

XST / 11 (Gu) / 11/11/78

March 25, 1978

Equipo de Dirección  
Política de la OST  
San José, Costa Rica

Dear Comrades,

Yesterday we received the article by Comrade Sara Santiago summarizing the results of your electoral campaign. Except for one point, the article is excellent, in our opinion, and we would like to publish it as soon as possible.

The one point concerns your references to the United Secretariat:

1. In several places you refer to the OST and the PRT as sympathizing organizations of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International. The designation should be sympathizing organizations of the Fourth International.

2. In the first paragraph on page 4 of the manuscript you say that the PRT has been able to survive as an organization because of its connection with the United Secretariat. On the political level, however, the PRT derives its line from the positions of the Bolshevik Tendency. This provides the key to explaining the PRT's capacity (or lack of capacity) to survive organizationally.

To go into the injurious role played by the Bolshevik Tendency in the Costa Rican elections would hardly be worthwhile in an article such as this one, which is no doubt why Sara correctly left it out.

3. The second paragraph on page 4 reads: "El S.U. de la IV Internacional tendré que tomar posición frente a estas dos políticas. El silencio de los organismos dirigentes del S.U. de la IV Internacional frente a esta situación podría inducir a creer que esta situación no es anómala en su concepto."

But the question of the two lines in Costa Rica constitutes part of the international internal problem involving at present primarily the erroneous political line and antidemocratic organizational practices of the Bolshevik Tendency. The more this discussion can be kept internal up to at least the next world congress the better the assurance of a free atmosphere. It is true

that the Bolshevik Tendency began some time ago to level public attacks against various sections and sympathizing groups of the Fourth International as well as formations that cannot adhere because of legal reasons. All those that have been attacked publicly have the right, of course, to answer publicly, as Sara does in this article. And there will be other public responses to such public attacks, we can be sure.

The paragraph cited above, however, does not fall within this context. The source of the PRT's line is neither the positions of the United Secretariat nor its public "silence." (As you know, the United Secretariat took a position internally on this matter which specifically referred to the PRT.)

We do not see any great problem in making these small modifications in the article. The easiest and simplest way would be to drop the sentences mentioned above. However, we are not sure that the article was intended solely for Intercontinental Press/Inprecor. Were copies sent out for wider distribution? Are you publishing it in Qué Hacer?

If the article were published in its present form elsewhere and we were to publish it with the suggested editorial changes the question would then arise, why two different versions? Since there is no reason for such a situation, please let us know about this immediately.

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On another subject: We would like to receive as much information as you may have available concerning the situation in Nicaragua. We read the article you published on this in the February issue of Qué Hacer. But that article did not deal with the question of the Frente Sandinista.

Several Trotskyist papers, particularly El Socialista under the editorship of the Bolshevik Tendency, have taken a very uncritical attitude toward the Frente Sandinista. Perhaps you saw the headline in the February 6 issue (No. 104) of El Socialista: "Todo el Poder al Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional y a las organizaciones obrera, campesinas y populares!!" This comes close to a complete reversal of the anti-guerrilla position of the leadership of the Argentine PST, which formerly went so far as to maintain that the guerrillas held by the Peronist regime were not political prisoners.

The best recent item dealing with the Frente Sandinista in the present situation appeared in the February 18 Bandera Socialista. It was an interview the Mexican comrades obtained with a Nicaraguan Trotskyist. We translated it and published it in the March 13 issue of Intercontinental Press/Inprecor, as you no doubt saw.

What we would like is something more specific along the lines of this interview, with additional facts, especially quotations, that would provide still more concrete information on the composition of the Frente Sandinista, its program, and the development of the differences that have appeared in its ranks over programmatic questions.

If you have such material, perhaps Fausto could write an article bringing things up to date. I thought that the article he did on the situation in Nicaragua (published in the November 28, 1977, issue of Intercontinental Press) was excellent as a whole. It included a brief sketch of the three tendencies that had formed in the Frente Sandinista. Perhaps this sketch could now be enlarged on in light of the recent events.

Of course, if you do not have any suitable new material, we will just have to continue to wait.

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We have heard that Jean Pierre and Gus Horowitz will be visiting your country in a few weeks. No doubt you will want to discuss these and other questions with them, particularly coverage of the situation in Nicaragua.

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Reba joins me in sending you warmest greetings. We want to thank you again for your hospitality and for the perfect timing of the dramatic events that greeted us on landing in San Jose.

Comradely yours,

Joe Hansen