

X. " V.I.T. -
DEC 5 1979

Destinataires : Organisations et sections sympathisantes

Expéditeur : Bureau du SU

Objet : Déclaration sur la scission de la IV

- Dates du prochain S.U.

Le 29.11.1979

Chers camarades,

Nous vous envoyons ci-joint la déclaration adoptée par le congrès mondial sur la scission de la Quatrième Internationale. Son objet est de présenter publiquement l'appréciation de l'Internationale sur cette scission. Elle sera publiée intégralement dans "Inprecor/Intercontinental Press". Les sections et organisations sympathisantes peuvent publier dans leur presse des extraits ou la totalité de cette déclaration de façon à la faire connaître largement par les membres et les sympathisants de l'Internationale et du mouvement trotskyste dans son ensemble.

Recevez notre salut fraternel;

Bureau du S.U.

NOTA : La prochaine réunion du Secrétariat unifié aura lieu les 26-27 et 28 janvier 1980.

Statement on Split From the Fourth International

By the LTT and the BF

(On the eve of the Fifth World Congress Since Reunification of the Fourth International (Eleventh World Congress), two groupings, the "Bolshevik Faction" and the "Leninist Trotskyist Tendency," split from the Fourth International. The World Congress adopted the following statement on the split on November 17, 1979.)

The Fourth International has suffered a split which represents a serious blow to our movement. Given the general rise of the revolutionary struggle on a world scale in the framework of the combined crises of imperialism and the ruling bureaucratic castes in the degenerated or deformed workers states, and the decision of this World Congress to implement a radical turn to the industrial working class to deepen our proletarian orientation, we are convinced of the capacity of our movement to rapidly overcome the quantitative and political effects of the split. All the necessary steps will be taken by the International and its sections to accomplish this.

The leadership of the "Bolshevik Faction" and the "Leninist Trotskyist Tendency" have publicly attempted to justify their split by charging that the majority of the forces of the Fourth International have "abandoned Trotskyism" by their defense of the Nicaraguan revolution and that this World Congress has not been democratically prepared. The facts speak otherwise.

The charge that the majority of the Fourth International is "liquidating" Trotskyism by its revolutionary response to the Nicaraguan revolution, by its analysis of the present stage of the Nicaraguan revolution, and by its fraternal attitude to the fighters of the FSLN who led the revolutionary overthrow of the imperialist-backed Somoza dictatorship, is absurd. Any other stance would amount to sectarian abstentionism in the face of the living revolution.

The World Congress has been prepared in a fully democratic way. The BF and the LTT have enjoyed full rights to present their views in the written discussion and in the sections, along guidelines agreed to by the BF and LTT themselves. The lie to their argument is given by the fact that the BF and LTT split right on the eve of the World Congress, refusing to even present their case before the delegates assembled here from more than forty countries in the highest body of the Fourth International, revealing their contempt for the majority of the cadres of our movement and their rejection of its democratic discussions and decisions.

The BF and the LTT had full rights to present their views on Nicaragua and every other point on the agenda of this World Congress. A section of the LTT which rejected the split course has in fact done so. The leaderships of the BF and LTT make the same excuse that there wasn't enough time to begin the discussion on Nicaragua at this World Congress since the overthrow of Somoza four months ago. On the contrary, a revolutionary organization such as the Fourth International has the duty to react rapidly to

events of such importance as the Nicaraguan revolution. This discussion, which the BF and LTT have now unilaterally cut themselves off from, will continue in the Fourth International as the revolution unfolds, in the framework of a massive international campaign of solidarity in the face of imperialist hatred for the Nicaraguan revolution.

The right of the LTT and BF to present their views inside the International was not and is not challenged. Their split was not politically justified and was therefore unprincipled.

The origins of the split go back before the Nicaraguan revolution. For some years the Bolshevik Faction has been functioning as a more open public faction, without regard to the decisions or norms of the Fourth International. Increasingly, it set itself up as a parallel formation to the Fourth International, organizing splits of our forces in country after country, setting up their own international apparatus and financial system in competition with those of the International, and moving their comrades from country to country without regard to the interests of the sections involved and not under the control of or even in consultation with the regular bodies of the International. Before the Nicaraguan events, they were warned that this World Congress would take the necessary measures to put a halt to this public factional operation. This method of functioning reached a criminal culmination in the operations of the "Simon Bolivar Brigade" in Nicaragua (see statement by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International on the Simon Bolivar Brigade in the October 22, 1979, issue of Intercontinental Press/Inprecor).

Right from the beginning, the BF conceived of the Brigade in this factional manner, and not from the point of view of the needs of the Nicaraguan revolution. The Simon Bolivar Brigade was set up behind the backs of the elected leadership of the Fourth International by the Bolshevik Faction with the express purpose of changing the relationship of forces in the Fourth International so that the BF would take over its leadership. The Brigade masqueraded as a military unit of the FSLN, fraudulently raised money using the name of the FSLN, and deliberately confused trade-union organizations and groups of workers in Nicaragua who thought they did represent the FSLN. This completely unprincipled behavior in the course of a living revolution represented a carrying over of their factional and sectarian methods within the Fourth International to the Latin American labor movement and Nicaraguan revolution as a whole. The operations of the Simon Bolivar Brigade were a real crime against the Nicaraguan revolution and against the Fourth International.

At its first meeting following the overthrow of Somoza, the United Secretariat of the Fourth International called the Bolshevik Faction to order for the Simon Bolivar Brigade. The United Secretariat warned the Bolshevik Faction to cease its activities as a public faction in Central America. Since they knew that this World Congress would demand that the Bolshevik Faction put an end to all violations of the statutes and norms of the Fourth International and cease its functioning as a public faction, the leaders of the BF decided to split.

The criminal adventure of the Simon Bolivar Brigade was bound to end in disaster, and it did. At that point, the Bolshevik Faction leadership switched its public line from attempting to cover themselves with the prestige of the FSLN, to public attack on the FSLN as the instrument of consolidation of a bourgeois state in Nicaragua. This set the stage for their bloc with the Leninist Trotskyist Tendency and the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International (OCRFI).

Both the LTT and the OCRFI reacted in a sectarian fashion to the Nicaraguan revolution. There is a parallel here with the Algerian and Cuban revolutions. In both of those cases, the majority of the Trotskyist forces on a world scale demonstrated their ability to correctly relate to the living revolution and to the revolutionary fighters who came to the fore in the revolutionary process itself, while at the same time defending and applying the Trotskyist program in these revolutions. But both times, there appeared sectarian tendencies within the Trotskyist movement who turned their backs on the living revolution. Leaders of the OCRFI, only recently, twenty years after the event, have come to the realization that a workers state had been established in Cuba! From the fact that these revolutions were led by revolutionists who did not have the full Leninist program, these sectarians deduced that the correct stance was to denounce them at all times as betrayers, irrespective of what they were concretely doing in the context of the mobilization and organization of the masses, the scope of the anti-imperialist and anticapitalist measures taken, etc.

Such a sectarian stance can lead to disastrous consequences, deeply discrediting Trotskyism in the eyes of the masses engaged in the revolutionary process. To a certain extent, this has happened in Nicaragua. In addition to the positions taken by the BF, the positions of the Costa Rican OST (Socialist Workers Organization), whose leaders are members of the LTT, and of the Liga Marxista Revolucionaria in Nicaragua, are a case in point. The newspaper of the OST, for example, presents the monetary measures taken by the Nicaraguan government as an anti-working-class measure. The LMR has tried to paint the false picture that Nicaragua today is a hot-bed of repression against the working class. This same theme was at the center of a common meeting organized by the OCRFI, the BF, and the LTT in Paris on November 13. These forces rejected organizing an international solidarity and aid campaign with Nicaragua against imperialism on the false grounds that this will only aid a "bourgeois" government in Nicaragua. Organizing meetings like that of November 13 can only give aid and comfort to the international campaign of imperialism and capitalist reaction against the Nicaraguan revolution, presenting as tyrants those who have overthrown the bloody tyranny supported by imperialism for forty-five years. Any criticisms revolutionists make, including on any violation of workers democracy, must be in a different framework--that of unconditional solidarity with the revolution, defense of the revolution against imperialism, which will attempt to drown it in blood as it advances, and with a fraternal attitude toward the Nicaraguan revolutionaries.

Under the impact of the Nicaraguan revolution, the OCRFI reversed its line toward reunification with the Fourth International.

Some years ago, the OCRFI, which represents forces which had refused to join the reunification of the Fourth International in 1963, approached the Fourth International for discussions. Recently, the OCRFI recognized the Fourth International and its sections as revolutionary organizations and agreed to discuss with us on the basis of the documents prepared for the World Congress, with the goal of sounding out the possibilities of fusion with the Fourth International. When differences within the Fourth International appeared on Nicaragua, with a temporary convergence between the positions of the Bolshevik Faction and those of the LTT and OCRFI, a majority of the OCRFI reacted with their old sectarian reflexes. They de facto excluded a delegation from the United Secretariat of the Fourth International from the discussions at their international conference, to which they had originally invited the United Secretariat. In addition, they decided to invite to that conference the LTT and BF, that is, to support the open break with the Fourth International by the LTT and BF. The OCRFI once again began to attack the Fourth International and its sections and sympathizing organizations in its publications, including an especially slanderous attack on the American Socialist Workers Party as "revisionist" and as having betrayed the cause of revolutionary Marxism.

What this reversal by the OCRFI amounts to is a short-sighted policy of seeking supposed temporary factional advantage. To do this, they turned their backs on the objective need of pursuing a course of exposing the possibilities of a principled unification with the Fourth International, which would represent a major contribution toward solving the crisis of revolutionary leadership in the coming class battles in a number of key countries. The unprincipled and irresponsible character of that decision is underscored by the OCRFI's own analysis of the world situation and the necessity of overcoming the crisis of proletarian leadership.

The OCRFI, the LTT, and the BF have issued an appeal to set up a "parity commission for the reorganization (reconstruction) of the Fourth International." This is an operation designed to further split and attack the Fourth International. Its content is liquidationism of the Fourth International and world Trotskyism as an organization. They have called for an "open conference" of those seeking the destruction of the Fourth International. This "open conference" itself will be nothing more than a talking shop with its only common denominator being opposition to building the Fourth International as a world party. It is clear that the OCRFI, the BF, and the LTT do not agree on the major issues of the class struggle today, and that they are opposed to majority rule, that is, democratic centralism. Their plan will come to nothing, just as the OCRFI itself failed to build an alternative to the Fourth International along these lines. It will only result in the demoralization and destruction of hundreds of valuable cadres.

By these actions, the OCRFI, the BF, and the LTT have turned their back on building the Fourth International as an organization, today. The need to simultaneously build national working-class revolutionary parties and the world party of socialist revolution is a fundamental programmatic tenet of Marxism. This is the epoch of imperialism, an epoch of growing internationalization of the productive forces and of the class struggle, an epoch of world revolution and counterrevolution. Any attempt on whatever basis

to build national revolutionary parties without at the same time working to build a revolutionary International will lead its practitioners to grave errors in the class struggle, not only on an international level but in their own countries.

By reaffirming and defending the integrity of the Fourth International as a world party, as an organization based on democratic centralism as it is applied on an international level, the Fifth World Congress Since Reunification (Eleventh World Congress) reaffirms and defends the programmatic and organizational integrity of revolutionary Marxism, of Trotskyism.

The Fourth International calls on the OCRFI, the Bolshevik Faction, and the Leninist Trotskyist Tendency to reverse their course. The World Congress affirms that the Argentine Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores, the largest grouping supporting the Bolshevik Faction, should become the Argentine section of the Fourth International. We maintain our general orientation on the question of principled fusions and regroupments. We reiterate the basic concept that the building of mass revolutionary workers parties and a mass revolutionary workers International cannot succeed solely by individual recruitment to the existing nuclei alone, which are the Fourth International and its sections, but will of necessity include fusions with other organizations either already existing or which will appear in the course of the revolutionary struggle itself. It reaffirms its conviction that the way in which the Fourth International and its sections respond to openings for fusions is and will be an important test of their revolutionary capacities.

Under the impact of the present split, we will not reverse our course of seeking the reunification of Trotskyist forces, begun in 1963. We are ready to discuss with the current represented by Lutte Ouvrière along the lines pursued by the United Secretariat in the last few years. In the case of the OCRFI, this would have to be preceded by a reversal of their present course and an affirmation that the Fourth International and all its sections are revolutionary organizations, and that the purpose of such discussions is to unify with them in their totality, and act in practice accordingly.

The Fourth International will not budge one inch from its principled position that any such discussion can only have the goal of the strengthening of the Fourth International as a world party based on democratic centralism.

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