

MAR 12 1979

12 Wachusett Road
Chestnut Hill
Massachusetts
02167

February 25, 1979

The Editor
The Militant
14 Charles Lane
New York, New York
10014

Dear Sirs:

In the February 2nd issue of The Militant, p. 16 (Internationalist Socialist Review, p. 6) Barnes states:

. . . the Amnesty International team reached an extremely important conclusion: They did not challenge the Cuban government's classification of political prisoners as counter-revolutionaries who are imprisoned for specific acts [emphasis in the original] against the revolution or their membership in armed counter revolutionary organizations.

But apparently the Castro regime moved in to crush the Cuban Trotskyists (POR) for their ideas. Workers Vanguard in its February 16th issue, p. 5, states that "in November 1963 the Castro regime moved in to crush the Cuban Trotskyists (POR)." Five leading comrades were arrested, held incommunicado for months, and then sentenced in secret trials to two-to-nine years imprisonment for the 'crimes' of distributing an illegal paper [Voz Proletaria] advocating the overthrow of the Cuban government and being critical of Fidel Castro. In part Workers Vanguard claims all five incarcerated had been defenders of the Cuban revolution.

In August 1962 the Cuban Trotskyists (POR) endorsed the Cuban government's plan to transform the sugar cooperatives, but insisted on their being run by councils elected by the masses. Barnes' failure to mention the violation of the democratic rights, the 'crime' of distributing Voz Proletaria, of the Cuban Trotskyists can only be regarded as an accommodation to Stalinism. All of this is not to denigrate the great gains of the revolution. But in my opinion not to allow all tendencies in the revolutionary movement, no matter how small, to express themselves freely will, over a period of time, lead to its degeneration.

Yours in Struggle,



Robert S. Canter

RSC/bg