

14 Charles Lane
New York, NY 10014

March 10, 1978

TO ORGANIZERS AND NATIONAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Dear Comrades,

Enclosed for your information are copies of correspondence regarding a recent visit to Mexico by Milton and Edith Zaslow of the "Committee for a Revolutionary Socialist Party." Also included is a copy of the CRSP's July, 1977 "Statement of Purpose."

Comradely,

Olga Rodríguez
Olga Rodríguez
National Office

México D.F., México
11 de enero de 1977

SWP Political Committee
14 Charles Lane
New York, NY

Dear Comrades,

Recently Milton and Edith Zaslow from the "Committee for a Revolutionary Socialist Party" were in México City on a social visit. While here they discussed their viewpoints with several comrades and left copies of the "Freedom Socialist" and other literature of their organization.

We assume you have copies of this literature. If not, let us know and we'll send it to you right away.

We would like to know of your attitude towards this formation. Leaving aside momentarily their false characterization of the SWP, we'd like to have your assessment of the organization and component parts of it, their approach in the mass movement, future possibilities of changing their political viewpoint, etc.

Correspondence, as usual, can be sent to: Manuel Sarmiento, Apdo Postal 27-453, México 7, D.F.

Comradely,

Manuel Sarmiento

14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014

February 9, 1978

Manuel Aguilar
Mexico

Dear Manuel,

Thanks for the information regarding the Zaslows' visit to Mexico.

We do have copies of recent issues of the "Freedom Socialist" newspaper. However, we would appreciate it if you would send us copies of the other literature they left with you, since some of it may be material we don't yet have.

I am enclosing a copy of a document we obtained describing the "founding conference" of the Committee for a Revolutionary Socialist Party. This document, as far as we know, has not been circulated by the CRSP.

As you can easily see from this document, the political essence of the CRSP comes down to a single point: unbridled hostility to, and hatred for, the Socialist Workers Party. Their so-called "political support to the Fourth International" is, of course, merely fakery designed to cover up their political war against the SWP.

The CRSP is a bloc between different groupings each led by renegades from the SWP, with different, and contradictory, political lines and orientations. It is held together by one thing and one thing only: agreement that the SWP is rotten and must be destroyed.

Although we never rule out the possibility that some individuals may be won away from this course, we see no possibilities of any of the component parts of the CRSP being won to support the SWP or the Fourth International. In fact, their course is in exactly the opposite direction.

We have been trying to pay close attention to this opponent grouping. Even though they are small, they do confuse some people, both in the U.S. and in other countries, because of their pretense of being supporters of the Fourth International. We would appreciate hearing from you about any future attempts they may make to get in touch with comrades in Mexico.

Comradely,

Larry Seigle

Larry Seigle
for the Political Committee
Socialist Workers Party

Enc. July. 1977 "Statement of Purpose" of CRSP

Los Angeles Conference on Revolutionary Regroupment, July, 1977

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

A conference of revolutionary socialists from various sections of the United States, assembled in Los Angeles, Calif., on the weekend of July 22-24, 1977, announces the formation of a new political tendency dedicated to the reconstitution of American Trotskyism and the regroupment of radical forces in this country.

Our ultimate objective is the construction of a revolutionary socialist party based on proletarian internationalism, a rich internal democracy, and firm roots in the working class and the new mass movements that have emerged in the past several decades--the kind of party that will be capable of mobilizing the broad cadres needed to achieve a workers and farmers government in the United States.

We do not start from scratch. We adhere to the programmatic foundations and traditions of the early Communist International (C.I.) and the first workers state, the Soviet Union. We identify ourselves with the struggle of the Left Opposition against the Stalinist degeneration of the Soviet Union and the C.I. We consider ourselves a part of the movement to build a world party of socialist revolution--a part of the Fourth International which is dedicated to the application of Marxist principles to contemporary social reality.

The Degeneration of the Socialist Workers Party

Many of us have a common origin in the early Socialist Workers Party. Although we left the SWP at different times and apparently over different issues, we are all convinced that the SWP has degenerated into a bureaucratic, monolithic, and centrist formation moving in the direction of the Social Democracy. Together with other comrades who have embraced the general program of the 4th International, we undertake the difficult, but unpostponable, task of re-creating an organized expression of revolutionary Marxism in the United States.

The opportunistic and Stalinophobic degeneration of the SWP was clearly revealed in its reaction to the momentous upsurge of revolutionary struggles in Western Europe, i.e., the overthrow of the 48-year-old fascist dictatorship in Portugal. The SWP veered sharply to the right, toward support--in company with the U.S. State Department--of the Portuguese Socialist Party's offensive against the revolution, an assault led by Soares on behalf of Portuguese capitalism and world imperialism.

This class betrayal by the SWP was compounded by its adoption of a neutral position in the Angolan civil war, a great social conflict between neo-colonialists backed by the U.S. and South Africa, and the revolutionary masses led by the Popular Movement for the Liberation of the Angolan People, the MPLA. So blinded was the SWP by Stalinophobia that it could not recognize the reality that was so clear to Washington and world reaction: that the outcome of this battle was decisive for the development of the revolution unfolding in all of southern Africa.

The political betrayals of the SWP are further compounded by its bureaucratic regime which stifles all serious criticism and thereby eliminates any possibility of correction from the ranks. All opposition to its anti-revolutionary policies in Portugal and Angola was crushed in advance by a "preventive strike"; an entire opposition tendency was purged from the SWP without the elementary formalities of a trial, a hearing, formal charges, or even notification of expulsion (until after the fact).

Further evidence of the demise of the SWP as a revolutionary organization is the astonishing fact that in the face of all these political and organizational misdeeds--unprecedented in the Trotskyist movement--the severe internal and public criticism by the representatives of the overwhelming majority of the 4th International met with not a ripple of dissent inside the SWP.

We are forced to conclude that the regeneration of revolutionary Marxism in the U.S. must proceed outside of and apart from the SWP.

Support to the Fourth International

The building of a U.S. section of the world Trotskyist movement lies ahead of us. The principal responsibility for this tragic situation obviously lies with the leadership of the SWP. We must, however, reluctantly take note of the self-defeating policy of the International Majority Tendency (IMT) of the 4th International. In the interests of maintaining its worthless relations with the SWP, the IMT contributed to the liquidation of its own supporting tendency in the U.S.--the International Tendency (IT) of the SWP. We declare our strong opposition to the opportunistic line of conduct followed by the IMT leadership in relation to the destruction of a sympathizing section of the Fourth International in the United States.

We nevertheless reaffirm our support to the general political line of the 4th International and our commitment to working for a revolutionary program in the U.S. in struggle against the revisionist SWP which flagrantly suppresses the voice of the International in this country in an organizational expression of its political hostility to the International.

Race, Sex, and Sexuality

Our tendency will further distinguish itself from the SWP and all other non-revolutionary political formations in the U.S. by its firm and consistent adherence, from its inception, to the following principles:

1. The struggle of racial-ethnic minorities against segregation and oppression is central to the revolution in the United States and requires constant analysis and unstinting support. Blacks, Chicanos, Native Americans, Asian-Americans, etc., can win liberation only through the coming together of these movements with each other, with other mass struggles and with a revitalized working class. Therein lies the hope for the socialist revolution in the U.S.

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2. Revolutionary socialist feminism--the movement for the total emancipation of women in every sphere of life--must be vigorously embraced, promoted and demonstrated in practice by any movement that calls itself Marxist. The double oppression of women, like the double oppression of minorities, creates a special dynamic amongst them that has already begun to transform every other social movement and political process in this country. Women workers constitute an enormous reservoir of energy, consciousness and leadership for the forces of world revolution.

3. The resounding demands of lesbians and gay men for dignity and civil rights are producing a polarization in the gay movement between right and left wings; working-class gays, female and male, are increasingly looking toward militant unionism and socialism as the only guarantees of emancipation from bigotry and wage slavery. The gay upsurge has taken the form of a great mass movement whose historical destiny is to link up with the revolutionary forces in this country.

4. Our tendency guarantees the right of any specially oppressed grouping in our midst--racial/ethnic minorities, women, and gays--to organize into caucuses for the purpose of promoting its rights and resisting any manifestations of racism, sexism, or homophobia in the organization--should such reactionary outcroppings of social and cultural prejudice appear. No majority can prohibit such formations.

A Party of Workers and Scholars

5. Our tendency will work to build a party that represents and encompasses, at one and the same time, revolutionary workers and Marxist scholars and theorists, jointly seeking to interrelate socialist theory and revolutionary practice.

Workers' Democracy

6. We firmly believe that bureaucracy and revolution are antithetical social phenomena and that full and open discussion of all differences, major and minor, is a necessary precondition for assembling and educating a revolutionary cadre.

The revolutionary party of the future must guarantee to all not only the right of dissent but the concomitant right to promote a dissenting position by organizing a faction. And any minority that may appear in such a party must be accorded proportional representation on all leading bodies.

We draw upon the experience of the Bolshevik Party, which enjoyed the widest and most profound internal democracy even during the most severe social crises. Amidst revolution and civil war, great debates were conducted within the organization and in the public press of the party as a necessary vehicle for achieving solidly united action.

The struggle for socialist democracy is the struggle against all bureaucracy everywhere--in the capitalist industrial establishment, in the trade union movement, and in all the workers states where Stalinist bureaucracy stands as an obstacle to the progress of world revolution.

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And the practice of socialist democracy must begin with our own revolutionary socialist movement.

Break with the Social Democracy!

Finally, we must take note of a significant shift to the right that parallels but is different from the conservative course of the SWP--the regressive turn of a large segment of the former leadership of the tumultuous New Left of the sixties and early seventies into the morass of the Democratic Party.

In collaboration with the social-democratic labor bureaucracy, the old New Left has perpetrated a wholesale abandonment of independence from the twin parties of capitalism, creating thereby still another basis for the reconstitution of American radicalism: the necessity for a definitive break with the capitalist parties and with the liberals and labor bureaucrats who support them. The Democratic Party serves as the vehicle for class collaboration and for support to the domestic and foreign policies of imperialism. The formation of the new Committee for a Socialist Movement by Michael Harrington, Gloria Steinem, et al., illustrates this serious shift to the right by former and potential radicals.

But as former leaders of the left shift to the right, a contrary shift to the left is occurring in the labor, racial/ethnic, feminist and gay movements. And herein are gathering the sources for our new tendency and the future revolutionary socialist movement.

Projects and Activities

As initial steps toward the process of regroupment:

1. We will publish and disseminate a Discussion Bulletin for the consideration of the problems, analyses, and perspectives expressed in this Conference. The proceedings, statements, and papers of this Conference will be published, and further studies, discussions and debates on the topics initiated here as well as others that will arise will be printed in this ongoing bulletin.

We stand ready, moreover, to collaborate with any group interested in the regroupment process in the establishment of similar discussion bulletins for the exchange of ideas.

2. We undertake to distribute periodicals and documents from all parts of the world which disseminate information and express the ideas of the Fourth International.

3. We will develop communication and an exchange of information and experience among groups and individuals in the tendency.

4. We will engage in joint coordinated activities around such issues as international proletarian solidarity, defense of victims of capitalist injustice, independent anti-capitalist political

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action, support to the various liberation and civil rights movements in this country, and efforts to extend trade union protections to all American workers. And finally we will assist in the formation of Marxist study groups and schools wherever possible to stimulate the ideological offensive against U.S. capitalism and its allies everywhere.

In conclusion we extend a warm and comradely invitation to all revolutionaries to work with us toward a regroupment of the forces on the left into a new party of socialist revolution. The party that can win victory for the American working class and an end to wars, poverty, prejudice, and class divisions in humanity is yet to be built. The job will not be done by skeptics, bureaucrats, nor those overcome by despair. It will be done by those who understand the urgent tasks ahead and have the courage to fight to win a new world.