

Yc:PC

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New York, New York

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Political Bureau

Dear comrades,

Larry Seigle's letter dated October 25 was handed to me last Friday in the comp room.

I asked the Political Committee to submit my article to the United Secretariat for publication in the international discussion bulletin partly because of a difficulty an SWP member with minority views will have taking part in the pre-world congress discussion, given the present forms of discussion.

As the article, which you decided not to submit, says, I am for amending the United Secretariat draft world political resolution because I support its general line as I understand it but think it is incorrect or inadequate on the Ogaden war, class independence in elections, the counter-revolutionary character of the Chinese Communist Party, and Cuba.

If a member's opinion is to have any effect in the international discussion, it must be made accessible to comrades in other countries more than a couple of months before the world congress. If the world congress is held in the summer of 1979 and the SWP convention is also held that summer, for example, an SWP member's views will be unlikely to reach cothinkers in other countries in time for discussion before election of delegates or observers to the world congress.

On Cuba, in particular, moreover, the members have not yet had a discussion or expressed their views. The SWP membership has not voted on any document even hinting at a position on Cuba since before the 1974 world congress, despite publication in 1975, 1976 and 1977 of documents advocating a call for political revolution and despite appeals for a yes-or-no vote on that position. When the members finally have a discussion, will their views reach cothinkers in other countries before the world congress?

For comrades in each of several countries to propose amendments reflecting their common views, it is necessary for those comrades to correspond or to meet. A preliminary step is for those who believe they might have common positions to find out whether or not they do.

One way this can be done is for an SWP member to submit a document to the party discussion bulletin, as you suggest, and wait to see if there is any response. But if, for example, the

SWF preconvention discussion opened in May 1979 and the world congress were held three months later, it would in practice be very unlikely for there to be time for drafting, publication and discussion of amendments between publication of a document in the SWF discussion bulletin and the election of delegates to the world congress.

This seems especially true in light of the IIDE's past publishing record. I know of two documents which by normal democratic procedure should have been published in the IIDE long ago by now: the call for formation of an international tendency, submitted in late 1977 or early 1978, signed among others by Lemo, an IEC member, and "For a Change in the Position of the Fourth International on Cuba," submitted to the United Secretariat by the leadership of the CST of Costa Rica on January 16, 1978. A document in IIDE #3 (May 1978) is dated June 5, 1977. Perhaps other documents have been delayed.

A fully democratic discussion in the world movement, following the dissolution of the two factions, requires that comrades be able to have their views published in some form well before the world congress.

In view of the overall problem, rather than waiting for the SWF discussion bulletin to open, possibly at the tail end of the international discussion, I have corresponded directly with some comrades in different countries with whom I have believed I would have common positions on a number of major questions, with the idea of our expressing our possible common views in the IIDE. The SWF national office was kept up to date with copies.

However, in a discussion among Gus Horowitz and Larry Seigle and myself in March 1978, Gus and Larry raised questions about whether this correspondence was proper. In discussions with François Massion and me, Caroline Lund raised similar questions, last August.

I ceased this correspondence and submitted an eight-page document on the Ogaden, class collaborationism, China and Cuba to the Political Committee on August 22, 1978, so it could be published without any prior international consultation on my part -- since international consultation seemed to have been what was objectionable in what I was doing.

In view of your decision not to submit it, I would like to resume my correspondence, which has been neglected. I am formally asking your permission because of past objections.

I wish to send copies of the document I submitted to the Political Committee, "Four Changes Which Should Be Made in the Draft World Political Resolution," to members of organizations of the Fourth International in Costa Rica, Belgium, France and Spain who I believe will agree with its political positions. I wish to ask these comrades if they will discuss

writing amendments reflecting these positions.

(I assume that there is no objection to my corresponding with comrades with the same views as I have on Cuba and the Cgaden, as no one has raised any so far with me.)

I would also like to know whether it is permitted to correspond on subjects where one disagrees with one's correspondent. May I write to Nemo to say I disagree with the idea of a campaign against the French national assembly? May I write to a Spanish comrade to say his proposed tendency platform is not clear politically?

If I write to these comrades does it mean I am carrying out "tendency work"?

Please explain for what kind of correspondence copies should be furnished to the national office. May one use one's own judgment and furnish copies of correspondence that would seem to be of interest, as a courtesy, or is a member obliged to furnish the national office with copies of all political correspondence? Does giving copies to the N.C. mean the correspondence has a special character or a tendency character?

I request a reply in writing so this problem can be settled.

If there are problems with my particular request concerning sending my document to comrades, would you let me know by about the middle of the month?

Comradely,

David King