was a commercial outfit when financial reports were demanded. At the moment Pluma has been subjected to various financial and juridical actions in which the management of the enterprise, irresponsible to say the least, has come under scrutiny. In face of a recent action freezing operations, the Executive Committee of the party has been called on to support the publishing house unconditionally. Such a demand is completely unacceptable. What corresponds to Trotsky's method is the total independence of the party from any kind of financial apparatus, since the party cannot run the risk of engaging in financial enterprises. The party can only intervene indirectly through agents. The identification of Pluma with the PST has been converted into a dead weight on the prestige of the party; it is obvious that we do not approve either morally or politically of the adventurous management of Comrade Moreno in financial questions. On this, in addition, we are asking that detailed accounts be made available to the party in relation to the funds of the PST both as to what was turned over to the publishing house and what the funds were used for.

We consider ourselves to be main promoters of the effort to make our party a detachment of the International -- without this implying any demerit to other comrades who were radically opposed to this -- we make this declaration after having consciously thought out all the implications, of having waited for a change and a rectification of the positions we have criticized. The struggle for the unity of our party, placed in danger by the divisionism of Comrade Moreno, is an objective to which we have committed ourselves. The method that we propose to overcome the

contradictions is the one that makes our tradition Trotskyist. We seek a democratic discussion leading up to a special congress of the PST in the first week of March. We ask for the immediate repeal of all penalties and the reinstatement of Comrades Ricardo, Gustavo, Gladys, and Socorro in their posts on the Executive Committee.

For this we appeal for the formation of the Tendencia Democracia Proletaria (Proletarian Democracy Tendency), which will undertake the obligation of struggling for the following points as an alternative to the present crisis within the party:

1. We resign from participating in the Bolshevik Tendency.
2. We greet the process of dissolving the factions and tendencies within the International.
3. We support the process of fusion between the PST-C and the LCR and call for a fusion congress to be held in the last week of March.
4. We assert the right of our party to enter into and maintain relations independently with the world bodies in accordance with the statutes of the International. Within the framework of a general policy on an international level, we assert the right of our party to apply national tactics and forge its own leadership on the basis of its own direct experience and without a substitute of any kind. Internationalism does not mean substituting for national leaderships and liquidating them.
5. We hold that the method of resolving the contradictions in the PST-C and guaranteeing unity lies in the calling of a special congress with the following agenda: a. Internal Party Regime. b. Relations between the PST-C and the BT.
6. To struggle for the lifting of the sanctions.

Bogotá, December 9, 1977.

Signed:

Socorro Ramirez
 Ricardo Sanchez
 Gustavo Vivas
 Gladys Jimeno
 Ciro Roldan
 Jaime Galarza

TRANSLATION

Resolution on Fausto Amador

Whereas:

1. The activities of Fausto Amador which were the object of an investigation by the Fourth International constituted acts of collaboration with the Somoza dictatorship.

2. These acts disqualified Fausto Amador from exercising leadership posts in the Fourth International until a long period of testing demonstrated that he was morally capable of exercising them.

3. The question of Fausto Amador is of enormous political importance in Central America, an importance that is multiplied by the present crisis shaking the region and particularly Nicaragua, so that any support given by the Fourth International to Fausto Amador places in danger the very existence of the Fourth International in Central America.

4. The United Secretariat at its meeting of October 29-31, 1977, admitted Fausto Amador into our International with a status "the same as that of all members of organizations that have entered into fraternal relations with the Fourth International pending recognition by the next world congress," which means that in actuality he has been converted into a full member of our International.

5. The same resolution accepts Fausto Amador's residing in Costa Rica.

6. The only limitation established in said resolution is the "recommendation" that "for a probationary period of twelve months or until the eve of the next world congress...Comrade Amador function as a member...without accepting any national leadership posts."

7. This final "recommendation" is absolutely formal, since Fausto Amador has ample recourse to the mass media of Costa Rica where he is well known as a sympathizer of the OST, and Intercontinental Press is trying to promote him to an international level by publishing articles bearing his signature.

The CC of the PST resolves:

1. To categorically reject the resolution of the United Secretariat with respect to Fausto Amador.

2. To demand that the USec rectify the cited resolution and replace it with a different one along the following lines:

In view of the fact that Fausto Amador acted as a collaborator of the Somoza dictatorship and was denounced as such by the heroic fighters of the Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional, the USec of the Fourth International resolves: not to admit Fausto Amador into the Fourth International, but test him for a minimum period of five years with rank-and-file tasks outside of Central America in a section of the Fourth International, and after this period has passed to rediscuss his entrance.

3. To repudiate IP's policy of promoting the figure of Fausto Amador as a Nicaraguan and Central American Trotskyist leader.

4. To call on the USec to censure any attempt similar to that of IP and require all publications of the Fourth International to refrain from promoting in any way the figure of Fausto Amador as a Trotskyist leader.

5. To recommend to Revista de América that it follow a policy of not collaborating with any publication that promotes by any means whatsoever the figure of Fausto Amador as a Trotskyist leader.

6. To call on the USec to open a public debate regarding this case in the publications of the Fourth International, inviting the Frente Sandinista de Liberación in particular to participate in it.

7. To demand that the USec of the Fourth International place at the disposition of the PST all the documentation that it has on the Amador case.

* * *

TRANSLATIONResolution on the Pluma Publishing House

Whereas:

Pluma is one of the biggest Trotskyist publishing houses in the world and the biggest in Spanish-speaking Latin America.

This enterprise has been attacked with bourgeois methods by JORGE ENRIQUE POSADA LALINDE (by way of clarification, the terms used in this whereas involves our concern not to leave any flank open for JORGE ENRIQUE POSADA LALINDE to again use bourgeois justice against us).

The CC of the PST therefore resolves:

1. To defend the Pluma Publishing House unyieldingly, supporting the comrades of the party and the Bolshevik Tendency who are struggling to save it.
2. To declare Mr. JORGE POSADA and Mr. UMBERTO VALVERDE to be ENEMIES of the Fourth International and the Colombian SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY.
3. To make available to the members of the PST the report on the financial situation of the Pluma Publishing House.

RESOLUTION ON THE EXISTENCE OF THE TENDENCY AND SANCTIONS

1. The party's growth and unity is being threatened as a result of the faction fight promoted by a group that intends to destroy the method of party building and the internal regime adopted unanimously by our founding convention.

2. The immediate and future prospects for our party depend fundamentally on our ability to adopt a correct policy for the class struggle and apply it in a consistent way, on our moving forward in building a capable leadership team, and -- and this is intimately linked to the other -- on our membership orienting itself toward the masses and our internal life developing in a disciplined way in the framework of democratic centralist criteria.

3. The stepped-up faction fight against the decisions adopted by the convention and against the leadership of the party has been pushed through by violating the adopted resolutions concerning dissolution of tendencies, which prohibit the formation of new tendencies or factions until the next pre-convention period.

4. The factional practice of the comrades has harmed activities in the development of the election campaign, the promotion of mass mobilizations, and the financial campaign, which has resulted in a decrease in the party's capacity for militancy.

5. Since the convention, this group of comrades has been engaged in various factional activities. It has held its own factional meetings with rank-and-file members, once with one comrade suspended from the party (Ricardo Sanchez); without the agreement of any leadership body, it has organized the distribution among the membership of internal material of the Executive Committee, the Central Committee, and the United Secretariat in order to further its factional goals. In this, they went so far as to allow the circulation of this material outside the party, as occurred with the distribution of Antonio's letter and other documents (balance-sheet of the convention, report on the activity of Ricardo Sanchez in Europe, letter from Gustavo Vivas to the Executive Committee, letter from Jaime Galarza to the Executive Committee and the Central Committee) at the door of the Jorge Eliécar theater during the national electoral convention. This chain of facts includes on the part of some Executive Committee members fostering their tendency in rank-and-file structures, bypassing the disciplinary rules of the bodies of which they are members, and culminates in the formation of the so-called Proletarian Democracy Tendency, which later presented itself to the Central Committee on the basis of a document announcing its formation and signed by comrades Socorro Ramirez (member of the Executive Committee), Gladis Jimeno (suspended from the party by an Executive Committee decision not yet ratified by the Central Committee), Gustavo Vivas (whose resignation from the Executive Committee was accepted a few days ago), Jaime Galarza (member of the Central Committee), Gira Roldan (member of the Bogota city leadership), and Ricardo Sanchez (suspended from the party).

7. In view of the situation in the party, which is threatened by a crisis that includes a possible split, we reaffirm our position that the unity of the PST requires the strictest and increasing development of the internal regime and the growing proletarianization of the party.

The best chances for these comrades' overcoming their factional attitude and for ensuring that they return to party building activity as it has been defined by our founding convention are linked primarily to their social status. Only a closer link with the workers movement

in the organization of their lives and in their political activity will create the conditions for overcoming their factional attitude and for enabling them to again find a place in party-building activity on the bases defined by our convention.

RESOLVED:

1. Immediate sanctions against comrades G.V., G.J., and C.R., who are suspended from the party at least until after the election campaign. The comrades will maintain relations with the party through the Executive Committee. Those comrades who have been full-timers will receive two months wages. Before the lifting of the adopted sanctions can be discussed, it is an indispensable condition that the comrades fulfill the following requirements:

- a) get a fulltime job in a factory or enterprise;
- b) develop political activity at their place of work according to the party line;
- c) form at least one committee of supporters of the party and accomplish every task required of any rank-and-file militant, including payment of regular dues according to the dues scale; accomplish the requirements linked to the financial campaign as have been established for every party member;
- d) win a minimum of five workers during the next six months.

2. According to the charges that have been presented, Comrade Socorro Ramirez would merit the same sanction as the other comrades cited above. Taking into account the fact that the comrade did not attend the Central Committee session to present her case and defend herself, the Executive Committee will have to listen to her and take its own decision to be ratified by the next Central Committee meeting.

In accordance with the decisions taken by this meeting of the Central Committee, Comrade Socorro Ramirez will have as her militant task and fundamental responsibility the presidential candidacy.

(After the CC, comrade S.R. did not come to the Executive Committee to present her case, at the same time as she said during a plenary session of the Bogota city membership that she would not respect party discipline. For this reason, the Executive Committee decided to separate Comrade S.R. from the party.)

Resolution on Party Finances

The Central Committee fully supports the Executive Committee of the PST in its financial management of the party funds.

Resolution on the Activities Report

The Central Committee resolves:

To accept the general line of the activities report, which was presented by the Executive Committee within the framework of the general line of the report presented by comrade Greco in the name of the Bolshevik Tendency. To take the activities report as the basis for the report that must be presented to the entire party.

Resolution on the Disciplinary Measures Against Comrade R.S.

Whereas comrade R.S. has acted in a factional manner as the activities report demonstrates, and has not fundamentally carried out the decisions that accompanied the previous disciplinary measure against him;

Whereas comrade R.S., despite this disciplinary measure, has acted against all the decisions of the party by encouraging the formation of a tendency called the Proletarian Democracy Tendency;

Therefore be it resolved:

1. To extend the disciplinary measure of separation from the party for an indefinite period.
2. To eliminate the special status previously granted to the comrade.
3. To call on comrade R.S. to fulfill the same conditions as comrades G.J., G.V., C.R.---especially getting a job in a factory and recruiting five workers.

Resolution Disciplining Comrade J.G.

The Central Committee of the PST declares:

1. That comrade J.G., a member of this body, formed a tendency with several comrades of our party.
2. That, what is worse, this tendency included a comrade separated from the party (R.S.).

3. That comrade Galarza made this decision at a time when the formation of tendencies in our organization is not permitted without prior authorization of the leadership bodies.

Therefore be it resolved:

1. To immediately discipline comrade J.G., separating him from the party at least until the election campaign is over.

2. That the comrade will maintain his relations with the party and--given his current status as a member of the United Secretariat--with the United Secretariat through the Executive Committee.

Resolution on the Dissolution of Tendencies

The Central Committee does not authorize the formation of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency or of any other tendency or faction before the opening of the next preconvention discussion period to follow the presidential elections of 1978.

Resolution on the Calling of a Special Convention of the Party

The Central Committee of the PST keeping in mind:

1. That a proposal to hold a special convention of the party in March of 1977 [sic] has been presented, a convention which would have as its agenda: a) the party regime; b) relations of the Colombian PST with the Bolshevik Tendency.

And considering:

1. That such a date interferes with the central activity of the party, which is the election campaign, and that the main efforts of the entire membership should be directed toward that activity so as to fulfill the goals we have set--the proletarianization of the party, national expansion, and membership growth.

Therefore be it resolved:

1. To reject the proposal for calling a special convention of the party and to ratify the position that once the election campaign

is completed, the resolution of the convention to call a special convention will be acted on.

Resolution on Unification

1. The Central Committee ratifies the line of strengthening the unification commission and the criteria and methods approved by the party.

2. In view of the situation that exists in the Fourth International and its repercussions in Colombia, the Central Committee of the PST calls on the LCR to uphold the agreements of the unification commission.

3. In accord with what was established some time ago, the unification commission will have to draw up a balance sheet of the process, spell out the tasks, and establish the steps and dates for the unification.

TRANSLATIONAppeal by Socorro Ramirez for a Special Convention of the PST

Bogotá
December 12, 1977

Executive Committee of the
Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores
Bogotá

Comrades:

Article 26 of the Statutes of our party states: "A special convention of the party can be called at any time by one-third (1/3) of the rank-and-file members or cells, by one-third of the Central Committee (1/3), or by a majority of the Executive Committee. It cannot be held less than one (1) month after the time that it is called."

As a full member of the Executive Committee and the Central Committee, I ask the Executive Committee to permit the holding of a national referendum of the party membership on the question of holding a special convention for the first week of March of next year. Our party is experiencing an acute political crisis. There is a de facto tendency fight shaking everything up. The leadership's response to the political differences was to take disciplinary measures against various leaders while claiming that these measures were in response to violations of democratic centralism. The unity of our party has been broken for those motives. We think that the PST still represents the most advanced effort at building a revolutionary party of the proletariat and toiling masses of Colombia. At the present time there are enormous possibilities to build a strong Trotskyist party in Colombia. We must not squander them with impunity. The revolutionary Marxists are increasingly making efforts and taking steps towards unification. This is something we must hail if we really are for Trotskyism and for a united and centralized Fourth International.

The political origins of the crisis and the current differences are these:

a year and a half ago, when the Bolshevik Tendency was born, our party affiliated to it as a group; the party regime (the present regime) was approved without much discussion at the convention, a convention that the leadership itself characterized as abnormal and sui-generis. So we have to discuss these two points, and find the solution to the conflicts at a special congress. Democracy is the only thing that can save our party at the present time. There is no other way. The problem is political, not organizational. The present leadership must demonstrate to the rank and file that it represents the majority of the party.

Fraternally,
s/Socorro Ramirez

TRANSLATIONMimeographed Circular Distributed Internationally

Bogotá
December 20, 1977

Comrades
[Addressee filled in]

Dear Comrades,

In consideration of their importance for the entire Fourth International, we are sending you copies of the resolutions on Fausto Amador and the Pluma Publishing House approved by the Central Committee of our party at its meeting on the 9, 10, 11, and 12 of December.

In consideration likewise of the fact that this situation endangers the Fourth International as a whole, and quite particularly the Latin American sections, we ask that our resolutions be brought to the attention of the members of your section by publishing it in the Internal Bulletin.

Fraternally,

Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores, PST
Executive Committee

s/Julio

For the Executive Committee PST

[Motion adopted by the PST (Colombia) Executive Committee, January 5, 1978.]

TRANSLATION

SPECIAL CONGRESS OF THE PST

I. Keeping in mind that:

a. The Central Committee of our party, at its meeting last December 9-12, voted to approve the calling of a Special Congress of the PST following the June elections, whose main aim will be to evaluate the election campaign we have been carrying out.

b. Despite that resolution, two letters have reached the Executive Committee of the party requesting that a Special Congress be held in March (one from compañera Socorro Ramírez and the other from the Neiva cell) and another letter from the Pasto collective requesting a congress in January. The three agree that the points that should be dealt with are the lifting of the sanctions and the party regime.

c. None of the petitions is based on essential differences with the political line the party has been following in its main campaign--the election campaign--which would suggest the need for a speedy rectification to save the party from disaster. On the contrary, the big successes we have been achieving in this arena have been recognized by all the members of the PST, including the compañeros who have launched the faction fight.

d. Instead, the apparently most serious argument raised by those who maintain that it is necessary to move up the date for the Special Congress to March or January is that the party is in crisis and that the Central Committee resolutions, with the disciplinary measures that were voted for, place the unity of the party in danger. According to these comrades, only advancing the date of the Congress can save the party from this crisis and split.

II. The Central Committee considers that:

a. In effect, the party has been placed on the verge of a split by the factional, liquidationist actions of a group of comrades who have carried out an entire campaign of political and moral defamation against the majority of its leadership cadres and the leadership of the BT. They have resorted to the most abject, lumpen methods and have been supported by the new unprincipled bloc in our International composed of leaders of the ex-IMG and ex-LTF. They have not hesitated to collaborate with individuals completely outside our party, including the bourgeoisie itself--elements who have been repudiated and declared enemies of our party by the overwhelming majority of our national leadership.

b. The holding of the Special Congress when we are in the midst of an election campaign would mean that we would have to immediately stop the party's external work and throw ourselves totally into an internal, factional pre-congress discussion period. (Something which even Jean Pierre himself, a member of the United Secretariat and the ex-IMT, had to admit at our Central Committee meeting.)

Any comrade who has been moderately active in the past months knows perfectly well the effort involved in carrying out the election campaign, the time demanded, etc.

If we were to now decree the opening of a pre-congress discussion period to once again discuss the question of the disciplinary measures and the party regime, the practical consequences would be totally obvious: putting the brakes on the activity which has been enabling the party to reach out to the masses, losing the small and large gains we have been making with this course, and not taking advantage of the excellent prospects that have presented themselves to us through this work. Then, we certainly would be able to speak of a crisis in the party, but not the crisis the liquidationist faction is talking about. Rather a total crisis that would demoralize the membership as a whole and would place the very existence of our organization in danger.

c. We must also be very clear about the problem of party unity. The unity of the party has been and continues to be threatened, but not by the political differences or disagreements that may exist among its members (something that is not only natural but necessary for the party to be a living organism and to be able to advance). Rather it is threatened by the factional, liquidationist methods of a group of comrades who, as the result of their petty-bourgeois characteristics, have shown--and continue to show--that they are not willing to abide by the will of the majority of the party.

These comrades say they want a different regime in the party, one where tendency struggles can be carried out at any time and constantly, etc. Such a regime would be incompatible with the principles of democratic centralism with which we are building our party. Nonetheless, the comrades have every right to hold and defend such a concept and none of them has been sanctioned or could be sanctioned for that reason. But that does not mean that the comrades can act according to that concept of the party when the majority has delineated another concept. It does not mean that they can disregard all party bodies and resort to disloyal, factional methods of defamation of the leadership, etc., because in so doing they only destroy the party organization.

If the comrades are disregarding the resolutions unanimously adopted on this matter at the Founding Congress (held scarcely four months ago), why do they want a special congress on March? Have they perhaps shown by their actions that they are going to respect the majority at this congress if it turns out that they remain a minority?

Party unity is not guaranteed by moving up the special congress because of people who insist on lightly disregarding the positions and resolutions of the majority. It is guaranteed by the minority respecting the will of the majority of the party, that is, respecting democratic centralism, keeping all of us more deeply imbedded in the mass movement with our politics, and deepening our application of the party discipline we have begun to build up. Only thus can a Marxist objectively evaluate the correctness or incorrectness of its politics and of its internal functioning.

d. At present, far from abiding by the Central Committee resolutions, those comrades are simply insisting on their liquidationist methods. Not only have they constructed a leadership parallel to that of the party (which organizes its own tours, etc.) but they are also beginning public attacks (like the article by Valverde in "El Pueblo" from Cali). They are distributing their factional materials to other political organizations; and comrade Socorro Ramírez, accompanied by Jorge Posada, and under the sponsorship of comrade Jean-Pierre, goes off to Mexico to give a report to the PRT on the situation in the Colombian PST without even having notified the party leadership of her trip and abandoning her election work.

e. These facts only confirm the characterization made by the Central Committee in December with regard to the split dynamic of this liquidationist faction. Thus, party comrades should understand that the call to move the special congress up to March, far from tending to resolve the question of party unity, constitutes the final maneuver of that faction before it splits, an attempt to see how many more fish it can catch from the muddied waters. Comrades should know that at the same time the Central Committee meeting was taking place, comrades from Medellín and Cali--kept up to date with what was happening in the Central Committee meeting through phone calls from these comrades--were organizing to split the party, trying to take over the regional locals. That split was slowed down later by those in charge of the faction, when they saw that a March congress could be the banner around which they could win more followers from within our party before formalizing the split.

f. For such purposes, the comrades have suddenly resorted to the party statutes; but only one of the articles, since they have violated almost all the rest!! Article 25 says: "A Special Congress of the Party can be set at any time by one-third ($1/3$) of the membership or of the rank-and-file cells, by one-third ($1/3$) of the Central Committee, or by the majority of the Executive Committee. The time span between it being called and being held cannot be less than one month. The calling of a special congress can be defended by members who work in any rank-and-file body of the party through the Internal Bulletin."

At the December Central Committee meeting, making use of precisely this article, more than two-thirds of the full members voted to ratify the call made by the PST Founding Congress to hold a Special Congress after the June elections where the party as a whole would discuss and decide on all the points posed.

Thus, if the congress has already been called, the only thing that can be done is move its date up or back, something already decided by the Central Committee. The article mentioned only spells out the mechanisms for calling a Special Congress. In no way does it help determine the date of the congress, as the liquidationist faction has tried to make it appear.

The difference, then, is clear: it is not that one sector of the party is asking for a special congress and another is refusing. Rather, it is a difference of a maximum of four months over the date on which it should be held; months that are decisive for the life of the party. If the congress takes place in March we throw out the election campaign; if it takes place at the latest in July, we carry out THE TWO TASKS: the elections and the congress. Why can't these comrades wait? We feel it is due to the desperation that characterizes petty-bourgeois currents.

We know that some comrades may be in agreement on moving up the date for the congress, comrades who are loyal to the party and are honestly convinced that it could mean a solution to the problems created by that liquidationist faction. But they also must be conscious that by holding that position they are objectively collaborating with the divisionist maneuver of the faction.

The leadership is convinced that it must defend to the death the resolutions of the congress and of the Central Committee to save and strengthen the party. Comrades who know how to place the interests of the party above all else will be able to wait three or four months to hold the congress while we fully throw ourselves into the final stretch of our political campaign. And if the leadership is wrong, it can be thrown out by the congress itself.

III. Therefore, the Executive Committee, meeting January 5, 1978, resolves:

a. To continue with all our energy the election and financial campaign, the plans for the next two months of which will reach all the members through the Internal Bulletin.

b. To ratify the calling of the Special Congress for after the June elections, a call made by the congress and ratified by the December Central Committee meeting, setting as the outside date for it to be held the month of July and incorporating into its tentative agenda the points on sanctions and the party regime.

c. That there is no place for a referendum in any body of the Party with regard to the date for the Special Congress that has already been called.

d. That all the members and candidates must respect this resolution, immediately go to work on the election plans in their region and the tasks that flow from this.

e. That whoever does not obey places himself outside the PST and his separation from the party will be immediately formalized.

TRANSLATION

Internal Bulletin No. 1. Proletarian Democracy Tendency, Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST)

Bogota, January 13, 1978

Statement on the Latest Events

The party has been moving towards a serious crisis ever since the last congress was held and the Pro-Bolshevization Tendency formed. The aforementioned tendency continued functioning in spite of the fact that it controlled the majority of the apparatus and the leadership bodies. This has been acknowledged by comrade Carlos Pizarro and was announced to the Central Committee by comrade Oscar Almario, who participated in post-congress faction meetings. The continued functioning of said tendency--in violation of the statutes--occurred because it was trying to persecute the minority in the party and expel it. They calculated that it was possible to destroy two or three leaders because they were petty bourgeois. This has created a generalized discontent in the party along with a growing opposition to this short-sighted, sectarian policy. At the December Central Committee meeting the disciplinary measures were stepped up and extended. They hoped that the party could be kept in the dark about what is really happening, what the true nature of the conflicts is. The comrades say, "They want to destroy the party; there is a plot" and they believe that in so doing they are providing a response on what is happening. They avoid clarifying the problems, but the price for this is increased confusion. The job of the leaders of a party is not to exorcise divisive demons, but rather to stick to the methods of party democracy to resolve conflicts.

When the Proletarian Democracy Tendency was formed to struggle to put a stop to the liquidationist course the party is being forced on, the only response of the comrades was administrative resolutions, disciplinary measures, censorship. In addition, they raised a big fuss, pointing right and left to petty-bourgeois, lumpen, and divisive elements who were violating the party's rules, as they have repeated in IB [Internal Bulletin] No. 43, January 7, 1978. Lenin used to say that insults have a political meaning--that they signal a lack of precise ideas.

The comrades who proceeded in this way call themselves Bolsheviks, and we are not exaggerating at all when we say that they claim to be the only Bolsheviks. Then they should act like what they say they are and proceed to make available to the party the information it needs, using Trotsky's method: "The foundation of party democracy is timely and complete information, available to all members of the organization and covering all the important questions of their life and struggle." (On Party Democracy. "The International Left Opposition, Its Tasks and Methods." The emphasis is by Trotsky.) [Writings of Leon Trotsky, 1932-33, (Pathfinder, 1972), p. 57.]

The information provided in the IB is neither timely nor complete. Basic decisions and facts are hidden from the party. For example, with regard to the call by broad sectors of the party for a special congress, the information is incomplete. The truth is that a majority of the members in the Western Region in their cells have come out for a Special Congress to be held in March and have rejected the disciplinary measures. The same is true for the majority in Ibagué. Eight comrades in Medellín voted in favor and eighteen against. In Neiva the entire workers cell voted for the same line. In Pasto the entire zone with the exception of one comrade voted for it. The majority in the Center-Zone in Bogotá are in favor of the congress. More than 30% of the party has come out in favor of a special congress to be held the first week of March, and that is sufficient, according to the statutes, to call it. In IB No. 43, after mentioning that there is a special congress set "following the June elections, whose main aim will be to evaluate the election campaign we have been carrying out," they go on to characterize the request for the calling of a congress in March in this way: "Thus, party comrades should understand that the call to move the Special Congress up to March, far from tending to resolve the question of party unity, constitutes the final maneuver of that faction before it splits, an attempt to see how many more fish it can catch from the muddied waters." This is another slanderous statement, another contemptuous characterization of the members, underestimating their decision-making capacity. It is another mistaken prediction, because we are the most belligerent fighters for party unity. Those who are violating the statutes and further liquidating party democracy are those who approved the resolution that bans the members' statement on the date for the special congress (Articles 4 and 25 of the statutes) and who prefer the threat "that whoever does not obey places himself outside the PST and his separation from the party will be immediately formalized."

They justified their violation of Article 25 on calling a special congress in this way: "for such purposes, the comrades have suddenly resorted to the party statutes, but only to one of the articles, since they have violated almost all the rest."!!!!!!! (Emphasis is from the text.) A leadership that resorts to such makeshift attacks, like those contemplated in the bulletin we mentioned, is not interested in clarifying the differences but in a divisive course, hypocritically covered up with phrases like "to strengthen and save the party."

The argument put forth for not discussing the party crisis in the cells, for not holding membership meetings and the special congress itself is that it is a waste of time. The bulletin we mentioned insists on that position, adding that we are in the midst of an election campaign. This argument is shaky. The comrades always give that line. Remember the party's regular congress. They made it an abnormal one, even calling it a sui-generis congress, because there was no time for discussion. Trotsky characterized this type of argumentation as follows:

"The frequent practical objections, based on the 'loss of time' in abiding by democratic methods, amount to shortsighted opportunism. The education and consolidation of the organization is a most important task. Neither time nor effort should be spared for its fulfillment. Moreover, party democracy, as the only conceivable guarantee against unprincipled conflicts and unmotivated splits, in the last analysis does not increase the over head costs of development but reduces them. Only through constant and conscientious adherence to the methods of democracy can the leadership undertake important steps on its own responsibility in truly emergency cases without provoking disorganization or dissatisfaction." (Ibid.)

Also hidden from the party is the fact that the disciplinary measures have reached Neiva, Medellín, Bogotá, the Western Region... and that all those who have been sanctioned support the positions of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency.

But, in addition, no response has yet been made to a question posed, for information demanded at the Central Committee meeting in accord with the statutes: What is the party's financial balance sheet for 1977? What has been done with the money from the different campaigns? How much and in what capacity has money been given to N. Moreno? It is a proletarian moral duty, as well as a political one, to make a clear accounting to the party on the utilization of its resources. The party must reflect the moral values of the proletariat by being absolutely clear. They refused to present this report to the Central Committee and they have refused to present it to the party.

Along the lines of slanders against the leaders of our party and our tendency, in the aforementioned bulletin, they go on to state that Socorro abandoned her tasks as a candidate and went to carry out factional work in Mexico, under the sponsorship of Jean Pierre and in the company of Posada. The truth is that Socorro went to Mexico on a personal trip for an end-of-the-year vacation, when the entire party was on vacation. She did not abandon the election campaign, in any way; she is known as the best campaign activist. (This has always been acknowledged by the slanderers.) In Mexico she was invited by the leadership of the PRT to a membership meeting of some 600-700 members. At that meeting there was the opportunity to give a full report on the situation in Colombia, the election campaign, and the state of the party. Her remarks, which were enthusiastically greeted, made it possible to call some attention to the Colombian political process and to win greater support for the election campaign.

A Petty-Bourgeois Method of Discussion

Educational talks have been organized that, according to the organizers, have the following aim: "With these talks we are not only seeking to reply to, report, and discuss the latest developments in the party that concern the factionalists and the visit of the United Secretariat delegates, and the situation of the BT and the FI. We also seek to initiate discussion preparatory to the Eleventh World Congress." But shouldn't this be done in the cells and the membership meetings, where according to democratic centralism one should debate, one can disagree, and make known one's opposition? What shows to the hilt the petty-bourgeois method of discussion is that those who have been leaders of the BT and who have now withdrawn from it are barred from being present. A discussion about what the BT statement is should be held on the basis of the latest events in the International, of the dissolution of the tendencies and factions. Gus Horowitz's reply to Moreno, which was published more than a year ago and which is available--or at least, was available up until a short time ago--in the international office, should be published along with Mandel's reply to Moreno's article (published in Ideología y Sociedad) and the SWP's evaluation of the IMT self-criticism. It is inadmissible that only the parts of Barnes's report singled out in the guide are discussed, not the report as a whole. First comes the schema, the model. Later one sees the facts, principles, and positions. It is clear that this is not reporting or beginning the discussion prior to the next World Congress. This is lining people up in a sectarian fashion.

Another fact that demonstrates the petty-bourgeois method of discussion is the reproduction in the form of appendices of quotes from Trotsky and Lenin on the party regime. Not complete texts, which can serve as a guide, but arbitrarily chosen quotes. Those from Lenin refer almost exclusively to the fight with the Mensheviks. Those from Trotsky from the fight against the anti-defensists. They use the quotes in a fraudulent way--rather than a concrete analysis of the concrete conditions, they try to make people believe that the opposition is the same as the Mensheviks and the anti-defensists. To do this, at least three things would have to be shown: first, that the opposition is Menshevik; but it is Trotskyist. Second, that the opposition is anti-defensist; but it is defensist. Third, that the opposition is opposed to Lenin and Trotsky's concept of democratic centralism; but the opposition shares it completely.

Moreover, the following methodological consideration must be kept in mind with regard to the different texts quoted: In Defense of Marxism must be read in its entirety, since it would be possible to counterpose quotes from that same work that contradict those the compañeros give. The Marxist method consists of seeing in the context of the work what lies behind the differences with Trotsky's positions. Lenin's What Is To Be Done? cannot be read without also reading the Twelve Years collection where Lenin explains critically the scope of the former work. The resolution of the Third International on party building methods cannot be read without also reading Lenin's speech to the same congress

where it was presented, in which he criticizes it.

A Physical Provocation and a Chain of Provocations

Last night, January 11, in the Western Zone of Bogotá, while there was a discussion in progress about the presence of leading comrades from the Proletarian Democracy Tendency at the educational talk, there was an attempted physical attack--wooden clubs were taken up--by the Argentines: Roberto Ramírez, Daniel Z., Daniel C. (Tano), "Petiso"--against comrade Gladys Jimeno. The attack was thwarted through the lucky intervention of the trade-union leader Claudio Castañeda, a member of our tendency, and through the departure of the assaulted compañeros so as to avoid a physical confrontation. The rest of the comrades of the PDT later opted to leave as a sign of protest and because it was impossible to carry out any discussion. This sort of outrage makes clear the desperation the BT leadership feels. We indignantly condemn that attack and we call on the entire party to denounce it, independent of what tendency one belongs to. We feel we have been made aware of the intentions of the BT and will proceed in accord with the methods of the workers movement. Violence is a method alien to the Trotskyist movement; it has been used by the Stalinists against us. We must educate the party on the methods used by the Stalinists so as to avoid encouraging this in our ranks. We are also aware that there are arms in the central headquarters and we have been shocked to hear from the lips of Lidia (Argentine) and Julio (Colombian)--in front of Barragán--that the line of physical confrontations will continue. Already Ernesto González (Argentine) had announced at the party congress that they would resort to pistols. N. Moreno, who has been conducting meetings in his home and at the central headquarters (today, January 12, he held one), will not be able to evade responsibility for the extremely serious course events are taking, since he has whipped people up and handed down the line that began to be implemented against Gladys last night. Of this fact, too, all Colombian Trotskyists and the leadership of the International are hereby notified. For our part, we will not be provoked by those in total crisis who have reached such a level of desperation. The only thing they will achieve is that we will defend our principles, which are those of Trotskyism, with greater intransigence, and that we will step up our activity.

We believe that the course followed by the authors of the resolution and the provocations is a liquidationist, divisionist course. The solution continues to be an honest intraparty agreement on the basis of a democratic party discussion. You do not defend the party with insults, aggression, and expulsions. The comrades have used this method over the last seven months with catastrophic results. They must stop whipping people up in such a small-minded, shortsighted way and get used to viewing us as members of the same party and the same international, because that is the way things are.

Bogotá, January 12, 1978.

* * *

Bogota, D.E. January 20, 1978

A P P E A L

We, leading members of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores, appeal the resolution imposing disciplinary action which was brought against us by the Central Committee of the party held in the month of December 1977 and which included separation from the party until the elections and, in the case of Comrade Ricardo, indefinite separation. In the political context that the party is going through today, what is involved is expulsion covered up under the label of separation.

The following documents explain the political, organizational, and statutory framework in which our expulsion and that of one hundred other comrades took place: 1) Declaration of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency and Counterreport on Activities; 2) Balance Sheet of the Congress of the PST; 3) Declaration Concerning the Latest Events; published in the Internal Bulletin No. 1 of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency; 4) The Situation of the PST and Its Perspectives, published in Internal Bulletin No. 2 of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency.

From these documents it is clear that not only have democratic centralism and clear principles of our movement been violated, but an open and blatant policy of political persecution has been followed, organized mainly by Nahuel Moreno and other Argentine leaders who are active in Colombia.

The disciplinary action against Comrade Enrique, delegate to the United Secretariat and member of the Central Committee, was based on his adherence to the Proletarian Democracy Tendency, which was announced at that Central Committee meeting. The same procedure was followed in the case of Comrade Ciro.

The Proletarian Democracy Tendency, as we have explained in the documents referred to, has submitted to these measures in order to fight the divisionist course carried out by the Pro-Bolshevization Tendency founded personally by N. Moreno at the PST congress, the text of which is known by the comrades of the United Secretariat and which continues to be in effect since the congress — in violation of the statutes.

The disciplinary action taken against Ricardo was based on the accusation that he engaged in public activities in violation of the line of the party. This accusation was never substantiated. On the contrary, it was a matter of a clear ideological censorship. Comrades of the United Secretariat have in their hands copies of the book by Ricardo in which he explains his positions.

As far as the disciplinary actions against Socorro, Gladys, and Gustavo are concerned, in addition to being based on their membership in the Proletarian Democracy Tendency, they stem from completely arbitrary and irrelevant accusations from rank-and-file comrades.

To the comrades of the United Secretariat

Socorro, Gustavo, Gladys, Ciro, Jaime, Ricardo

TRANSLATION

[Memorandum by PDT Supporters]

Informational Memorandum for the USFI on the Situation in the PST

The circumstances that have provoked an artificial crisis in the PST and have led the Pro-Bolshevization Tendency--an appendix of the Bolshevik Tendency--to split it, have led many cells, though not all, to carry out a discussion on the reasons for the above crisis.

The aforementioned discussion, which has been slowed down and even sabotaged often by the Pro-Bolshevization Tendency, has brought forth statements from the rank and file of the party which can be summarized as follows:

1. For rejection of the sanctions against leading comrades Socorro, Gustavo, Jaime, Gladys, Ciro, and Ricardo, and for their participation and reintegration in the party and the leadership.
2. To request the calling of a special convention of the party for the month of March, in accordance with article 24 of the Statutes. Such a convention is the proper method of resolving the conflicts and preserving the unity of the PST.
3. Adherence to the positions of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency.

The leadership of the Pro-Bolshevization Tendency proceeded to use the Executive Committee to declare that the democratic norms allowed in the statutes were suspended, and they explicitly prohibited anyone from invoking article 24 of the statutes; they announced that anyone who did so would automatically be suspended from the party.

They also announced that the request for a special congress was a last resort, a maneuver by those whom they labelled factionalists. In addition they proceeded to unleash a campaign of threats, including physical ones. We call the attention of the comrades of the USFI to IB No. 43 of January 7, 1978, in which the resolution we mention is published.

The statements by the rank and file very quickly began to show that the MAJORITY of the PST would be behind the positions of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency. We attach the names of the members and organized sympathizers who have stated their agreement, and it should be noted that we do not yet have the opinions expressed in some of the party units. Comrades Riel and Enrique, members of the USFI, witnessed the collection of these signatures. Obviously this plebiscite is not an attempt to get the leadership of our tendency

officially recognized as the sole leadership of the PST. The Trotskyist method is to appeal for a democratic discussion, so that a convention can express the real situation in the party, solve the conflicts, and guarantee the unity of the PST. This is exactly what we are asking for, and this is what is in our document, "Declaration of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency." The aim of the plebiscite, which was carried out in accordance with the internal norms of the party (article 24), is to ask for the convening of a congress.

To guarantee the authority and democratic character of the special convention that we are asking for, we ask for the intervention of the United Secretariat; in addition this would help promote the process of fusion of the Trotskyists into a single party in Colombia.

For the TDP
Socorro, Gustavo, Jaime, Gladys,
Ciro, Ricardo

Below are the names of the members and organized sympathizers who have signed.

[335 names were listed.]

Report by Greco to the Central Committee of
the Colombian PST, December 12, 1977

[Because of deficiencies in the tape recording, Comrade Greco filled in the gaps on the basis of his notes. Parentheses have been used to indicate these corrections.]**

(We were hoping) that the representatives of the leadership of our international, who were going to participate in the Central Committee meeting of the Colombian PST, would offer us an analysis of the status of the class struggle in the world, explain the political lines applied by our international in the key countries of the class struggle and draw a balance sheet on these political lines. And our first...well, it wasn't a surprise, but rather a confirmation of the situation in the Fourth International, is that neither of the two comrades who spoke in the name of the United Secretariat were capable of giving us a report telling us: The class struggle is like this, we applied such and such a political line, and we obtained such and such results. They made an organizational report on the Fourth International. They explained to us that the tendencies dissolved themselves; that there was a better climate for discussion; that in this context a problem existed: The Bolshevik Tendency, which is not dissolving. To all intents and purposes, then, the biggest obstacle to normalizing the situation in the international is our Bolshevik Tendency. Together with this, Comrade Jean-Pierre painted the picture of a situation in which, as the Fourth International is growing and improving internally, the Bolshevik Tendency is entering into a process of crisis. He virtually gave us a deluxe burial, because he said that we were already finished, that the Bolshevik Tendency practically had no reason for existing.

Our report on the situation in the international and the situation of our tendency is absolutely the opposite. It is not accidental, because impressionism in the political arena has been the permanent method of the ex-IMT. Comrade Jean-Pierre did not say what occurred in the international since '69 up to now. He listed some elements of what had occurred in the last month or in the last two months. He did not say that in 1969 our tendency was reduced to a handful of militants in Argentina and a smaller handful of militants in Uruguay. He did not say that in this entire period our tendency has spread out to practically all the central countries of Latin America and has extended to Europe. He did not talk about the numerical growth of our tendency. He did not say--and this is an important thing to be noted by people who claimed to be the world's greatest experts in underground work--that the Argentine PST is the only party in the Fourth International that could survive in a situation such as exists in my country, grow in this situation, and give an example to everyone, not only Trotskyists, but the workers parties and the workers movement on a world scale. None of this was mentioned by Comrade Jean-Pierre. Comrade Jean-Pierre came here to tell us that the Bolshevik Tendency is in a crisis because Comrade Antonio broke from it, because the Lucas group left it, because the Portuguese PRT entered into a crisis, and there is a problem in the Colombian PST.

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[This explanation was listed as a footnote in the Spanish original.]

This in one aspect of his report. We could discuss some of these cases. In some of them agreement could be reached with Comrade Jean-Pierre because we also have the custom of being objective. Actually, the Portuguese PRT is in a state of crisis; according to our interpretation, not because of the policies of our tendency but because in two critical moments they were incapable of implementing the policy of our tendency: when it was suggested that they enter the Portuguese SP and when the attempt at an electoral campaign failed. We would disagree, on the other hand, with the report on Spain. We think that the work of the comrades of our tendency in Spain is quite good.

An Unprincipled Front

But in any case, the dynamic of the tendencies and currents cannot be analyzed solely as a summation of national realities. And what we must point out in any analysis of the situation of our international is the political lines, the application of these lines. All the comrades must wonder, why was the report of the two comrades of the United Secretariat purely organizational? Do you know why it was purely organizational, comrades? Because all the documents of the Fourth International were declared "historical," except one: Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. That means that the IMT's document for Europe (which was going to arm our sections in Europe) no longer exists. The documents of the Tenth Congress no longer exist. Question: What is the political line of our Fourth International? There isn't any. To be able to dissolve the tendencies, it was necessary not only to liquidate the positions that these tendencies held and continue to hold in an unprincipled front, but in addition leave our international if it were just born, with one hand behind and the other in front, stripped of a political line. I would like the comrades of the United Secretariat to first inform us as to which documents govern the policies of the leadership of the Fourth International. Those of the Tenth?

Jean-Pierre--Your information is absolutely false. What documents have been withdrawn? The documents of the Ninth World Congress and parts of the documents of the Tenth on Latin America, and that's all. Just that which is referred to in the Self-Criticism and the logical consequences of the Self-Criticism. But they are not withdrawn. It is the world congress which is going to take this up. When the world congress takes it up, a different text will be presented.

Greco--Does the document of the Tenth World Congress stand in relation to Europe?

Jean-Pierre--For the time being, up until the next world congress, yes.

Greco--The information that we had, comrades, was this. But then we're going to take advantage of the fact that documents exist and explain in the light of these documents the dissolution of the tendencies. Afterwards, we will verify which information was the most correct.

To dissolve the tendencies in an international, and to unify around the leadership bodies, you have to meet a pre-requisite so that this dissolution is principled and this later unification is likewise principled. And this pre-requisite is that no fundamental differences exist between those who are carrying out this action of dissolution of tendencies and the unification in a new...we characterize it as a "bloc."

The Dissolution of the Tendencies

What occurred in our international was the categorical and resounding failure of the LTF which was reduced to its minimum expression, and which opted to dissolve itself when in practice it was already dissolved--as Comrade Jean-Pierre himself said to me on previous occasions. The loss of everything that was the LTF in Latin America. The loss of almost everything that was the LTF in Europe...On this annihilation of the LTF, the subsequent dissolution was based. It was a dissolution of what was already dissolved. And this dissolution was the result of the political line used by the LTF in Portugal, of the political line posed by the LTF for Spain, of the political line posed by the LTF in Angola.

The dissolution of the IMT, which also is a manifestation of a crisis, not of a physical disappearance as in the case of the LTF, but of a prolonged crisis which lasted eight or nine years, which went through the guerrilla variant, went through the adventurous actions of the mass vanguard in Europe, which went through the catastrophe of Portugal, and which terminated in the Spanish FUT. The crisis of the two political lines incapable of orienting the sections, incapable of orienting the international, is what produced its dissolution.

The problem is to dissolve...for what? Giving us sweet talk, the comrades will tell us: to work through the organisms of the international, because in this international no plot exists. We are Marxists: subjective considerations are of no importance to us, what is important is the interpretation of the practical reality as it is given. And the practical reality as it is given is the unity of these two ex-currents of ex-tendencies against the Bolshevik Tendency with the program of democratic centralism understood in a revisionist manner. This is the reality of our international.

What Unites this Bloc?

Let's study this bloc a little, which was thrown together. Who are in this bloc? Comrade Jean-Pierre, when he comes to any country, when he speaks as a leader tells you: Comrade, I'm of the opinion that the SWP, particularly Comrades Hansen and Barnes, in addition to Novack, has a (revisionist concept of the question of democracy. But Comrade Jean-Pierre is together with the SWP, Novack, Hansen, and Barnes in this bloc.

(The SWP and the IMT have stood at opposite poles in face of the Angolan and African revolution in general, one of the most important points) of the world revolution. However, the SWP and the ex-IMT are united. The African revolution has not been able to divide this holy alliance.

In Europe we're going to take up some examples. The SWP is of the opinion that the French LCR committed an error in principle in voting for the Union of the Left, because the Union of the Left is a popular front. The French LCR is of the opinion that neither is the Union of the Left a popular front nor did they commit any error in principle. But the French LCR and the SWP are united in this bloc.

In Spain. Comrade Hansen says: The fundamental reason for the dissolution of the LTF is that it finished with the problem of the guerrilla war. And he forgets that the LTF itself characterized this same method as having extended to Europe around the broad mass vanguard. In Spain only a few months ago, the Spanish LCR carried out the most fabulous vanguardist policy that has ever been seen, when it made this monstrous Frente Unico de los Trabajadores with the whole swamp, with the whole ultraleft, with the whole Spanish centrist formations.

(In this Comrade Jean-Pierre was correct: The European document of the Tenth World Congress has been declared not "historical," but the policy which the Spanish LCR applied was the policy of this document. Actually this document is still followed in practice. But the SWP and Comrade Hansen, who less than four years ago formed a tendency to combat this document and this policy, are now in an unprincipled bloc with the authors of this document and the Spanish LCR, which continues to apply this policy.

(In Portugal, the IMT considered that the central task in the prerevolutionary period was the construction of organs of dual power. The SWP and the LTF held that this was not so. But today both are united in an unprincipled bloc.

(Comrade Hansen in his report to the International Executive Committee in February 1975 said that our tendency was going to move toward unification with the IMT. And he characterized this hypothetical unification as a political crime. What happened was a unification, not of our tendency, but of the LTF with the IMT, and the characterization of "political crime" has been forgotten for the sake of an unprincipled bloc.

(But let's see how this unprincipled bloc is also manifested here in Colombia.

(Comrade Ricardo Sánchez pounded Barnes, attacking his report Europe vs. America and the Crisis of Stalinism. He found in these statements reasons for constituting the Bolshevik Tendency. Today this material still remains pertinent, and nonetheless Ricardo Sánchez

is in an unprincipled bloc together with Barnes, calling for the tendencies to dissolve.

(Comrade Jean-Pierre has told us repeated times that Ricardo Sánchez did absolutely nothing while he was in Europe. But now Comrade Jean-Pierre is together with Ricardo Sánchez in an unprincipled bloc.

(Comrade Jaime Galarza is completely against--and he voted against it in the United Secretariat--the entrance of Fausto Amador into the international. Comrades Hansen and Jean-Pierre are in favor of it. But these three comrades are together in an unprincipled bloc.

(I believe that these elements give us a preliminary insight into what is involved politically in this bloc: an unprincipled agreement between currents and sectors that do not agree politically on key questions of the class struggle. And, in view of the fact that this bloc guides our international, I believe also that we have a clear description of the political crisis in which our world party is submerged.)

The Organizational Political Crisis

As to the organizational question, I do not want to carry on a war of figures. We are accustomed to European impressionism. And I do not say this out of nationalism, but because unfortunately the education of the European Trotskyists all comes from the same source, the IMT.

The situation of the main sections in Europe: the French LCR,-- Jean-Pierre himself said it--: "crisis of political leadership." The situation of the IMT and the LCR: At the next to the last congress it constituted an overwhelming crushing majority within the LCR; at the last congress, 45 percent of the LCR stood against the IMT. But Comrade Jean-Pierre says: The crisis is positive. Why positive? Do you know who came out against the IMT? They were the self-management currents--which discovered that in the party you have to have self-management, not centralism--the ecological currents, the abortionist currents...an enormous quantity of this motley crew, which here in Colombia is denominated the "coffee-house crowd," if I'm not mistaken "swamp" also. That's 45 percent of the French Revolutionary Communist League. But to finish with the comparison--Comrade Jean-Pierre just told us here that 75 percent were union members. I turn to Rouge. In the campaign that Rouge is making, it is put this way: "Rouge in danger of death," and that we all hope it will not die because it is a great conquest of the international--a French worker writes telling them: Look, comrades, I have always contributed, I am a member of the CP, I sympathize with you, but I have always contributed and I have supported you, I had hopes in your party, here's my contribution so that Rouge can appear, but this is the last time I'm going to do it. For two reasons: One, because I have seen your party launch a campaign and

abandon it in a couple of days; two, I have never seen your leaders or your members in the plants selling your newspaper, etc. But, aside from this, if what the worker says were not enough, what the leadership of the LCR replied should be: Comrade, you are right. We have not succeeded in overcoming a student attitude. This is signed. We continue to hold a student attitude. But it is ten years since May '68! Ten years are too much to continue holding a student attitude! This is one of the two biggest sections in Europe! The Fourth must explain why ten years after '68 we continue to hold a student attitude and why we are in a crisis of political leadership in France.

On Spain, we have already been given astronomical figures, comrades. What we know is the following: the 7000 militants of the Spanish LCR got 30,000 votes in the elections, or 40,000. Forty thousand divided by 7000 gives an average of five or six votes per head, which signifies that there is a problem here: Either these 7000 members are inactive, or these 7000 activists do not exist.

Beginning of a Moral Crisis

Unfortunately, to these elements of a political crisis, of a political-organizational crisis, elements of a moral crisis have begun to appear in our international, which worries us a great deal. Since you do not know about them, I am unfortunately going to have to go into this at some length.

Beginning with Comrade Mandel and the famous matter of the Viejo Topo magazine and his openly pro-CP Eurocommunist declarations. Were they made by him, or were they not made by him? We have the proof that they were made by him. Comrade Mandel later rectified his line, but there is a categorical moral fact: Comrade Mandel denied that these declarations were his, and, at the request of the Yankee comrades, the United Secretariat made an ardent defense of Comrade Mandel in a motion saying: Why does the factional Bolshevik Tendency believe that Comrade Mandel could have made these declarations? But Comrade Mandel made them, we have the tape recording. He said everything that appeared in the Viejo Topo. The problem here is not that he rectified his line, very good that he rectified it. But Comrade Mandel lied, and the United Secretariat lied to the whole international. First moral item.

Second moral item: the famous and scandalous case of Comrade Josefina and her friends in Mexico, comrades, which has been proved, documented. We have the tape recordings. Declarations made by them, saying: Comrades I had a meeting with the Mexican police behind the back of the organs of my party, I never informed the organs of my party; and, in addition, since the police told me that Comrade Ricardo Hernandez was a policeman, I carried out a campaign so that Comrade Hernandez would not be elected to the Executive Committee of my party. They said it; we did not say a word. These comrades, are, were, the top leaders of the LTF in Latin America and were unconditionally defended by the SWP and by the leadership of the Fourth International. That means: first, you can lie in the Fourth International. Second precedent, in the Fourth International any leader can privately contact the police without informing his party, on the basis of these contacts

mount a campaign against another comrade, and this leader does not merit any disciplinary action. Now, these comrades are in the leadership of the Mexican PRT, against the vote of our comrades.

Third worrisome case from the moral angle. Worrisome but a little laughable. The other great leader of the ITP in Latin America is Comrade Otto MacKenzie (Oh, I forgot: Comrade Cristina writes for Intercontinental Press; Comrade Otto MacKenzie also writes now for Intercontinental Press). Comrade Otto MacKenzie in his work in this country was to be an inspector for the Labor Department and make rulings against workers. Third precedent: The international accepts as leaders comrades who exercise public functions of the bourgeois state against the working class.

Fourth element, which came up in today's meeting and which was categorical, concrete, on the part of Comrade Hansen. Did you listen closely to what he said on why we should not discipline Socorro? Socorro should not be disciplined because she is our presidential candidate. And he told us that he had never seen anything like this in the history of the Fourth. I don't know, in the history of the Fourth, if a presidential candidate was ever disciplined. But I know something about the history of the Third. And I know categorically that it is a moral question, a question of principle, that the comrades who carry out functions of a parliamentary type or are high in the leadership of the trade unions, the party keeps a thousand, two thousand, three thousand times closer watch on them than on the leading comrades of the party as a whole. The entire struggle against parliamentary cretinism occurred around this principled, moral issue: When a candidate, a type who holds a post in an association, or a high trade-union leader, breaks a millimeter, a millimeter! with the party regime, that person has to be disciplined ten, twenty, thirty times more forcefully than any other comrade in the party. When Lenin struggled against parliamentary cretinism and other variants, he was emphatic about this. And Comrade Hansen tells us that we do not understand what democratic centralism is; and he has established--it is taped--a new norm for the international: the candidates--and naturally if they are elected and seated in the congress--can do anything they wish against the party, because they must not be touched. This is the point that has been reached today in the moral decay of the leadership of our international.

And a point remains, in which we do not know why none of the comrades of the United Secretariat have taken a stand. Comrades of the United Secretariat: What about the publishing house? There is a Trotskyist publishing house that has been attacked by a bourgeois. The first thing, before saying anything, you had to stop here and say: unconditional defense of the Trotskyist publishing house. But the comrades do not care a fig about this. And by chance this bourgeois is allied with a sector, or is a friend of a sector, which is able to attack the Bolshevik Tendency: that this bourgeois liquidates a Trotskyist publishing house appears to be of no importance to the comrades of the United Secretariat. I hope I am mistaken. This is an appeal to the comrades of the United Secretariat to define their position on the publishing house.

The Unprincipled Bloc and The Bolshevik Party Regime

And thus with this panorama of the Fourth International, we can finally understand why the central discussion is about the organizational regime. It is a characteristic of all unprincipled fronts that have existed in the workers movement. It was a characteristic of the Bakuninists against Marx, who said that the Marxist regime was dictatorial; that of the antidefensists against Cannon; that of the group of Sneevliet, Nin and Co. against Trotsky, that of the August Bloc of the year 1912 against Lenin. The characteristic of all these fronts in the absence of principles, of politics, is this: Let's attack the internal regime, Let's attack its centralist, disciplined, Bolshevik characteristics. And that is what is being expressed here, with complete clarity, with pristine clarity.

Why does it have to be a struggle against the internal Bolshevik regime? Because without such an attack, they cannot exist. People who hold diametrically opposite views on the key problems of the working class cannot exist under a Bolshevik internal regime. They cannot exist. Jaime Galarza, who is against Fausto Amador entering, cannot exist with Jean-Pierre, who is in favor of Fausto Amador entering. We need loose parties, in which all the tendencies express themselves in a free way, because it is the only way we can glue together this tremendous agglomeration of shadings, currents, "nonexisting" factions, in which everyone thinks, does, says, and acts as he wishes. This is what is important because--watch out!--in the name of this, which is already being elevated to a permanent category which is: in all the national parties you can have any kind of tendencies and you can do anything--which is what the comrades of the United Secretariat came here to tell us--after which they demand that the Bolshevik Tendency observe centralism within the Fourth International. We are going to be centralists in the Fourth, but the comrades are already recommending: no measures against anyone even though they carry on public propaganda against the party.

The worst is that they appeal to tradition. Comrade Hansen told us: you learned nothing. But yes, comrade, we learned a great deal from the SWP. We have always considered it to be our teacher. Do you know why? Because it ruthlessly expelled every factionalist. And not just one, three, or four. More than a hundred comrades of the IMT were thrown out of the SWP. Of course, the SWP said: We did not expel them, they were outside; they said: since they carried out public work and distributed publications different from those of the party, these comrades were outside the party, making another party, therefore they are no longer within our party. Fine. If Comrade Hansen came here to teach us what we did learn from them, he ought to say: Don't expel them, consider them outside the party, that they are a different party. But he did not come here to say that. He came to say: Let them stay inside. I do not recall the SWP vacillating a minute in expelling more than 100 comrades of the IMT. A position that we support unconditionally.

This is the method that Comrade Hansen taught us, it is the method that the SWP taught us, and it is the method that we are rescuing from the decadency of the leadership of our international.

The Fausto Amador Case
And Its Possible Political Consequences

I wish to deal for a moment--so that you can see the tragic consequence that can arise for the international--with the case I mentioned in passing: the case of Mr. Fausto Amador Arrieta. Mr. Fausto Amador Arrieta is an individual who was a member of the Frente Sandinista de Liberación, of which the main leader was his brother. This individual, at a certain moment under the dictatorship of Somoza, appeared before the dailies, in front of the television in Nicaragua, and said, among other things, that he had been visiting Cuba and was totally disillusioned with what was going on in Cuba, that he thought that if the combatants of the Frente Sandinista de Liberación did what he had done--that is, lay down their arms--their lives could be guaranteed, and he actually recommended that they lay down their arms against Somoza. This means that he is not a terribly desirable person. The Frente Sandinista accused him of being a traitor, some say they wanted to execute him--we do not know this for sure--his own brother completely broke off relations with him. This individual is now a member of the Costa Rican OST. Not long ago Comrade Jean-Pierre asked me: I was in Costa Rica; I am alarmed; Comrades of the Bolshevik Tendency in Costa Rica do not support the electoral campaign of the OST, which is exactly like the one being carried on by the Colombian PST. And my reply to Comrade Jean-Pierre was as follows: There is no reason to worry about the comrades of the Costa Rican PRT refusing to support the party of Fausto Amador Arrieta. In the eyes of Central American public opinion, Fausto Amador Arrieta is the greatest traitor that exists. And this traitor is now within the Fourth International.

Why do I say this? Not to insist on the moral problem, but to see the incalculable political consequences. I would like to see how the leadership of the Fourth International is going to answer, what they choose to do in face of the following...Do you know the name they give in Europe to what Fausto Amador did? Collaborationism. That is what the collaborators with the Nazis did. It was called collaborationism. We have to ask: Why did the Fourth International, why did this unprincipled bloc which is directing the Fourth International, instead of listening to the fighters of the Frente Sandinista--who are far leftists, guerrilla fighters, not Marxists, petty-bourgeois populists, petty-bourgeois nationalists...but who struggle against Somoza, which is good, who want to struggle against Somoza--why instead of listening to them, do they listen to Fausto Amador, a collaborationist with Somoza? This is what the Fourth International is going to have to explain in Central America. If a very probable combination of circumstances occurs: that Somoza fails; that the Frente Sandinista emerges

as a movement of great prestige because of its antidictatorial struggle--although it might be only a democratic struggle--against one of the worst dictatorships in Latin America, a prestige similar or superior to that of the Uruguayan Tupamaros; that the Frente Sandinista might say: I would like the Fourth International to explain why Fausto Amador Arrieta is in its ranks...and, gentlemen, at that moment Trotskyism will be finished in Central America. It will be finished because no other explanation is possible except to tell them: Look, inasmuch as Jack Barnes said in his report that if as a member of the ITF, Fausto Amador was not accepted his case could blow the policy of dissolving the tendencies sky high--textually: Can blow this whole policy sky high--then the IMT which was against it, said: Good, we accept it. And that is why he is inside the international.

OK. This is the bloc we have to confront. There is no plot here: the unity is organic, the unity is normal; it is a law of dialectical materialism that unites them. I do not know if they think that way or not; that is totally secondary for us as Marxists. Whether they meant to plan it or not is totally secondary. This talk about "plots" is beneath us as Marxists. The problem is: what objective phenomenon is occurring in the Fourth? It is the objective phenomenon of an agglomeration of sectors in political decomposition, in organizational decomposition, and the sad beginning of moral decomposition.

The Repercussions in Colombia

How is this expressed within the Colombian party? I also listened with attention to jot down anything in the report of the famous tendency that has appeared, and I was left with my pencil raised. Because I expected that as Trotskyists they were going to say: Let's form a tendency because the electoral line is catastrophic, because we are going to carry out a policy of class-collaborationism or an ultraleft policy, because we differ completely with the policy of this party. But no, the tendency thinks the policy of this party is perfect. They have not made a criticism of the policy of this party. It could be something else: let's form a tendency because the electoral line is superstructural, or because the line of the support committees is mad and can lead the party to catastrophe. But no, they are in agreement also with the line on the support committees. They were also in agreement with having succeeded in bringing together other socialist currents into a front. They are in agreement with the entire political line. Differences are going to appear--don't worry--after a time. But they did not say anything about this. They said: Let's constitute a tendency because we are against the regime.

Then there was profound unity. It was a good thing to have had the two reports one after the other. That meant total unity on an international scale, without a plot, perhaps without a single meeting, perhaps without even talking about it. That is the unity, that is the bloc. This is what, as Marxists, we have to try to understand, because it is a profound problem and because it leads actually to the characterization that our tendency must make of the international situation and what policy we are going to follow in face of it.

In the first place, the first concrete, categorical reply: The situation in the international demands and requires a tighter closing of ranks by our tendency. We are struggling against an extremely dangerous phenomenon, much like that in which the liquidators attacked Lenin in 1908-1912, a front which included everybody, even Trotsky. Altogether here with a single objective: We are against an illegal party. This was the great discussion. All the liquidators were saying: We are against this Lenin who is a beast, just how are we going to make an illegal party. And Lenin said: I will confront along with my Bolsheviks this whole group; it is a liquidationist bloc; I will struggle for an illegal party. And the struggle today is the same one. Either you fight for a Bolshevik party or you are out to get a POUMist party, which means trying to get a party amounting to a summation of factions, a summation of tendencies. It is the same struggle.

The Absence of a Proletarian and Bolshevik Tradition

There is a characteristic that Trotsky always assigned to the petty bourgeoisie, that they do not want to make class characterizations. The Argentine PST and later the Bolshevik Tendency, have been attacked in many ways. The preferred charge now is factionalism. But, if we are Marxists, every political phenomenon has its social explanation. If we are factionalists, if we do not understand the situation in the Fourth and thousands of disasters throughout the world are ascribable to us, then you have to explain which class, which class sector is putting pressure on us, is penetrating our ranks, leading us into bringing about so many disasters for Trotskyism, and we have never succeeded in getting a categorical reply from the international. To the contrary, complete unity: here no class characterizations are made. This is what Trotsky said: Not to make class characterizations is petty bourgeois, because in a factional struggle the first thing you have to do is define from the Marxist point of view which classes are expressed in this factional struggle. We who claim to be orthodox Trotskyists, do have a class interpretation of this phenomenon. And the phenomenon is the student-type leaderships of our movement.

Comrade Jean-Pierre said that it was a great disaster for our Tendency to have to recognize that now we are not in position to present ourselves as an alternative leadership for the Fourth International. And we think to the contrary that everything is advancing. Because we are discovering the roots of one of the problems of our Tendency, the generalized problem of the international and also these small split-offs that have occurred and those that are going to occur--because splits in the tendency are going to continue to occur--as can be seen at bottom in the Colombian phenomenon. Do you know why we cannot, despite the rise, build two or three parties of 1500 or 2000 members in Europe? Because we do not have cadres with a tradition. And do you know why there are no cadres with a tradition in Europe? Because the IMT educated them. All our cadres, our own European cadres, have been educated in what was--do you remember?--the old Bloque Socialista. The bloc of the cafes, Ricardo's bloc, this socialist bloc. OK, unfortunately this was the only school which our European cadres had. Thus it is going to take two, three, perhaps

more years for the comrades to understand what the Colombian PST is coming to understand more and more, and which the great majority of the party understands with complete clarity: politics is not what is carried on in the cafes, the leaders are not those who debate the best nor those who write the best theoretical articles; the leaders are those who take part in the class struggle and those who construct a party in the class struggle. It is going to take time for the European comrades to understand this, and actually there are no Argentinians, nor hordes of Argentinians, nor thousands of Argentinians, who could replace a national leadership. Nor are there going to be thousands of Colombians, which the PST is beginning to be in position to provide.

That means that we will have to wait for a process of maturation. In this process of maturation we are going to see not only little splits like those we have had; perhaps we'll have bigger splits; there are comrades who fall by the wayside. There are comrades who, precisely because of their class character, put their personal prestige above the necessities of the party. There are comrades who cannot accept a criticism. There are comrades who have to be the main figure--or the star--otherwise they will break with the party. And then we are going to lose these comrades. It is a process that is occurring here and which has occurred in other sectors of the world. But within the dynamic of consolidation of development of our tendency.

Thus comrades, to wind up. The attack that is going to be made will be harsh; Comrade Hansen has already announced it. We are going to be pictured before the whole international as factionalists, as splitters, as those who do not respect the centralism of the international, as if we should--we're not going to do it--let all kinds of tendencies form in the national parties. This is the attack that is coming. It is an attack that is going to last for a long time. Unfortunately, at this time there is no country in the world that has reached a critical stage in the class struggle. We are going to see what happens to this bloc. We do not know if this bloc is going to break into a thousand pieces in face of the impact of the class struggle should a new Portugal arise or if (as is very probable in our opinion) the rise shifts to Latin America. Perhaps no, if the bloc consolidates in face of the impact of the class struggle it is terribly dangerous. This would mean that the fate of the international would be sealed if the bloc is still in the leadership. And we do not know what is going to occur with this bloc, but it has this great advantage: Now we cannot say: Let's discuss Angola, let's discuss this or that country; now there is no critical prerevolutionary situation in the world.

The Situation of the Class Struggle

We think that in Europe very sharp prerevolutionary situations are unlikely to appear in any country in the immediate period ahead. From the political angle, there are very big control mechanisms which in a practical way are neutralizing the European rise. The rise will continue, it is strong. In Portugal something like a partial retreat has begun: hence the fall of Soares. But in general it appears to us that the control organizations are so monstrous and so well mounted and have had so many years of experience that although the rise will continue, it is going to take time to bring down these mechanisms and put Europe or some country in Europe in a situation of prerevolutionary crisis. We believe that the case of Portugal was to a certain degree exceptional because it was combined with the colonial revolution in Africa.

Let's see, at the same time--and it would be good had the comrades of the United Secretariat taken the floor on this in order to give us their opinion, but they have not said anything--the rise tends to again shift to Latin America. There are important signs of its rise in Latin America; a very deep crisis, latent but close to exploding in Central America; in Brazil; in Peru.

And we see the Argentine question, which gives us the impression that the Argentine proletariat can be converted into the vanguard of the world proletariat. That is to say, it has not been defeated by the dictatorship, it has mounted resistance strikes which recently almost culminated in a general strike, provoking the first important retreat of the Videla dictatorship. Thus we see a tendency for the rise to shift toward our continent.

The Tasks of the Bolshevik Tendency

In Argentina there is a saying that goes: "The racetrack tells which are the horses." That is, you see the horses in the racetrack, those that are the fastest and those that are the slowest. We say the same. We will see whether our tendency is mistaken. It will be demonstrated whether with the rise we break up, we dissolve ourselves. Up to now the contrary has occurred: In those countries of the world where there has been a rise, it has been our tendency that has advanced and it has been the others that have retreated. This is categorical. We think that the same process will continue.

Likewise in the coming months each and every one of you is going to be systematically bombarded by a campaign on our internal regime. There is going to be a tremendous propaganda offensive. Measures are not going to be taken; I, too, am of the same opinion: organizational measures are not going to be undertaken. And this, comrades, poses a great task for our party leadership: We have to train all the cadres of the party as cadres of the Tendency.

You know that there is a danger, what Jean-Pierre said: That we destroy cadres: OK, for me the greatest massacre in the destruction of cadres that I can recall was the massacre committed by the IMT and comrade Jean-Pierre in voting in favor of guerrilla warfare in Latin America. Thus, comrades, our errors can actually destroy cadres, we can be unjust, we can be mistaken, we are inexperienced, provincial, with a narrow local outlook, not integrated in depth in the leadership of the Fourth International. What Jean-Pierre said is correct--he did not say that this isolation arose from 25 years of isolation imposed upon us by the IMT systematically excluding us from the Fourth; but this is past history, still it is history. And we run the risk of committing errors.

How could we not commit them? First: in this struggle, comrades, by proletarianizing our party. That is to say making our party enter the workers movement, getting the comrades to test themselves in the workers movement, and going so far as to apply (Comrade Hansen said that in the history of the Fourth he had never seen such atrocities) ...so far as to apply the recommendations of Trotsky when he said to a sector--let us say--youthful, petty bourgeois, within the SWP; these comrades have to carry out hard physical labor in the provinces, and have to win five workers in three months; if they cannot win five workers in three months, they have to drop to the level of sympathizers and be given three months more. If they do not gain five workers in three months, they should be expelled. But this was written by Trotsky, of whom comrade Hansen was a disciple. And he comes to tell us that he has never seen atrocities like ours in the international, caramba! The problem is that the SWP in its time did not go all the way in applying such measures, but another problem is that these were Trotsky's indications in struggling against the penetration into our party of these rotten, semilumpen, coffee-house student types, who permanently try to join up.

Thus, the first measure: in order to carry on this battle--which is not only national, but very international--proletarianizing our party. Second measure: not to accept a single attack against the internal regime of the party. Not a single one! The harder the attack against the internal regime, the more we have to educate the international to which the Bolshevik Tendency directs itself that there are no privileges for candidates, there are no privileges for incorrigible factionalists, there are no privileges for those who defend the fight to form a public faction. We must provide the international with a demonstration. The majority, at least the European majority is not going to understand this for a while. Because of this I say that it is not going to be easy. I do believe that in Latin America we are going to understand this much better.

Thus this is the summary of the situation, It is not that our tendency does not have an analysis; it has one: it is the one we have posed. It is not that we do not have a policy. The policy is: form more and more cadres around the political positions and organizational methods of our Tendency; prepare these cadres against an unprincipled bloc of petty-bourgeois characteristics which is now in command in our international; and, beginning from that, with this force, wait. Wait for what? The class struggle. The more we strengthen the Tendency the more this development will be reproduced in the Fourth which Jean-Pierre had to recognize. With a rise in the class struggle our Tendency went from a small handful in Argentina to an entire world current. A new blow of the class struggle and we will see what happens in our international! []

[From the Internal Bulletin of the Bolshevik Tendency, No. 3, Dec., 1977]

TRANSLATION

The Situation in the International and Our Tendency

This Internal Bulletin of the Bolshevik Tendency consists mainly of a series of documents. The reason for this is to give comrades a picture of the new situation that has opened up in the International after the recent Central Committee meeting of the Colombian PST and the role played there by Hansen and Jean-Pierre, the representatives of the United Secretariat. We are not making an exhaustive analysis here, since the next Boletín de Polémica Internacional [International Discussion Bulletin] will be coming out soon and will contain four items that give an initial view of the situation as a whole:

- 1) Barnes' report of August 1977 on the dissolution of the LTF;
- 2) Jean-Pierre's report to the PST (C);
- 3) Hansen's report to the PST (C);
- 4) Greco's counterreport to the PST (C) CC.

Several things should be noted briefly: the recent CC of the PST (C); the appearance at that CC of a faction headed up by Ricardo Sánchez, Gladys Gimeno, Gustavo Vivas, Jaime Galarza, and Socorro Ramírez which broke with our tendency, which is breaking with the PST(C), and which is oriented towards unification with the Colombian LCR; the unconditional alliance of Hansen and Jean-Pierre with this faction. All of these factors have resulted in concretizing the perspective that we pointed out in previous IBs: the dissolved LTF and IMT have formed an unprincipled petty-bourgeois bloc against our tendency. This bloc has been "enriched" by the comrades who in breaking with our tendency are unable to put up with our disciplined, Bolshevik organizational regime. The first expressions of this phenomenon are Lucas and several others from his group in Spain, Antonio of Venezuela, and this faction in the PST(C).

A summary of our analysis of the situation in the International and our tendency is the following:

- 1) The dissolution of the LTF and IMT were the products of their respective political crises.

2) In order to respond to these crises they formed a bloc against our tendency; our tendency has turned out to be their main enemy, both because of the dynamics of our development and because our political positions cut squarely across the positions that they have defended and continue to defend, and to which they have not been able to offer an alternative.

3) As has occurred repeatedly in the history of the revolutionary movement (Bakunin against Marx; Sneevliet, Nin & Co. against Trotsky; the antidefensists against Cannon; the August bloc against Lenin), the axis of attack against our tendency is the party regime. The accusations against us, and particularly against Moreno, stem from this. They accuse us of being maneuverers, factionalists, splitters, monolithic, caudillistas, antidemocratic, bureaucratic, etc.

4) This occurs because a bloc of this type, in which an amalgam of diverse political positions exist (Africa, Portugal, Spain, France--the SWP and Mandelists continue to be opposed to each other on all of these points) necessitates a POUMist-type internal regime in which all kinds of tendencies, factions and permanent groupings discuss interminably. Any kind of discipline would signify a breakup of this bloc, because there are no principled political agreements that guide the action of the parties in the International.

5) Another factor leading to the formation of the unprincipled bloc is the organizational-political crisis, which is a product of the political crisis of the International. Its clearest manifestation, among other things, is the situation of the French LCR--which was presented as the IMT "model" at the last world congress. In his report, Jean-Pierre himself characterized the situation of the French LCR as one of "crisis of political leadership."

6) Finally moral issues were another factor that caused this bloc to congeal. These were seriously aggravated when Fausto Amador was accepted as a member of the International; this collaborator of Somoza is now held up as a public leader of Trotskyism in Costa Rica and Central America as a whole.

7) In face of this situation our tendency continues, in general, to develop and consolidate--in spite of several partial setbacks such as the serious situation of the Portuguese PRT and the factional struggle in the Colombian PST. This is shown by the electoral campaign

in Colombia, the development of our work in Italy and Spain, the advances in Venezuela, and the extraordinary situation of the Argentine PST (which has been in the forefront of the recent struggles against Videla and has doubled the press run of its newspaper).

8) As this process of development and consolidation moves forward--for example, in our involvement of new sectors that follow our tendency in the mass movement, or the Bolshevization and proletarianization of the parties that we lead--this has corresponding effects on our own tendency, which is very young and inexperienced. The most petty-bourgeois comrades--those most inclined to place their own role as leaders and their aura of prestige above the interests of the party, those who shine in the ideological-type factional struggles so characteristic of the sects of the swamp but who cease to shine in the daily work of the mass movement, those most incapable of putting up with our criteria of strict Bolshevik discipline--are beginning to break with our tendency and to join up with the unprincipled bloc, raising the same criticisms of our internal regime.

For the unprincipled bloc our tendency is going through a crisis. For us, however, it is a cleansing process, a product of our development and consolidation. Precisely for this reason we foresee new splits and conflicts inside the tendency. But we should avoid impressionism: these problems must be seen within the framework of the extraordinary advances that we have made since 1969, and which still demonstrate that we are the most dynamic and solid, the most politically armed and homogeneous tendency in the International.

9) The recent trip to Europe has led us to a more pessimistic conclusion than the hypothesis we had had about the situation there. If, on the one hand, there has been a great upsurge, we also find that the big reformist apparatuses have things very much in hand. The Portuguese situation of two years ago--which has been reversed now that the bourgeoisie has been able to put the workers movement on the defensive--seems to us to have been an exception brought about by the relation between the Portuguese revolution and the colonial revolution in Africa. Portugal, too, is now an integral part of the European revolution as a whole. This leads us to foresee that there will not be any sharp prerevolutionary situations in Europe until a very grave economic crisis explodes.

On the other hand, the European leaderships of our tendency are rather weak. This was dramatically shown by the crisis of the Portuguese PRT, which came about as the result of a series of historic mistakes (the failure to seize the opportune time to carry out entrism in the SP, the failure in the electoral campaign, etc.). This weakness of the European leaderships, combined with the characteristic of the upsurge in Europe that we have described, leads us to think that for the moment we are not in a position to put ourselves forward as the leadership of the International.

10) This means that the International is in a burning contradiction. There is a crisis of political and organizational leadership that makes it necessary for our tendency to take over the leadership of the Fourth. But our tendency is not mature enough to assume this role. We have to wait for the national leaderships that we are building to mature, and for new explosive upsurges of the class struggle to bring the moment closer when we can contest the leadership of the International in a concrete way.

11) The reason for the weakness of the European leaderships of our tendency, or rather the weakness of all the national leaderships of our tendency--with the exception of the Argentine PST and, to a lesser degree, the Colombian PST--is rooted, above all, in the absence of tradition. The political and organizational methods of Bolshevism are not acquired in one day, but through years of activity in a climate of rising class struggle. The Argentine cadres, and to a lesser degree the Colombian cadres, can--and must--help out, must become a part of these national leaderships--in-formation, and take part in the process of maturation of those leaderships. BUT THEY CANNOT SUPPLANT THEM. Petty bourgeois bad habits, studentism, impressionism, and sectarianism cannot be overcome by the simple process of pumping in more experienced cadres to replace the national leaderships. There must be an integration, a collaboration, not the substitution of the central leadership of the tendency and the Argentine PST for these leaderships.

In Europe the weakness is accentuated because the only school that our comrades had before joining the tendency was the IMT school, with all its cafe discussions, typical of studentism and the swamp, and with few or no ties to the workers and mass movement. They are cadres that are showing exemplary self-sacrifice and are assimilating the lessons of our tendency very quickly, but they must still mature much

more to attain the level of Bolshevization and proletarianization that will transform them into great national leaderships.

12) The conclusion is that we must accelerate as much as possible the consolidation of the national leaderships of the tendency, while being conscious that nothing can replace the experience that these same leaderships have to go through to develop. The tendency's contribution will basically be propagandistic, trying to help these national leaderships-in-formation to solve the political and organizational problems they face. We will not fall into the federalist position of the SWP, and leave the development of the national leaderships to chance, hoping for a "natural" process to unfold. We will fight to the death for our line of involving comrades of other countries in helping this development--even though there are limitations on this due to the weakness of the tendency cadres and the needs of the objective situation. But we are not going to transplant leaderships to build parties in other countries. This is why we say that the task of the tendency will be mainly propagandistic. Thus, Revista de America and the tendency documents for the international discussion will have central importance in this process.

13) The situation in Argentina is such that the Argentine PST is beginning to gain mass influence. So, the development of the Argentine PST is a priority task for our tendency, although we must try not to neglect the development of the other parties, especially the Colombian PST. Because of this, we have decided to reverse the flow of Argentine cadres that have been coming from the country for more than a year. We have decided to send back all the Argentine cadres we can, where there is no major risk, in order to strengthen the PST.

14) The process of consolidation of the national leaderships that will put us in a position to contest for the leadership of the International will take place mainly through the proletarianization and Bolshevization of our leaderships and parties. This process implies very profound changes, not only methodological and political ones, but in our way of living as well. It means breaking all the ties that bind us to the petty bourgeoisie. This will be a difficult process for a tendency as young and inexperienced as ours is, and it will lead to new problems with the comrades who are most unwilling to

become genuine proletarian Bolsheviks and to leave the atmosphere of the student sects behind in order to set out in building parties of iron discipline, forged in the workers movement and the class struggle.

To take on these tasks and these new problems energetically, to close ranks behind the tendency, and to remain intransigent in the struggle to the death with the unprincipled bloc that is leading our International, even preparing to convert ourselves into a faction. THESE ARE THE BASIC TASKS OF EACH AND EVERY ONE OF THE COMRADES OF OUR BOLSHEVIK TENDENCY.