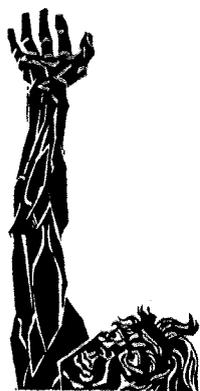


**Yugoslavia, East Europe and  
the Fourth International:  
The Evolution of  
Pabloist Liquidationism**

by Jan Norden



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## Editorial Note

"Yugoslavia, East Europe and the Fourth International: The Evolution of Pabloist Liquidationism" was originally prepared as a contribution to discussions between the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) and the Partido Bolchevique por la Cuarta Internacional (PBCI) of Argentina. It was published in the ICL's *International Discussion Bulletin* No. 30 (October 1992) as part of the discussion for the Second International Conference of the ICL, which was held in the late autumn of 1992.

At the ICL conference, a panel discussion on "The Fourth International and the Fight for the Continuity of Trotskyism" examined the rise of the revisionist current led by Michel Pablo which destroyed the Fourth International in the early 1950s. Comrade Jan Norden, a member of the Central Committee of the Spartacist League/U.S. and of the International Executive Committee of the ICL, traced the evolution of Pabloism in the flawed response of the Fourth International to the Yugoslav Revolution and the 1948 Tito-Stalin split, while other panelists examined the influence of the Algerian independence struggle on the development of Pabloism in France, and the history of liquidation of the German Pabloists into the Social Democracy in the 1950s. The conference mandated the early publication of Norden's document, which represents a significant extension of our 1972 *Spartacist* article "Genesis of Pabloism." "Yugoslavia, East Europe and the Fourth International: The Evolution of Pabloist Liquidationism" assumes a knowledge of "Genesis of Pabloism," which is included in this bulletin.

Based on the discussion at the ICL conference and in preparation for its publication as *Prometheus Research Series* No. 4, "Yugoslavia, East Europe and the Fourth International: The Evolution of Pabloist Liquidationism" has been revised and portions of an 8 August 1992 letter to the PBCI incorporated into it. The notes have been expanded to reflect the extensive documentation assembled from French-

and English-language publications of the Fourth International, as well as from archival sources. We are not able to reprint in this bulletin a representative selection of the documentary record cited. We have included a few items from the early period immediately following the June 1948 announcement of the Tito-Stalin split, because most of these are not readily available in existing document collections.

We publish the International Secretariat's initial circular to all sections of the Fourth International on the "Tito affair," as well as the two "Open Letters" which the International Secretariat addressed to the Yugoslav Communist Party in July 1948. The leaderships of both the French and British sections of the Fourth International opposed the accommodation to Tito reflected in these Open Letters. We publish one document from each of these oppositional currents: a resolution adopted by the Fifth Congress of the French Parti Communiste Internationaliste, held in July 1948, and a letter by British Revolutionary Communist Party leader Jock Haston to the International Executive Committee, undated but written some time in the late summer of 1948.

Those who wish to pursue further study of the documentary record are directed to the many sources cited in the text. In the 1970s the American Socialist Workers Party reproduced many of the most important documents from the history of the Fourth International in its *Education for Socialists* pamphlet series, which is still in print; many documents reprinted in the *Education for Socialists* series are cited in the notes. Much documentation is available in French in the four-volume series edited by Rodolphe Prager, *Les congrès de la IV<sup>e</sup> Internationale (manifestes, thèses, résolutions)*, published in the 1980s by La Brèche-PEC. Where a French-language source is cited in this bulletin, the English translation was provided by the library staff.

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# Yugoslavia, East Europe and the Fourth International: The Evolution of Pabloist Liquidationism

**Reforge a Fourth International That Trotsky Would Call His Own!**

by Jan Norden

On the eve of the Second World War, Leon Trotsky wrote in the 1938 founding document of the Fourth International:

All talk to the effect that historical conditions have not yet "ripened" for socialism is the product of ignorance or conscious deception. The objective prerequisites for the proletarian revolution have not only "ripened"; they have begun to get somewhat rotten. Without a socialist revolution, in the next historical period at that, a catastrophe threatens the whole culture of mankind. It is now the turn of the proletariat, i.e., chiefly of its revolutionary vanguard. The historical crisis of mankind is reduced to the crisis of the revolutionary leadership.<sup>1</sup>

The second imperialist world conflagration was certainly such a catastrophe threatening to engulf all of mankind. The outcome of that war, centrally the defeat of Nazi Germany by the Soviet Red Army and the imperialist hegemony of the United States, set the international framework in which class struggles were waged for the next four and a half decades.

In the last several years, we have witnessed the spreading collapse of Stalinist regimes from East Europe to the Soviet Union. This, too, was long ago predicted by Trotsky, who insisted that in the absence of socialist revolution in the imperialist centers and proletarian political revolution in the USSR to oust the parasitic Stalinist bureaucracy, the Soviet workers state faced destruction at the hands of economically more powerful imperialism. But the effects on the workers and oppressed of the world of the destruction of these bureaucratically degenerated (in the case of the Soviet Union) and deformed *workers states* are no less devastating for having been foreseen long ago. Capitalism continues to decay, and the treacherous misleaders of the working class continue to betray, paralyzing the workers in the face of a worldwide counterrevolutionary offensive. Today, no less than when Trotsky wrote half a century ago, "the crisis of the prole-

tarian leadership, having become the crisis in mankind's culture, can be resolved only by the Fourth International."<sup>2</sup>

Yet the Fourth International itself was destroyed as the world party of socialist revolution some 40 years ago, at the hands of a liquidationist current headed by Michel Pablo (Raptis). The Pabloists abandoned the fight for an independent Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard of the proletariat and instead chased after the Stalinists and a host of other petty-bourgeois and even bourgeois misleaders, justifying their capitulation by relying on the pressure of the supposed "objective revolutionary process." The Spartacist tendency, now the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), has fought from its inception for the rebirth of the Fourth International through the political defeat of Pabloism by authentic Trotskyism. That requires a study of its origins and development, which we have addressed in numerous documents and in "Genesis of Pabloism."<sup>3</sup> The first appearance of the Pabloist revisionist current (though elements of it can be found earlier) came over the Tito-Stalin split in 1948, when the leadership of the Fourth International embraced the dissident Stalinist regime in Tito's Yugoslavia.

For many years, those who laid claim to the heritage of the anti-Pablo forces grouped in the International Committee (IC), notably Pierre Lambert in France and Gerry Healy in Britain, virtually ignored the Yugoslav affair because of their own complicity. Thus in his 1966 pamphlet dedicated to justifying the expulsion of Spartacist from the London "International Committee" conference, Healy introduces Pabloism with the laconic comment: "Then, in 1951, came Pablo, at that time Secretary of the International, with his theory that because of the imminence of the third world war, the Stalinist parties could, under the impact of this war, transform themselves into revolutionary parties."<sup>4</sup>

Pablo's theory apparently dropped from the sky.

On the other hand, a number of small centrist groups, which split off from the larger by-products of the explosion of the Fourth International, have declared that it was the FI's capitulatory line on Tito that marked its definitive political degeneration. The result, and indeed the purpose, of this is to turn the 1951-53 fight against Pabloism into an aftereffect, in order to declare both sides bankrupt, the Fourth International politically degenerated, and the revolutionary continuity broken. This, in turn, frees the born-yesterday centrists to pursue their eclectic, anti-internationalist lashups with abandon, combining and recombining with other denizens of the pseudo-Trotskyist swamp, while conveniently amnestying their own revisionist history. Hence the British Workers Power group claims:

The historical continuity of Trotskyism was shattered....The opposition in America, Britain and France that did emerge in 1952-3 was subjectively committed to opposing Pablo. However, they have to be judged not by their impulse but by their politics. Their "orthodoxy" was both sterile and based on postwar *revisionism*, prompted by the Yugoslav events. It was not authentic Trotskyism. Thus we cannot view either component of the 1953 split as the "continuator" of Trotskyism. Both were centrist.<sup>5</sup>

In contrast, we have sharply criticized the errors and failures of those, particularly in the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP), who opposed Pabloism, *as we take their side in this crucial fight for the survival of Trotskyism*. Key to reforging the Fourth International, we wrote two decades ago, "is an understanding of the characteristics and causes of Pabloist revisionism and the flawed response of the anti-Pabloists who fought, too little and too late, on national terrain while in practice abandoning the world movement."<sup>6</sup> But while recognizing the inroads of opportunism over the Yugoslav affair, we emphasized:

It is crucial that the organizational weakness, lack of deep roots in the proletariat and theoretical incapacity and disorientation which were the *precondition* for the revisionist degeneration of the Fourth International not be simply equated with the consolidation and victory of that revisionism. Despite grave political errors, the Fourth International in the immediate post-war period was still revolutionary. The SWP and the International clung to sterile orthodoxy as a talisman to ward off non-revolutionary conclusions from world events which they could no longer comprehend.... Pabloism was more than a symmetrical false theory, more than simply an impressionistic over-reaction against orthodoxy; it was a theoretical justification for a non-revolutionary *impulse* based on giving up a perspective for the construction of a proletarian vanguard in the advanced or the colonial countries.<sup>7</sup>

As we will show in what follows, based on an examination of the public and internal materials of the Fourth International, those who write off the FI over Yugoslavia are in fact renouncing the struggle for the Trotskyist world party and its program, the Bolshevism of today.

### The "Tito Affair" Explodes

The Fourth International had indeed been confused by the fact that Stalinism emerged from World War II greatly strengthened, contrary to Trotsky's prognosis. In Italy and Greece there were attempted revolutions, in France, Belgium and elsewhere there were great strike waves, but the Stalinists managed to douse these fires and thus save the bourgeoisie. Meanwhile, the Kremlin's sway had been extended through the Red Army's defeat of Hitler's Germany. The resolution on "The USSR and Stalinism" at the Second World Congress of the Fourth International (1948) declared categorically about East Europe, "In the 'buffer' countries [*glacis* in French] the state remains bourgeois." It listed seven factors determining the "capitalist nature of the economy" in East Europe, and ruled that "on so large a scale as half of Europe, structural assimilation [to the Soviet Union] of the 'buffer' countries was impossible," in part because destruction of the bourgeois states "can take place only as a result of the revolutionary mobilization of the masses."<sup>8</sup>

This was in *April 1948*, two months *after* the so-called "Prague coup" which was the benchmark for the Stalinist consolidation of power throughout East Europe. The revolutionary upsurge of the masses at the end of World War II had been suppressed in the interests of the pact with the "democratic" imperialists at Yalta and in agreement with the local bourgeoisies. But the American Marshall Plan in 1947 made it impossible for the "buffer zone" states in the Soviet sphere of influence to be maintained except by expropriating the bourgeoisie. In industrialized Czechoslovakia, with its traditionally strong Communist Party, this was accompanied by a bureaucratically controlled mobilization of the masses. In much of the rest of East Europe it was carried out in a completely "cold" manner by a police purge of the bourgeois parties (the Stalinists having everywhere controlled the political police since 1945). Within a year, the East European bourgeoisies had been liquidated economically and purged from the state apparatus except for purely symbolic tokens. At the time of the FI's Second World Congress, the "people's democracies" were bureaucratically deformed workers states in the process of consolidation.

With its disorienting position on the class nature of East Europe, the Fourth International was thrown into tremendous confusion by the bombshell of Stalin's excommunication of Tito in the "Communist Information Bureau" (Cominform) communiqué of 28 June 1948. For the first time, an entire Communist party, and moreover one holding state power, was no longer under Kremlin control. The Cominform statement bandied about the spectre of Trotskyism, declaring that "slanderous propaganda about the 'degeneration' of the CPSU (B), about the 'degeneration' of the USSR, and so on, borrowed from the arsenal of counter-revolutionary Trotskyism, is current within the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia."<sup>9</sup>

What did this signify? It is important to recall that this was the first time that a national Stalinist party had actually broken with the Kremlin, and thus a certain amount of disorientation was to be expected. For the Fourth International, this represented both a significant opportunity and a theoretical predicament. An opportunity, because many Communist Party members in East and West Europe would find it hard to swallow the overnight transformation of Tito from hero of the anti-Nazi Partisan struggle and shining star of the Cominform (whose HQ had been placed in Belgrade) to "Hitlero-Trotskyite" and even "fascist beast at bay." A theoretical quandary, because Yugoslavia was supposed to be capitalist. Over the next three years, the International Secretariat (I.S.), the International Executive Committee (IEC) and the Third World Congress of the Fourth International declared that the Yugoslav Communist Party (YCP) had "ceased to be a Stalinist party," but rather was centrist and indeed "left-centrist" evolving toward revolutionary.<sup>10</sup>

The leadership of the FI assumed that any split from Stalin had to be to the left. Yet, as Stalinism was based on the nationalist dogma of building "socialism in one country," Trotsky had long foreseen the possibility of competing Stalinist nationalisms. Thus in his 1928 critique of the Stalin-Bukharin draft program of the Comintern, Trotsky wrote: "If it is at all possible to realize socialism in one country, then one can believe in that theory not only *after* but also *before* the conquest of power."<sup>11</sup> And after the 1938 Munich pact, he added:

Ten years ago it was predicted that the theory of socialism in one country must inevitably lead to the growth of nationalist tendencies in the sections of the Comintern....Today, we can predict with assurance the inception of a new stage. The growth of imperialist antagonisms, the obvious proximity of the war danger, and the equally obvious isolation of the USSR must

unavoidably strengthen the *centrifugal nationalist tendencies* within the Comintern....Henceforth the Communo-chauvinists will have to worry about their own hides, whose interests by no means always coincide with the "defense of the USSR."<sup>12</sup>

The Fourth International's line of tailing after Tito was certainly the starting point for Pabloism, which became a full-fledged revisionist program ultimately explicitly liquidating the *raison d'être* of the Fourth International as the indispensable independent proletarian vanguard of the working class. Already in the first of two open letters sent to the Yugoslav Communist Party in July 1948, the International Secretariat led by Michel Pablo referred to the YCP as a "revolutionary workers party."<sup>13</sup> The second letter ended with the call: "Yugoslav Communists, let us unite our efforts for a new Leninist International!"<sup>14</sup>

There was turmoil and serious political disorientation over Yugoslavia throughout the Fourth International. But it would be a mistake to think that when the leaders and cadres of the FI picked up their morning papers on 29 June 1948, they were suddenly stricken with irremediable revisionism. In fact, the declarations of the FI are not at all uniformly opportunist. Thus a 30 June 1948 circular by the International Secretariat, "To the Leadership of All Sections," notes:

Yugoslavia is the only country of the glacis where the government had not been imposed by the entry of the Red Army and the Soviet occupation, but which had been brought to power by the revolutionary movement of the masses.

Tito personally is a bureaucrat to the hilt, past master in the bureaucratic and GPU Kremlin machine.... The reply of the Yugoslav party enables us, naturally without solidarising with it or Tito, to attack the resolution of the Cominform.<sup>15</sup>

The circular urged FI leaders to "follow with great interest but also with caution the evolution of the Moscow-Belgrade conflict." Yet the initial "Open Letter to the Communist Party of Yugoslavia" issued the next day (1 July) did politically "solidarize" with the YCP leaders, calling on them to "Keep up your fight! Deepen the significance of your struggle with Moscow and its international machine!...Long Live the Yugoslav Socialist Revolution!" And by July 13, the I.S. had thrown caution to the wind in its second open letter, calling on the YCP to become the "mobilization point" for the "mass of revolutionary workers."

The first two open letters on Yugoslavia by the International Secretariat could not have involved much consultation with the American SWP, which

was initially a good deal less enthusiastic about Tito, as will be shown below. A third open letter from the I.S., dated September 1948, pulled back. In the meantime, the Yugoslav CP had held its Fifth Congress (July 1948), which took a purely defensive posture, and at the end of Tito's report all those attending arose chanting, "Stalin-Tito!"<sup>16</sup> At the congress, in response to the Cominform charges, Tito boasted that he knew how to handle "Trotskyist-fascists." The YCP's paper *Borba* (4 July 1948) reported: "A handful of Trotskyists, who showed their true faces in the war as collaborators and agents of the invaders, ended shamefully before the People's Courts."<sup>17</sup> This may have given pause to those Trotskyists who were eagerly embracing the Yugoslav leader.

Thus the new I.S. letter to the YCP noted that "Your leaders and delegates at the Congress have reaffirmed the position, long held by your party, to the effect that Yugoslavia is already a country where socialism is being built and that it is possible to do this." The letter polemicized against the Stalinist conceptions of "socialism in one country" and a "monolithic" party. It urged "Yugoslav Communists" to "institute a real regime of proletarian democracy in the party and in the country!" and to "call for the real proletarian revolution in other countries of Eastern Europe! And of all of Europe and the world!"<sup>18</sup>

After the initial rush of enthusiasm for Tito by the FI's International Secretariat, there was nervousness over the implications. A resolution on Yugoslavia at the Sixth Plenum of the IEC, in October 1948, was relatively restrained. Yet it described "Tito and the leadership of the Yugoslav Communist Party" as representing, "thus far, the bureaucratic deformation of a plebeian, anti-capitalist revolutionary current," and declared that "from the moment that there is a conflict and break between a Communist party and the Kremlin, this party ceases to be a Stalinist party like the rest."<sup>19</sup> These conclusions opened a breach in the Trotskyist program through which opportunists could drive a truck, and they did.

For a time, the positions taken by the Fourth International were notable mainly for their rampant confusion. Thus the IEC resolution adopted at the Seventh Plenum (April 1949) goes through a tortuous argumentation, calling the East European states a "hybrid transitional society in the process of transformation, with features that are as yet so fluid and lacking precision that it is extremely difficult to summarize its fundamental nature in a concise formula." Opting for a "definition by description," the

resolution details a long list of factors, finally declaring the buffer zone countries to be "*capitalist countries on the road toward structural assimilation with the USSR.*" But the resolution quickly adds that this "does not at all imply that the bourgeoisie is in power as the dominant class in these countries"; indeed, a "military-political overturn" had "eliminated the big bourgeoisie and the bulk of the middle bourgeoisie."<sup>20</sup>

A capitalist country in which the bourgeoisie is not the ruling class, and indeed has been largely "eliminated" as a political and economic force! As Max Shachtman once wrote (speaking of the American CP's talk of a "labor party" that would be neither reformist nor revolutionary), such a phenomenon "has never been and never will be seen by God or man or beast or the elfin folk who see pretty near everything."<sup>21</sup>

Only the elimination of borders, literally incorporating East Europe into the Soviet Union and making planning possible, would be a sure sign marking a qualitative social transformation, according to the IEC's Seventh Plenum. On the other hand, the plenum noted that in Yugoslavia, unlike in the rest of East Europe, the bourgeoisie had largely been liquidated and the bourgeois state apparatus destroyed as a result of the Partisan struggle. The IEC took note of the possibility of "a real differentiation in the workers' movement following the Tito crisis, despite the undeniable existence of a police regime in this country."<sup>22</sup> While the IEC hesitated to make the leap, Pablo insisted that the analysis presented "should logically lead to the conclusion that Yugoslavia has ceased to be a capitalist country."<sup>23</sup> The plenum formally opened up a discussion in the International on the Yugoslav question.

But as Stalin's anti-Yugoslav offensive mounted, particularly with the Rajk trial in Hungary and similar purges throughout East Europe, Tito and his associates, their backs to the wall, began talking of "bureaucratic degeneration" in the Soviet Union, founding Titoist parties in Germany and Italy and a pro-Tito trade-union current in France. YCP theoretician Moshe Piyade wrote in the Belgrade party daily *Borba* (6 October 1949), "Since that very day when they proclaimed that Trotskyism was no longer a tendency in the international workers movement and had become an agency of fascism," henceforth "there remains only physical extermination and the burning of heretics, all discussion being excluded."<sup>24</sup> The leaders of the FI jumped on these openings, producing paroxysms of praise, sending work brigades and trade-union delegations

to Yugoslavia, publishing articles and interviews, and distributing books by YCP leaders.

At its Eighth Plenum (April 1950), the IEC fulsomely hailed "the progressive evolution of the Yugoslav CP," which "surpasses the most optimistic forecasts," and stressed "the depth of the revolutionary movement which bore this party to power and the remarkable qualities of its leading cadres"! This supposedly confirmed "the declaration made by our International upon the outbreak of the Yugoslav affair that the rupture of a Stalinist party with the Kremlin necessarily involves a differentiation from Stalinism, which under certain conditions can be highly progressive."<sup>25</sup> A separate resolution declared that despite continuing differences over the stages of development of the Yugoslav Revolution, with "the victory of the proletarian revolution in Yugoslavia, a workers' state and a regime of the proletarian dictatorship exists in this country."<sup>26</sup> Yet what took place in Yugoslavia was not a proletarian revolution but a peasant-based revolution militarily organized by a Stalinist party, the majority of whose members were peasants, giving rise to a bureaucratically deformed workers state.

So whereas in April 1949 the IEC referred to "the undeniable existence of a police regime," in April 1950 it saw in the evolution of the Yugoslav CP "an ever more clear and powerful affirmation (in the field of ideas and of the political and economic organization of the country) of the highly democratic essence of the dictatorship of the proletariat."<sup>27</sup> Indeed, while the IEC admitted that "bureaucratic deformations continue" in Yugoslavia, it declared that "a serious struggle is being conducted by the Yugoslav Communists against these deformations."<sup>28</sup> In addition to this remarkably clean bill of health for the Yugoslav workers state (in effect, no worse than the Soviet Union under Lenin ca. 1920-21), the Fourth International leadership saw a rosy future ahead for it:

To the degree that the Yugoslav CP persists along this road and, by ridding itself of the last ideological vestiges of Stalinism, it will renew the organic bonds between the unfolding Yugoslav and world revolutions, that will entail the regrouping of revolutionary forces on an international scale and it will become the most powerful springboard from which to launch the decisive assault against Stalinism in its crisis.<sup>29</sup>

The task the IEC laid out, therefore, was "to surround the Yugoslav revolution with a widespread and active sympathy by the international revolutionary vanguard and the conscious segment of the working class," as well as to promote and regroup

"the new Communist opposition" in the CPs "stimulated precisely by the Yugoslav example."<sup>30</sup>

### **Belgrade's "Right Turn" Over Korea**

But at the same time that Tito & Co. were denouncing "bureaucracy" at home and in the Soviet Union, the imperialists were turning the screws on Yugoslavia. And then came the decisive event in the evolution of the Yugoslav affair: the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950. For a time, the YCP tops had sought to maneuver between the Kremlin and imperialism, but now that the issue of war was posed there was no escaping. Belgrade at first tried to take a waffling line of neutrality, speaking in the UN against labeling North Korea the aggressor and voting against the sanctions that gave a UN cover to the American expeditionary force in Korea.<sup>31</sup> But Yugoslavia eventually caved in to Washington, criminally abstaining on the resolution authorizing General MacArthur to cross the 38th parallel into North Korea, and then opposing the resulting Chinese intervention and voting against the Chinese resolution demanding U.S. withdrawal from Korea.

The Fourth International responded with articles such as "Yugoslav Foreign Policy Continues Drift to Right."<sup>32</sup> A November 1950 appeal by the FI's International Secretariat declared, "proletarian Yugoslavia appears to be abandoning its independent policy and seems to be lining up with the imperialist bloc led by Washington," and called for an end to "the prostration of the Yugoslav Revolution before imperialism."<sup>33</sup> A series of circulars by the I.S. noted "widespread illusions [among the Yugoslavs] concerning the role of the UN" (June 1950), then a "combination of a leftist course internally and a course which has shifted to the right internationally" (September 1950), and finally a series of positions "which can no longer be considered errors resulting from political confusion, but must be regarded as the expression of a new course taken by the leadership of the YCP which...is tending to associate it with the imperialist bloc" (November 1950). The final circular concluded that "we don't call yet for the constitution of an opposition tendency," but rather called on the YCP as a whole to renounce its policy toward Korea.<sup>34</sup>

At the end of November 1950, the FI International Executive Committee held its Ninth Plenum and passed a resolution which was then adopted, with very few modifications, by the Third World Congress of the Fourth International in August 1951. This was the last major statement by the FI on Yugoslavia. The IEC resolution declared that

there was a “Yugoslav proletarian revolution” (whose conquests were “generalized and legally consolidated in 1945-46”), and held that with the break from Stalin the YCP “ceased to be a Stalinist party in the full meaning of the word.” The resolution claimed that in Yugoslavia “Stalinism no longer exists today as an effective factor in the workers’ movement,” and went even further to assert: “The dynamics of the Yugoslav revolution confirms the theory of the permanent revolution on all points.”<sup>35</sup>

What about Trotsky’s insistence that “the realization of the revolutionary alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry is conceivable only under the political leadership of the proletarian vanguard, organized in the Communist Party”?<sup>36</sup> The need for an independent, Bolshevik-internationalist vanguard party, the key to Trotsky’s program, was not mentioned, for the simple reason that this task had been ceded to the Stalinist YCP under Tito. The Workers Power obituary on the Fourth International claims that:

In 1951 the centrist positions of the Third World Congress on Stalinism, on Yugoslavia, and general perspectives (the impending “civil war” perspective) proved, beyond doubt, that a programmatic collapse of the Fourth International had taken place. The fact that no section voted against the Yugoslav resolution—the cornerstone of all the errors—is a fact of enormous significance. The FI as a whole had collapsed into centrism.<sup>37</sup>

In reality, while reflecting the deep inroads Pabloism had already made, the IEC resolution on Yugoslavia adopted by the Third World Congress was not quite so seamlessly opportunist as Workers Power would have it. Reflecting mounting disenchantment with the Tito regime, the resolution notes that the “right turn in Yugoslav foreign policy” over the Korean War had “in part vitiated the effects of the Yugoslav affair on the international crisis of Stalinism.” It also vowed to make “frank and uncompromising criticism of all the political errors and opportunist deviations on the part of the CPY.” In one of its few amendments to the IEC resolution, the Third World Congress insisted that these criticisms “should tend to impel the Yugoslav communists to replace their present opportunist leadership by a revolutionary leadership.”<sup>38</sup>

Moreover, the Third World Congress resolution on international perspectives declared that “we shall work for the creation of a Bolshevik tendency in the YCP, against the policy of surrender and capitulation of the leadership, and for its replacement.”<sup>39</sup> So by August 1951 the Fourth International was calling,

softly, for the ouster of the Tito leadership. The report on Yugoslavia to the congress by Harold Livingstone (George Clarke) was harder. While saying that “the Yugoslav revolution is not dead,” it declared “its progressive influence on the world labor movement—in deepening the crisis of Stalinism and in giving new impetus to the forces of revolutionary Marxism—is now a thing of the past.”<sup>40</sup>

While Clarke said that “we do not put a cross on the Yugoslav revolution,” in fact Yugoslavia hardly appeared after that in the press or statements of the Fourth International up to the split in 1953. An article reporting on the Third World Congress wrote of Yugoslavia that “the events which have occurred since mid-1950 have demonstrated all the profound opportunism of a leadership nurtured within the Stalinist camp, and the extreme danger this opportunism constituted for the preservation of the revolutionary gains.”<sup>41</sup> And an article by Pablo summed up:

After a brief left-centrist period which followed their break with the Kremlin, the Yugoslav leadership in their attempt to safeguard the regime with the money, the military and diplomatic guarantees of Western “democratic imperialism,” has been liquidating the proletarian power in Yugoslavia bit by bit and preparing its total demise....It is now more necessary than ever that the revolutionary Marxists of the Yugoslav Communist Party organize into a Leninist tendency and align themselves against the treacherous policies of their leaders.<sup>42</sup>

For all of 1952 we found not one article on Yugoslavia in *Quatrième Internationale*, the press of the French Parti Communiste Internationaliste, or the press of the American SWP; for 1953 we found only one.<sup>43</sup> Having been burned by their handling of the Tito affair, the FI leaders dropped it like a hot potato. They backed away from the Belgrade regime, but there was no reckoning with the theoretical and programmatic questions Yugoslavia had posed for the Fourth International. In early 1953, SWP leader Joseph Hansen could say: “Our co-thinkers now call for a political revolution in Yugoslavia such as we advocate against the Kremlin. This means that the Tito regime is judged to be politically counter-revolutionary.”<sup>44</sup> But what happened to the earlier appraisal of the Tito regime as “left-centrist” and the “remarkable qualities of its leading cadres”? This was essentially swept under the rug.

At the time of the split with Pablo in November 1953, the document by the SWP plenum published under the title “Against Pabloist Revisionism” had only this to say:

Yugoslavia and China show that under certain exceptional conditions the leadership of a Stalinist

party, caught between extermination by the counter-revolution and an extremely powerful revolutionary offensive of the masses, can push forward to power...But it would be unwarranted to generalize too broadly and hastily on this point. It should be remembered that while the Yugoslavs marched to power, the CP's in other countries remained subordinate to the Kremlin and facilitated the work of the counter-revolution. Two Communist parties, the Yugoslav and Chinese, met the test in one way; the others in a directly opposite manner.

The specific conditions which forced the Yugoslav and Chinese CP's onto the revolutionary road must be analyzed and understood.<sup>45</sup>

While the FI reaffirmed the need for a new revolutionary leadership of the proletariat, the study of the implications of the Yugoslav and Chinese revolutions did not take place. It took until 1955 for the SWP to characterize China as a deformed workers state, and even then it placed the qualitative transformation in 1951-53, when as a result of the Korean War (most of) the capitalists were expropriated, rather than in 1949 when the revolution took place.<sup>46</sup> This was continuing the same methodology which had led to enormous confusion over East Europe. Yet the May 1957 SWP convention declared that "the Titoites have demonstrated throughout that they are in no sense to the left of the Soviet bureaucracy."<sup>47</sup> And an SWP resolution on the Hungarian Revolution said of Tito's support for Moscow, "When the cards were down, the fact that Tito represents simply a variety of Stalinism proved decisive—despite his differences with Khrushchev & Co."<sup>48</sup> The fact that these issues were dealt with only empirically and the theoretical questions raised by the deformed workers states after WWII were never fought out was a major failure of the anti-Pabloists. This was later to feed into the SWP's capitulation to Pablo/Mandel over Algeria and Cuba, facilitating the formation of the Mandelite "United Secretariat" (Usec) characterized by its perennial search for "new vanguards."

### **Who Opposed FI Capitulation to Tito?**

But to recognize and criticize these weaknesses and failures, as we more than any other tendency have done, is far from dismissing the struggle against Pabloism. Those who use the Yugoslav affair in order to equate pro- and anti-Pablo groupings in the Fourth International, who talk of the definitive degeneration and political collapse of the FI during 1948-51, are throwing up a smokescreen to obliterate what the fight during 1951-53 was all about: the continuity of Trotskyism. To accomplish this they simply disappear all opposition to the tailing after

Tito pushed by Pablo and adopted by the I.S./IEC. Thus Workers Power writes:

As the FI leadership's world view became increasingly at variance with reality, so their orthodoxy became ever more fragile. All that was needed to dislodge the FI from the orthodox positions it held until 1948 was a sharp twist in world events.

That twist in events came almost immediately after the 1948 Congress. In the summer of 1948 the Tito-Stalin split was made public....Out of the Yugoslav events the FI developed centrist conclusions and positions....Pablo's positions on Yugoslavia were adopted by the FI at its Third World Congress in 1951. They were subscribed to by all the major sections and leading figures of the FI.<sup>49</sup>

This picture of a uniform capitulation to Pablo is utterly false. To understand the real development of Pabloism it's necessary to look at the opposition that did arise over the Yugoslav affair, and its weaknesses.

Naturally, from outside the FI there was criticism from Max Shachtman's Workers Party. Workers Party leader Hal Draper wrote of the "galloping political degeneration" of the FI, concluding: "The Stalinotropism of the Fourth International leadership is flowering."<sup>50</sup> A similar tone was struck by the "Revolutionary Faction of the Mexican Section of the Fourth International." Its "Critique of the 'Open Letter' of the I.S. to the Yugoslav CP" accuses the I.S. of "a grave opportunist deviation" as it "places Tito and the Yugoslav 'Communist' Party to the left of Stalin, thereby creating illusions about a future revolutionary role of a party that despite everything continues to be Stalinist."<sup>51</sup> True enough, but in the very next sentence, it lets the cat out of the bag, declaring, "in the USSR there is no workers state, however degenerated they portray it to us, but rather state capitalism."

Somewhat later, in May 1951, Natalia Sedova Trotsky wrote to the American SWP, breaking all ties with the Fourth International to protest its stands on Yugoslavia, East Europe and the Soviet Union. She declared that "your entire press is now devoted to an inexcusable idealization of the Titoist bureaucracy," which "is only a replica, in a new form, of the old Stalinist bureaucracy." She rightly noted that "It is absurd to believe or to teach that the revolutionary leadership of the Yugoslav people will develop out of this bureaucracy or in any way other than in the course of struggle against it." Yet while she was able to take to task the SWP and the FI for their opportunist line on Yugoslavia, her starting point was the declaration that "Stalinism and the Stalinist state have nothing whatever in common with a workers' state or with socialism."<sup>52</sup> Natalia

rejected Trotsky's policy of unconditional defense of the Soviet Union, claiming it had become capitalist. Thus she refused to support the Soviet Union and North Korea ("the armies of Stalinism") against U.S. imperialism in the Korean War.

So the purveyors of the thesis that the Soviet Union was a new exploitative class society, whether "bureaucratic collectivist" (Shachtman) or "state capitalist," accused the I.S. of selling out to Stalinism. Of course, they wrote off the whole affair as a squabble between two bureaucrats. "Go to it, bandits! Deepen the rift between you!" wrote Shachtman,<sup>53</sup> while Draper declared that "the conflict between the Yugo and the Commissar is over who is to benefit from the exploitation of the masses."<sup>54</sup> This is hardly surprising: their line was crystallized Stalinophobia. Thus Shachtman vituperated against "Stalinist imperialism," while Draper opposed the Yugoslav call for a Balkan federation in denouncing "Yugoslav sub-imperialism." Ultimately Shachtman's line would take him from the mythical "Third Camp," to pro-imperialist "neutrality" in the Korean War, to direct support for imperialism at the time of the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba and in the Vietnam War.

(Parenthetically, any honest believer in "state capitalism" should have realized the falsity of this construct by the time of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, when the Stalinist bureaucracy acted not as an exploiting class, which would have defended its property and class interests to the bloody end, but rather as a fragile, parasitic layer which quickly shattered, with whole sections going over to the insurrectionary workers. Today, as imperialist pimps, the "state caps" are enjoying the collapse of Stalinism. But if there were any shame among revisionists, by rights Tony Cliff et al. ought to be embarrassed into nonexistence by the stark revelation of the fallacy of their schema. If it's only the change from one form of capitalism to another, then why the mass bloodletting in Yugoslavia, mass hunger in Poland, mass unemployment in East Germany, not to mention the emboldening of world imperialism for, e.g., the mass slaughter in Iraq?)

But there was plenty of unease over the Fourth International's line on Yugoslavia from those who saw themselves as orthodox Trotskyists. The American SWP took a distinctly different tack at first from that of the I.S. An initial editorial in the *Militant* declared, "All that Tito and his clique are striving to defend are their own material interests, their power and privileges. All they ask is to be permitted to rule in Yugoslavia as Stalin rules in Russia."<sup>55</sup> In the

same issue John G. Wright, a leading SWP cadre, sounded almost like Shachtman: "The Dictator-in-Chief in the Kremlin has decided to veto the Little Dictator in Yugoslavia."<sup>56</sup> This soon changed. Directly contradicting Wright's rather Stalinophobic articles, Joseph Hansen declared: "Far more is involved than the fight between a big dictator and a little dictator. The struggle initiated by Tito...may well become the starting point for new, large-scale regroupments and developments in the international working class movement."<sup>57</sup> That was quite true.

A 3 August 1948 statement by the Political Committee of the SWP was not nearly so effusively capitulatory as the I.S. Open Letter of July 13. Nevertheless, the SWP statement was marked by the objectivism which was characteristic of much of the FI's writings on Yugoslavia:

The course of events will work in favor of the revolutionists...The logic of the Stalin-Tito struggle is such that it is bound to impel the militants in Yugoslavia and elsewhere—not to the right but to the left. This will happen independently of whether Tito himself moves to the right, or whether he seeks to straddle the fence somewhere between the Kremlin and imperialism.<sup>58</sup>

Over the next year and a half, the SWP continued to keep some distance from the Tito regime. Thus in November 1948 Joseph Hansen wrote an article, "Tito Flounders with Stalin's 'Theory' of Building 'Socialism' in One Country."<sup>59</sup> Nine months later a *Militant* editorial commented: "Thus far Tito has been fighting the Kremlin with measures and weapons borrowed almost exclusively from the arsenal of Stalinism," to wit, the false claim of "building socialism" in one country, making deals with imperialism and "bureaucratic police measures" internally.<sup>60</sup> However, in late 1949 the SWP began to shift when a National Committee statement declared: "Stalinist in origin and ideology, the Tito leadership has nevertheless been compelled by the logic of the struggle to question some of the fundamental premises on which Stalinism rests....The Yugoslav struggle has given rise to a new form of centrism, a tendency between Stalinist reformism and revolutionary Marxism."<sup>61</sup>

By the spring of 1950, the SWP had become positively euphoric over Tito. James P. Cannon sent a telegram to the YCP Central Committee hailing the latter's May Day manifesto: "workers everywhere will acclaim your appeal to defend Yugoslavia and restore revolutionary movement to Leninism as opposed to Stalinism and Social Democracy."<sup>62</sup> An article in the same *Militant* proclaimed, "Above all, the Yugoslav manifesto indicates that the final

crisis of world Stalinism is at hand.”<sup>63</sup> (This paean was occasioned by a single reference in the YCP manifesto to “the struggle against the revision of Marxism and Leninism.”) Two months later, the *Militant* headlined “Tito Denounces Bureaucracy as Foe of Socialism,” and editorialized that Tito’s June 27 speech denouncing the “huge, bureaucratic, centralistic apparatus” in the USSR and attacking Stalin by name was “a great mile stone in the development of the international working class and socialist movement.”<sup>64</sup>

But as Belgrade lined up with imperialism over the Korean War, the SWP’s enthusiasm quickly cooled. From November 1950 to January 1951 the *Militant* published an eleven-part cautionary series by Ernest Mandel, who at the time wrote under the name Ernest Germain, titled “Yugoslavia Seen with Open Eyes.” This was followed by another four-part series by John G. Wright on “Yugoslavia’s Foreign Policy.” Wright accused the Yugoslav leaders of “more and more tending” to “trade away their democratic and socialist principles in exchange for material and military aid” from the imperialist West.<sup>65</sup> “What blinds the Yugoslav Communists is that their own leaders themselves still cling to the illusory reactionary goal of building socialism within the confines of Yugoslavia, just as they keep clinging to the Stalinist conception of a ‘monolithic’ party,” Wright concluded.<sup>66</sup>

The policy of the French Parti Communiste Internationaliste (PCI) on Yugoslavia was broadly similar to that of the American SWP, although the swings were more pronounced since the issue was much more immediate in Europe. At the Fifth Congress of the PCI in July 1948, the majority led by Jacques Privas (Jacques Grimblatt), Michèle Mestre, Pierre Lambert, and Marcel Marin (Marcel Gibelin) passed a motion directly opposing the I.S. Open Letter of July 13 “for idealizing Tito and the Yugoslav CP,” while making clear their intention to abide by international discipline.<sup>67</sup> The PCI motion insisted that the Tito-Stalin split was part of the general crisis of Stalinism in the buffer zone, which it attributed to “exploitation” of these countries by the Kremlin. The I.S. was supported by a minority led by Pierre Frank and Marcel Favre-Bleibtreu. At a PCI Central Committee meeting in late 1948, Bleibtreu and Frank fulsomely supported the Yugoslavia motion adopted by the October 1948 IEC plenum, insisting in particular that the YCP had ceased to be “a Stalinist party like the rest.” The majority of the PCI Central Committee, while viewing the relatively restrained IEC motion as a step in the right direction, still insisted

that the IEC disavow Pablo’s August 1948 article, “The Yugoslav Affair,” as well as the Open Letter formulations which idealized Tito.<sup>68</sup>

On the other hand, during 1950, the French PCI practically became a publicity agency for the Yugoslavs. A January report on the PCI’s Sixth Congress declared that “above all the defense of Yugoslavia is the defense of a proletarian revolution”:

The reporter [Bleibtreu] fought the doubts and hesitations which threaten to weaken the intervention of the party. He showed:

—that it is wrong to speak of a Yugoslav bureaucratic caste of the same nature as the Russian bureaucracy; —that it is wrong to accept the idea that the YCP has capitulated or is in the process of capitulating to imperialism. No vote of Yugoslavia in the UN, no trade agreement can justify such a claim.<sup>69</sup>

The resolution “Hands Off the Yugoslav Revolution” voted by the congress declared that the Yugoslav CP had “return[ed] to Leninism on a series of important strategic questions.” It characterized the YCP as representing “left-centrism in the process of evolving,” citing factors “which objectively push the YCP onto the road of the revolutionary program.”<sup>70</sup>

The PCI regularly advertised works by Yugoslav leaders such as Milovan Djilas and Edvard Kardelj (*People’s Democracy in Yugoslavia*) and urged readers to tune in to the broadcasts of Radio Belgrade. A headline proclaimed “The Magnificent Election Campaign of the YCP,” while the article declared: “The YCP and the Fourth International are hated for the same reason: because they express the greatest force of our epoch, the force of the proletarian revolution, the invincible strength of the working people of all countries.”<sup>71</sup> On May Day 1950 a French delegation visited Belgrade; PCI leader Pierre Lambert reported, “I believe that I saw in Yugoslavia a dictatorship of the proletariat, led by a party which passionately seeks to combat bureaucracy and impose workers democracy”! (At the same time he reported that typical slogans carried in the demonstration were “Tito, Central Committee, Party, Yugoslav Peoples,” and “Tito Is with Us, We Are with Tito.”)<sup>72</sup>

The PCI held meetings in defense of Yugoslavia which had to be physically defended against Stalinist attacks. It also took the lead in sending youth work brigades (called the Jean Jaurès Brigades after the French Socialist leader) and trade-union delegations to Yugoslavia, which eventually totaled some 2,000 young workers. *La Vérité* bombastically headlined the report of one delegation, “Those Who Have Seen the Truth in Yugoslavia Say It: YES, This Is a State Where Socialism Is Being Built, This Is the

Dictatorship of the Proletariat.” Denouncing reactionary and Stalinist accounts of a “police state” in Yugoslavia, the article declared, “This state is a WORKERS STATE, resolutely engaged on the road of SOCIALIST DEMOCRACY.” However, elsewhere in the reportage, *La Vérité* admitted that “the French delegation was struck by...a certain bureaucratic plethora,” and “a certain insufficiency of political life and discussion” in the ranks of the Yugoslav party and trade unions.<sup>73</sup>

Eventually, the Tito regime’s capitulation to imperialism over the Korean War could no longer be ignored. In December 1950 *La Vérité* candidly expressed the sense of disillusionment among the PCI ranks, particularly the youth who had enthusiastically joined the work brigades: “All this is extremely painful for the revolutionary friends of Yugoslavia who have hoped that its leaders would really keep their promises to consistently defend Marxism-Leninism against Stalinist revisionism.”<sup>74</sup> The trade-union grouping led by Lambert around the journal *L’Unité*, in which PCI militants cooperated with pro-Tito elements and which was reputedly financed by the Yugoslav government,<sup>75</sup> eventually fell apart.

In “Genesis of Pabloism,” we wrote that “Virtually without exception the Fourth International was disoriented by the Yugoslav revolution.”<sup>76</sup> With the documentation now available to us, we can say that this is not entirely true. The British Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) at least understood that capitalism had been abolished, not only in Yugoslavia but in the other countries of East Europe as well, and opposed the capitulation to Tito. Yet the RCP’s line was dismissed out of hand, not only by Pablo but also by the SWP, and, most importantly, almost none of its documents were widely disseminated in the FI. At the April 1948 Second World Congress, the RCP submitted amendments to the resolution on the USSR and Stalinism in which they opposed the description of the East European states as capitalist, noting instead:

a) The basic overturn of capitalist property relations has already been, or is in the process of being completed. b) The capitalist control of the government and the apparatus of the state has been, or is in the process of being destroyed. c) This process of assimilation is the necessary and inevitable product of the class character of the Russian economy, and of the preponderance of the Russian state as the dominant military and political force in the existing relations of world powers on the one hand, and the balance of power between the Stalinist and working class organisations and the remnants of the ruling class, on the other.<sup>77</sup>

At the same time, the RCP was careful to underline that “the destruction of capitalism in these countries must not be taken as a model for the general overthrow of capitalism, nor does it prove that capitalism can be destroyed in Western Europe coldly, by terror from above.”<sup>78</sup>

So unlike the rest of the International, the British RCP did not face a theoretical quandary in dealing with the Tito-Stalin split. RCP leaders Jock Haston and Ted Grant, in a July 1948 article, noted that this “marks a new stage in the development of international Stalinism which must be closely followed by revolutionary and militant workers,” but they cautioned: “One thing we know, Tito is no Trotskyist. Organisationally and ideologically he is the enemy of Trotskyism.” Their article concluded:

All socialists will give critical support to the movement in Yugoslavia to federate with Bulgaria and to gain freedom from direct Moscow domination. At the same time, the workers in Yugoslavia and these countries will fight for the installation of genuine workers’ democracy...This is impossible under the present Tito regime. For an Independent Socialist Soviet Yugoslavia within an Independent Socialist Soviet Balkans. This can only be part of the struggle for the overthrow of the Capitalist Governments in Europe and the installation of Workers’ Democracy in Russia.<sup>79</sup>

A powerful letter to the International Executive Committee by Jock Haston, “on behalf of the Central Committee, RCP,” undated but probably written in late summer 1948, criticized the Open Letters of the I.S., noting that while they exposed the bureaucratic expulsion of the YCP from the Cominform, this “must not mean that we become lawyers for the YCP leadership, or create even the least illusion that they do not still remain, despite the break with Stalin, *Stalinists in method and training*.” Haston criticized the Open Letters for failing to fulfill these conditions and appearing to be “based on the perspective that the leaders of the YCP can be won over to the Fourth International.” While individuals may change, Tito et al. “themselves rest on a Stalinist bureaucratic regime in Yugoslavia.” Thus, “by their silence on fundamental aspects of the regime in Yugoslavia and YCP policy, the letters strike an opportunist note.” Haston’s letter contained the essentials of a Trotskyist position on Yugoslavia:

Tito is attempting, and will attempt, to follow an independent course between Moscow and Washington, without altering the bureaucratic machine or turning to proletarian internationalism. A bureaucratic regime, resting as it does mainly on the peasantry, can have no independent perspective between the Soviet Union

and American imperialism. The *main* emphasis of the [I.S.] letters should have been to show the necessity for a radical break with the present policy of the YCP, the introduction of soviet democracy within the party and the country, coupled with a policy of proletarian internationalism....

It is impermissible to slur over the nature of the YCP, its identity on fundamental points with other Stalinist parties. Such a slurring over can only disorientate Stalinist workers. Yet every attempt is made by the I.S. to narrow the gulf that separates the policy of the YCP from Bolshevik-Leninism....

It is true that the Yugoslav Stalinists settled, with some success, the national problem inside their own country. It was their programme with regard to this question that enabled them to win over members of the quisling armies. But the comrades must be aware that the propaganda of the YCP towards Germany was of the same chauvinistic character as that of the Russian and other Stalinist parties....The I.S. mentions Togliatti's chauvinism, and Thorez' nationalist hysteria, and leaves the impression of a *favourable comparison* between the policy of other Stalinist parties and that of the YCP. We cannot be silent on the YCP's chauvinistic campaign around Trieste, their attitude towards reparations, their *uncritical support* for the Russian bureaucracy's demand for reparations from the German people. It is necessary to take up these questions so that it shall be clear precisely what the gulf is between a nationalist and an internationalist policy, and precisely what it is that Yugoslav militants must struggle against.<sup>80</sup>

Haston also nailed the I.S. on the glaring contradiction between the latter's defense of Yugoslavia, which the FI's Second World Congress two months earlier labeled a *capitalist* state, against the Soviet degenerated *workers* state led by Stalin:

The World Congress majority adopted a position that the buffer countries, including Yugoslavia, were *capitalist* countries. It rejected the resolution of the RCP that these economies were being brought into line with that of the Soviet Union and could not be characterised as capitalist. The amendment of the British party to the section "The USSR and Stalinism" was defeated. But it is evident from these letters that the I.S. has been forced by events to proceed from the standpoint of the British party, *that the productive and political relations in Yugoslavia are basically identical with those of the Soviet Union.*<sup>81</sup>

Haston appealed to the International Executive Committee to "reject the orientation in the Open Letter" and, in order to correct the damage done, to reopen the discussion on the buffer zone. At the IEC's Seventh Plenum in April 1949 (which voted the "definition-description" of the buffer zone as still capitalist), the representatives of the RCP introduced the substance of their Second World Congress amendments as a counter-motion.<sup>82</sup> It was not until the IEC's Eighth Plenum in April 1950 that the

Fourth International characterized Yugoslavia as a workers state, and only at the Ninth Plenum in December of that year did it finally declare that capitalism had been overthrown in the "buffer zone countries."

If, as we have written, the American SWP leadership's approach to East Europe amounted to a "wooden orthodoxy," insistently ignoring reality until finally forced by events to recognize it (but failing to draw the theoretical lessons), the Haston/Grant leadership of the British RCP tended toward empiricism. They recognized that events in Europe had not conformed to Trotsky's prognosis, particularly following the defeat of the Italian workers uprising in 1944-45; but on this basis they declared a phase of "bourgeois 'democratic' counter-revolution." Haston/Grant had supported the rightist Goldman-Morrow tendency in the SWP, which put forward a "democratic" minimum program for constituent assemblies as opposed to a fight for soviets. Seeing the British Labour government elected in 1945 carrying out more extensive nationalizations than had been expected, Haston speculated in 1946 about a worldwide trend to "state capitalism" and began questioning the character of the Soviet state. But in a sign of political vitality, the discussion which followed in the RCP produced a corrective and a switching of positions.

Tony Cliff, who had arrived in Britain from Palestine in late 1946, was assigned by the I.S. to argue against Haston in favor of the Trotskyist characterization of the Soviet Union as a degenerated workers state. But Cliff then went over to "state capitalism" and in 1948 published his book, *Russia: A Marxist Analysis*. In contrast, in the course of re-studying the question, going back to *Capital* and the works of Lenin and Trotsky, the Haston/Grant leadership came back to the original Trotskyist position. As a result of this study and under the impact of events in East Europe, the RCP leaders were able to adopt a coherent position on the "buffer zone" and Yugoslavia which, at least on paper, neither denied reality nor gave up the struggle for the Trotskyist program. And they were able to do so with a trenchant analysis that could have armed the International for future events. Thus a 25 June 1949 letter of the RCP to the I.S. stated: "We cannot fail to comment here that your uncritical letter to the Yugoslav Communist Party precisely lends weight to the point of view that Tito is an 'unconscious Trotskyist'."<sup>83</sup> A decade and a half later, the founding document of the United Secretariat, which brought the SWP together with the main forces of

the European Pabloists, approvingly cited radical journalist I.F. Stone's observation of the Fidelistas in Cuba: "the revolutionists there are 'unconscious' Trotskyists."<sup>84</sup>

But at the same time, Haston and Grant were under constant attack by the I.S., which was supporting the RCP minority led by Gerry Healy. Cannon supported Pablo in Paris, and Healy was Cannon and Pablo's man in London. As early as August 1945, Healy, instigated by Pierre Frank, was calling for the British section to enter the Labour Party. In June 1946, the IEC was pushing the RCP to put most of its forces into the Labour Party "with the object of patiently building up an organised Left Wing"—a foretaste of Pablo's later call for "entrism *sui generis*" (of a distinct type), whose purpose was not to polarize an existing left wing but to bury the Trotskyists in this reformist party "for a long time." The RCP majority opposed this liquidationist line. In September 1946 the IEC supported Healy when he threatened to split the RCP in order to enter the Labour Party, and they recognized *two* British organizations, the Haston/Grant RCP and Healy's entrism group.

This heavy-handed treatment was repeated again in 1949, when Haston/Grant finally capitulated to the pressure and agreed to enter the Labour Party. To get around the fact that Haston/Grant still had the larger forces, Healy demanded (and the I.S. backed him) that he have a majority on the leading bodies of the fused group until an election the next year! As occurred with the French in 1951-52, liquidationist politics went hand in hand with a bureaucratic internal regime. In the end, the result was the destruction of the RCP, in which the FI's wrong position on Yugoslavia was an important element.

### **Discussion on Yugoslavia: Round One with Pablo**

At its Seventh Plenum in April 1949, the IEC decided to open a discussion in the International on Yugoslavia. This discussion was marked by rampant confusion, as could be imagined from the FI's shifting programmatic statements. Over the course of three years, a number of individuals changed position: Pablo was initially the most enthusiastically pro-Tito, but after the outbreak of the Korean War he most strongly emphasized the deformed character of the Yugoslav regime; in the French section, Lambert was initially critical of the I.S.'s capitulatory policy toward Tito, but by 1951 was criticizing Pablo for being too harsh on Yugoslavia; Bleibtreu was consistently soft on the Yugoslavs, first support-

ing Pablo, then Lambert; Mestre in turn was consistently harder on Yugoslavia, initially aligned with Lambert, later with Pablo; and Germain was consistently confusionist. Yet amid the confusion, one can discern the early stages of a battle which by 1951-53 was to put into question the very existence of the Fourth International.

At the heart of the internal struggle over Yugoslavia was a drive by Pablo to deny the need for an independent Trotskyist vanguard. He generalized his liquidationist program of chasing after Stalinist forces from initially tailing Tito to seeing revolutionary possibilities in the Kremlin itself and the European CPs which followed its orders. On the other hand, the response of those who opposed Pablo was marked by a formalistic pseudo-orthodoxy that was unable to explain events in East Europe when reality didn't square with their undialectical categories. Reasoning that Stalinism, as a counterrevolutionary force, could *never* carry out a social revolution, however bureaucratically deformed, they first denied that Yugoslavia had overthrown capitalist rule, only to then claim that there had been an authentic proletarian revolution and Tito's YCP had been able to establish a workers state because it was not Stalinist. The theoretical confusion that resulted from such contortions seriously undermined the struggle against Pabloist liquidationism, and eventually fed into the American SWP's embrace of the same revisionist program a decade later over Cuba.

As head of the International Secretariat, Pablo was responsible for the initial "Open Letters" which embraced the Tito regime. In his first signed article on the Tito-Stalin split, "The Yugoslav Affair," written in August 1948, Pablo argued that the Yugoslav CP during the war "led a real mass movement with distinct revolutionary tendencies which brought it to power."<sup>85</sup> A year later, Pablo was already raising many of the themes which he later elaborated into a wholesale attack on Trotskyism. In September 1949 he wrote:

Thus, in the historic period of the transition from capitalism to socialism we shall witness the rise not of normal workers' states, but of more or less degenerated workers' states, that is, states with strong bureaucratic deformations which can reach the point of complete political expropriation of the proletariat.<sup>86</sup>

Asserting that "in our epoch, the proletarian power established in a single country will inevitably and rapidly become bureaucratized," Pablo argued that "there is no other remedy than to bring to bear the weight of the world organization of the proletariat," which "alone is capable of counterbalancing the

corrupting influence of national isolation upon the party in power.”<sup>87</sup>

Thus Pablo declared that Stalinist degeneration was no longer an exceptional situation but rather constituted “modifications in the norm of proletarian power”! In asserting that bureaucratization was “inevitable,” he simply wrote off the Trotskyist program of proletarian political revolution to overthrow the Stalinist bureaucracy. Moreover, these “modified norms” were destined to last for a considerable time:

...in the whole historic period of the transition from capitalism to socialism, a period which can extend for centuries, we shall encounter a much more tortuous and complicated development of the revolution than our teachers foresaw — and workers’ states that are not normal but necessarily quite deformed.<sup>88</sup>

This is the revisionist perspective that came to be characterized by Pablo’s opponents as “centuries of deformed workers states.” It liquidates the need for the Fourth International as an independent revolutionary leadership, at best reducing it to the role of opposition after the necessary/inevitable bureaucratization of the revolution, or, more likely given Pablo’s later evolution, to the role of “Marxist” braintrustees to the Stalinist regimes—or even to left-talking rulers of capitalist states. (In the early 1960s Pablo [Raptis] acted as a government adviser to Ben Bella’s Algeria, and in the early 1970s to a lesser extent to Allende’s Chile, peddling “self-management” schemes borrowed from Tito’s Yugoslavia.)

Already in 1949, Pablo referred to Yugoslavia as “a workers’ state deformed from its birth,” which was “led and controlled by a caste forming into a bureaucracy.”<sup>89</sup> But he pointedly did *not* call for a workers political revolution to oust this bureaucracy. (Logical enough, since according to him bureaucratization was “inevitable.”) Unfortunately, however, the far-reaching liquidationist implications of his analysis were largely ignored at the time, since his opponents were arguing that Yugoslavia along with the rest of East Europe remained *capitalist*. Thus most of his initial document was taken up with long quotes from Yugoslav officials demonstrating that the bourgeoisie had indeed been liquidated. Pablo again took up this same theme in February 1950, arguing against Germain’s construct of the East European states as capitalist states on the road to structural assimilation into the USSR.<sup>90</sup>

The main response to Pablo was given by Germain.<sup>91</sup> In his opus, Germain adduced all manner of arguments to show that the states of the “buffer

zone” remained capitalist. But how did he square this with the Marxist definition of the state, since the armed force was entirely in the hands of the Stalinists (local and Soviet), and the economies had by this time been essentially collectivized except for agriculture? Referring to Engels’ “jewel-like formula” of the state as a body of armed men, he waved this aside, averring that it “suffices to explain to novices the Marxist theory of the state and to find one’s way in cases which are comparatively simple,” but was of no use at all in this complicated situation. Likewise he rejected the criterion of what class interests the state serves and dismissed the evidence of the expropriation of the bourgeoisie throughout East Europe, claiming that Mussolini did the same in his 1943-44 “Salò Republic” (in German-occupied northern Italy)!

Instead the erudite Marxist savant discerned “an entirely special type of capitalism.” He discovered an entirely new category, a “bastard” bourgeois state, or, “if one wishes,” “a degenerated bourgeois state on the road to structural assimilation with the USSR”!<sup>92</sup> It is easy to poke holes in this contorted concoction. Germain in fact threw the Marxist theory of the state out the window in his desperate attempt to maintain the classification of the East European states as capitalist. To get around the problem of defending Belgrade against Moscow while arguing that capitalism hadn’t yet been destroyed in Yugoslavia, he labeled it a “workers and peasants government”—essentially giving Tito & Co. a certificate of revolutionary good conduct. His invention of a “bastard/degenerated bourgeois state” was simply playing with words, allowing him to keep on calling the buffer zone capitalist while emptying this term of all verifiable content. But *why* did he go to such absurd lengths?

Following Trotsky’s observation that “every sociological definition is at bottom an historical prognosis,” Germain warned that those who defined East Europe as workers states were adopting “a perspective of the possibility of a growth and increasing development of Stalinism on an international scale in the years and decades to come!” That “would oblige us to revise *from top to bottom* our historical appraisal of Stalinism.... We would then have to repudiate the entire Trotskyist argument against Stalinism since 1924, a line of argument based on the *inevitable* destruction of the USSR by *imperialism* in the event of an extremely prolonged postponement of the world revolution.”<sup>93</sup> Germain was quite wrong to insist that recognizing East Europe as deformed workers states would mean abandoning

Trotsky's analysis and revolutionary program against Stalinism. *But he did accurately discern that this is what Pablo & Co. were driving at.* The same concern was voiced by various leaders of the SWP who were clearly driven by fear of the potential implications of recognizing the East European regimes as deformed workers states. Morris Stein, in a February 1950 report to the SWP National Committee plenum, noted: "their 'workers states' have come into existence not by means of proletarian revolution but through bureaucratic counterrevolution. How square this with our Marxist concepts of the proletarian revolution?"<sup>94</sup> John G. Wright, who called Germain's tortured document "brilliant," wrote:

Finally, to call the regimes in Eastern Europe "workers states" is to say that the Stalinists have been and are carrying out revolutionary tasks there, in a bureaucratic way, in a "deformed" way, qualify it how you may, revolutionary nonetheless. We must challenge that. We must say that just the contrary is true. It is the counterrevolutionary essence of Stalinism that has come to the fore in Eastern Europe, and not the reverse.<sup>95</sup>

This wooden orthodoxy of the SWP was based not on a dialectical and materialist analysis of the situation, but on fear that if it were admitted that capitalist rule was destroyed in the states of the Soviet-dominated "buffer zone," then all of Marxism would collapse along with the justification for the very existence of the revolutionary party. The bankruptcy of this "method" was shown by what happened when the fact of the expropriation of the bourgeoisie in East Europe could no longer be denied. Only five months after writing his treatise, Germain flipfopped and at the Eighth Plenum of the IEC (April 1950) suddenly declared that Yugoslavia was now "a non-degenerated workers' state!"<sup>96</sup> And when they had to face the truth on the buffer zone, Germain's supporters simply pretended that his criteria for "structural assimilation" into the Soviet Union had been accomplished. Thus Murry Weiss, reporting for the National Committee to the SWP's November 1950 convention, declared: "The salient characteristic of the whole process has been the destruction of these states as separate states, and their incorporation, in one form or another, into the USSR."<sup>97</sup>

This is not successive approximations, but rather repeated obfuscation. In fact, Trotsky had laid the theoretical basis for recognizing that the Stalinists could, under unusual conditions, overthrow bourgeois rule. The Transitional Program states: "one cannot categorically deny in advance the theoretical possibility that, under the influence of completely

exceptional circumstances (war, defeat, financial crash, mass revolutionary pressure, etc.), the petty-bourgeois parties, including the Stalinists, may go further than they themselves wish along the road to a break with the bourgeoisie."<sup>98</sup> But where Trotsky wrote of this as a "highly improbable variant," the Pabloist revisionists seized upon this phrase and turned it into the norm. The anti-Pablo forces denied reality as long as they could and then capitulated, rather than insisting that even in those exceptional conditions where revolutions led by Stalinist and other petty-bourgeois forces overthrow capitalism, this is accomplished against their own program, and the resulting bonapartist regimes remain a roadblock to international socialist revolution.

In the fight over Yugoslavia in the Fourth International, one can see the origins and early stages of Pabloism. Yet it was not yet the full-blown liquidationist program. One indication of this is that the lineup over Yugoslavia was not identical to that in 1953, when the battle came to a head. In the former case, not only those who later stood with Pablo, such as Bert Cochran (who used the name E.R. Frank) and Michèle Mestre, called for recognition that Yugoslavia and the rest of East Europe were workers states, but also Joseph Hansen, who was one of the leaders of the fight against the pro-Pablo Cochran-Clarke faction in the SWP. In a December 1949 document, Hansen noted: "Labelling such a country in Eastern Europe as Yugoslavia a 'workers state' concedes nothing to Stalinism and does not involve a revision of the Marxist theory of the state." He stressed that events in Eastern Europe were merely "the positive side of a development that was a major blow to the socialist movement. While the borderlands experienced an upset in property relations, Stalin's henchmen in France and Italy were knifing workers' uprisings in the back. All Europe, including Germany, might have been socialist today were it not for the crimes of Stalinism at the close of the war."<sup>99</sup>

Yet Hansen didn't recognize that Tito, too, was a Stalinist, and the SWP went along with the FI's capitulatory line on Yugoslavia. Once again, in this discussion the only treatment of Yugoslavia and East Europe that followed the lines of Trotsky's own writings on Soviet Stalinism came from the British RCP. A May 1949 document by Bill Hunter, "The I.S. and Eastern Europe," pointed out anew how events had confirmed the RCP's amendments at the Second World Congress a year earlier. Hunter noted that the position that Yugoslavia was a workers state, but the rest of East Europe wasn't, amounted to a

“halfway house,” insisting that comrades who took that line couldn’t hold to it for long. Hunter went back to Trotsky’s 1940 work, *In Defense of Marxism*,<sup>100</sup> for some guidelines:

Trotsky said of Poland in 1939, “*This overturn was forced upon the Kremlin oligarchy through its struggle for self preservation under specific conditions.*”

It was that same struggle for self preservation which was the determining factor of the Kremlin’s post war policy in Eastern Europe....The fact [that] Stalinism under certain specific circumstances carries out revolutionary measures does not cancel out its past, its origins, its conservative and counter-revolutionary aspects, its bureaucratic base and the effect of its methods on the world working class movement. On the other hand we cannot be blinded to the particular progressive measures Stalinism is forced to carry out because of the viability of the property form on which it rests. The Fourth International is not to be justified by ignoring facts, or attempting to pour them into preconceived theoretical vessels. In that way lies a fog of mysticism.

To declare that under every and all particular conditions the Stalinist bureaucracy must compromise with the bourgeoisie means never to understand the events in Eastern Europe....However, this does not mean that the bureaucracy has taken up the banner of world revolution. Its struggle still remains a defensive one within the framework of gaining the best possible compromise with world imperialism.<sup>101</sup>

Unfortunately, even though Hunter’s document was promised in the introduction to the first SWP *International Information Bulletin* announcing the start of discussion on Yugoslavia in the FI, it never appeared.<sup>102</sup> For that matter, as far as we could discover, none of the RCP’s letters and statements against the I.S./IEC line(s) on Yugoslavia and East Europe were ever widely circulated, or published in the SWP’s internal bulletins. Instead, Morris Stein, in opening the discussion on East Europe in the SWP Political Committee, simply dismissed them with a wave of the hand, remarking, “I am not dealing with the position of the British RCP,” since it “represents no new factor” and its views were already “overwhelmingly rejected” by the 1948 World Congress.<sup>103</sup>

### Round Two:

#### Pabloite Liquidationism Takes Shape

The discussion inside the Fourth International over Yugoslavia and the class character of the East European states was the first stage in the appearance of Pabloism as a full-fledged liquidationist current. But it was only the first stage. That it didn’t represent the “degeneration” of the FI is indicated by the fact that both sides pulled back. In fact, the earlier alignment over Yugoslavia had been largely

reversed, with the initially strongly pro-Tito Pablo now attacking his detractors in the FI for capitulating to the Yugoslavs. Mainly the change of position over Yugoslavia was due to Belgrade’s capitulation before imperialism over the Korean War.

But by this point, the attack on Trotskyism had gone beyond the issue of Yugoslavia. As a result of the East Europe discussion, Pablo & Co. generalized an initial opportunist position into a full-blown revisionist program, while major sections of the Fourth International one by one drew back and went into opposition as the liquidationist implications of this program became clear to them, above all when it hit them on the national terrain. Pablo’s line on Yugoslavia certainly gave a foretaste of what was to come. Thus in his January 1951 revisionist manifesto “Where Are We Going?” Pablo points back to his December 1949 document “On the Class Nature of Yugoslavia”:

As for us, we reaffirm what we wrote in the first article devoted to the Yugoslav affair: this transformation will probably take an entire historical period of several centuries and will in the meantime be filled with forms and regimes transitional between capitalism and socialism and necessarily deviating from “pure” forms and norms.

We are aware that this statement has shocked certain comrades and served others as a springboard to attack our “revisionism.”

But we do not disarm.<sup>104</sup>

Taking Trotsky’s *negative observation* in the Transitional Program that “one cannot categorically deny” that under certain “completely exceptional” circumstances the petty-bourgeois parties “may go further than they themselves wish along the road to a break with the bourgeoisie,” Pablo turned this into a *positive program*, declaring: “The Yugoslav affair as well as the march and the victory of the Chinese revolution...have demonstrated that the Communist Parties retain the possibility, *in certain circumstances*, of roughly outlining a revolutionary orientation.”<sup>105</sup> When these statements provoked a storm of protest in the International, Pablo and his followers declared that “centuries” referred to the whole transitional period before full socialism and not just the degenerated/deformed workers states, and that “outlining a revolutionary orientation” only meant that the Stalinists could go so far as to take power. But this was only to throw sand in the eyes of those who didn’t want to see.

For Pablo went further. In the same article he declared that since World War II the world has entered “a period essentially different from everything we have known in the past.” And what was

this “new reality”? “For our movement objective social reality consists essentially of the capitalist regime and the Stalinist world. Furthermore, whether we like it or not, these two elements by and large constitute objective social reality...” So where the “old reality” consisted of the two fundamental classes of capitalist society, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, and intermediate forces such as the peasantry and more broadly the petty bourgeoisie, this new world reality consists of “the capitalist regime” and the “Stalinist world.” And where does the working class fit in this schema? According to Pablo, “the revolutionary spirit of the masses directed against imperialism acts as an additional force, supplementing the material and technical forces raised against imperialism.”<sup>106</sup> So in effect the world working class becomes an auxiliary to the Soviet Army, a kind of “National Guard,” as Bleibtreu put it.

What lay behind this “new reality” was the spectre of an impending third world war. Earlier Pablo had argued that this general war was “many years” away, but in “Where Are We Going?” he wrote that “capitalism is now rapidly heading toward war; for it has no other short or long-term way out.” “It is with the Korean war,” he added, “that our movement for the first time realized the important factor that the relationship of forces on the international chessboard is now evolving to the disadvantage of imperialism.” The coming war would “take on, from the very beginning, the character of an *international civil war*”; the continents of Europe and Asia “would rapidly pass over under the control of the Soviet bureaucracy, of the Communist Parties, or of the revolutionary masses.” In sum: “War under these conditions, with the existing relationship of forces on the international arena, would essentially be *Revolution*.” To the “new reality” corresponded a new programmatic conception, “the conception of *Revolution-War*, of *War-Revolution* which is emerging and upon which *the perspectives and orientation of revolutionary Marxists in our epoch should rest*.”<sup>107</sup>

In part, Pabloism consists of *Cold War impressionism*. Under the impact of imperialism’s “Cold War” against the Soviet Union, Stalin is obliged to expropriate the bourgeoisie in the “buffer zone” of East Europe; a maverick “national Stalinist” regime in Yugoslavia breaks with Stalin to seize power—and Pablo concludes that the CPs can sometimes “roughly outline a revolutionary orientation.” The North Koreans take Seoul, drive the puppet capitalist regime into the Pusan pocket; U.S. imperialism

counterattacks with the Inchon landing, crosses the 38th parallel; China enters the war, Truman hints at using the A-bomb—and Pablo concludes that the third world war is around the corner, with imperialism holding the short end of the stick.

Pabloism is also characterized by *objectivism*. In language that would be echoed years later by the Argentine pseudo-Trotskyist adventurer Nahuel Moreno, Pablo declared in his report to the February 1952 Tenth Plenum of the IEC: “The situation is *prerevolutionary all over in various degrees and evolving toward the revolution in a relatively brief period. And this process from now on is in general irreversible*.”<sup>108</sup> Pabloism also incorporates themes raised by the *Zhdanov line*, the Kremlin’s quarter-turn to the left in response to the Cold War Marshall Plan. At the founding meeting of the Cominform in 1947, Andrei Zhdanov in his theses declared: “The struggle between these two camps, between the imperialist and anti-imperialist camp, unfolds under conditions of a continued deepening of the overall crisis of capitalism, of a weakening of the forces of capitalism, and of the strengthening of the forces of socialism and democracy.”<sup>109</sup> The struggle between “camps” instead of classes, the international balance of forces unfavorable to capitalism: these premises were shared by Pablo and Zhdanov.

But most fundamentally the “program” of Pabloism was the *denial of the need for a Trotskyist vanguard*. Under the impact of the unexpected postwar surge of Stalinism and the weakness of the Trotskyist forces, with new questions posed by events in East Europe and China, a whole section of the leadership of the Fourth International, particularly centered in Europe where the pressures were strongest, not only rejected Trotsky’s prognosis about the outcome of the imperialist war, but threw out the Trotskyist program as well. Instead of an independent proletarian leadership, they saw “new vanguards,” first Tito’s Yugoslavia and Mao’s China, and then the whole “Stalinist world.” Pablo and his acolytes were increasingly explicit in their revisionism. Pablo’s main report to the Third World Congress was published under the title, “World Trotskyism Rearms.”<sup>110</sup> The English version of the theses of the Third World Congress included a subhead on the “New Course of Trotskyism,” and Germain (Mandel), who by this time had capitulated to Pablo, gave a report to the congress on the activity of the I.S. and IEC under the title, “Three Years of the New Course of Trotskyism.”<sup>111</sup> The most blatant expression was from Pablo’s American follower

George Clarke, who made his battle cry “Junk the Old Trotskyism!”<sup>112</sup>

As the developing Pabloite revisionist current passed from particular positions to a general program, it also began to draw organizational consequences. Thus in his report to the Third World Congress, Pablo declared: “What we have understood for the first time in the history of our movement and of the workers’ movement in general...is that we must be capable of finding our place in the mass movement as it is.” This is specified as understanding “the necessity of subordinating all organizational considerations, of formal independence or otherwise, to real integration into the mass movement.”<sup>113</sup> A few months later, at the Tenth Plenum of the IEC (February 1952), Pablo spelled out what came to be known as “deep entrism.” He cited as a precedent the British section’s entry into the Labour Party (under massive pressure from the I.S.). This was “almost qualitatively different” from the “entrism” advocated by Trotsky during 1934-38, for this was intended to be “long-term” in nature. Of the reformist parties, he stated:

We are not entering these parties in order to come out of them soon. We are entering them in order to remain there for a long time banking on the great possibility which exists of seeing these parties, placed under new conditions, develop centrist tendencies which will lead a whole stage of the radicalization of the masses and of the objective revolutionary processes in their respective countries.<sup>114</sup>

In fact, he stressed, the aim was “to help in the development of their centrist tendencies”!

As for the official Communist parties, since the Stalinist tops would prevent any internal factions and likely prevent many known Trotskyists from entering, Pablo advocated “entrism of a special kind, *sui generis*,” arguing that the Stalinist movement will produce “*much greater and more important centrist tendencies*” than the social-democratic reformists. To accomplish this task, a member should “not hesitate” to “conceal his Trotskyism”.<sup>115</sup> “In order to remain there and work, it will be necessary for a whole period, at first, that our militants completely conceal their Trotskyist identity” and they must “not undertake any political work based on our own ideas.” “‘Ruses’ and ‘capitulations’ are not only admissible but necessary,” in order to carry out this “entrism *sui generis*.”<sup>116</sup> As for those on the outside, their chief aim was to assist the entry work. So when the anti-Pabloites wrote of the “liquidation” of the Trotskyist program and party, this was no projection or exaggeration, but the *explicit, immediate* program of Pablo and his associates.

What, then, of the opposition to Pablo? As we remarked at the outset, it was partial, belated, largely on the national terrain, and did not come to grips theoretically with the new questions which gave rise to Pabloism. *But they did fight*, and we take sides with those who sought, in however flawed a manner, to combat the forces that were liquidating Trotskyism!

First came the British RCP majority. In his report to the Third World Congress, Germain noted the expulsion of Haston and Grant from the International Executive Committee after its Eighth Plenum in April 1951, describing them as “embodying the tendency of British Trotskyism which obstinately refused to integrate itself into the International, to assimilate the new course of Trotskyism.”<sup>117</sup> Indeed the Haston/Grant majority derived from the old British Workers International League (WIL), which for purely cliquist reasons placed itself outside the British section of the Fourth International from 1938 to 1944. But in 1951 Pablo and Germain were far more concerned by the fact that the RCP majority had refused for more than three years to liquidate into the Labour Party, despite the insistent attempts by the I.S. to force them to do so. In the end, Pablo engineered by remote control a split led by Gerry Healy, who took about a third of the organization into the Labour Party. Haston/Grant didn’t go along with the I.S./IEC fiction that East Europe was still capitalist in 1948-49, and partly because their vision wasn’t distorted by these pseudo-orthodox blinders, they saw Tito clearly for what he was: a nationally based Stalinist who wanted to build socialism in *his* one country. In a 1950 statement written shortly before he was expelled, Grant rightly listed as the first of three reasons for the collapse of the FI in Britain “capitulation to Tito-Stalinism internationally.”<sup>118</sup>

In order to destroy Haston and Grant, Pablo’s I.S. destroyed the RCP in the process. To do so, they resorted to organizational methods reminiscent of Zinoviev’s Comintern regime. So when Healy split the British section in 1947, the IEC granted his entry group independent status, reporting directly to the I.S. Later, in late 1948-early 1949, when first Haston and then Grant capitulated and came out for entry into the Labour Party, the I.S. turned on them and denounced them for...liquidationism! “Their proposal of entry looks like a desperate man drowning himself in deep water,” commented the I.S. “Entry on such a pessimistic and liquidationist line...would only accelerate the process of political disintegration and destroy all perspective for the

Fourth International.”<sup>119</sup> When Healy demanded and got from the I.S. control of the section now reunited in the Labour Party, even though he and his supporters were in a minority, with a year’s leeway until elections were to be held, he proceeded to drive out and expel his opponents, some legitimately (like the Cliff group, whose supporters publicly denounced “Russian imperialism” and refused to support the North in the Korean War), most not.

Healy, who had also been a leader of the old WIL, was implementing Pablo’s line in London. The “deep entrism” policy Healy carried out in Britain (which eventually resulted in the Socialist Labour League when he exited in the late ’50s) was certainly a precursor of the “entrism *sui generis*” which Pablo attempted to shove down the throats of the French PCI a few years later. The RCP had been set up only in 1944, as a forced (by the I.S.) fusion of the WIL and a disintegrated Revolutionary Socialist League (official FI section), and it was rent by inherited animosities at the top. Its principal leaders eventually abandoned Trotskyism, Haston openly, and Grant through carrying out an entry into the Labour Party so deep that his Militant group only exited in 1992 (and that over Grant’s opposition). But in the late ’40s the RCP, more than any other section of the International, tried rather successfully to grapple on the basis of Trotsky’s program with the issues that had been thrown up by history. And they were ground up by a leadership that subsequently sought to liquidate the Fourth International itself. In an interview on Healy’s history, Spartacist League Central Committee member James Robertson remarked:

Cannon and also Pablo were very much on the RCP’s case, and Healy was their local inside man. I don’t know all the rights and wrongs but I do believe that they did not try to reshape the RCP, but successfully destroyed it. And so far as I know that was the last Trotskyist organization in Britain, the SLL in the period from 1957-67 proving to be hollow.<sup>120</sup>

### **Pabloite Revisionism Ravages the Fourth International**

The French PCI was the second section that Pablo targeted for destruction. As noted earlier, the then PCI majority opposed the I.S.’ 1948 letters to the Yugoslav CP for “idealizing Tito.” The PCI passed a motion demanding that the I.S. reject Pablo’s August 1948 article on “The Yugoslav Affair.” And while the composition of the PCI majority as well as its line on Yugoslavia changed, the French party was almost constantly in opposition to Pablo on East Europe and Stalinism. Working closely with

the International Secretariat, which was then located in Paris, they smelled an anti-Trotskyist rat early on. The fight came to a head during 1950-52, in the period leading up to and following the Third World Congress. The first object of dispute was the “Theses on Perspectives and Orientation,” written by Pablo and submitted to the Ninth Plenum of the IEC at the end of November 1950, as part of the discussion for the upcoming Third World Congress.<sup>121</sup> The discussion was particularly colored by the appearance in January 1951 of Pablo’s revisionist treatise “Where Are We Going?” with its “new reality” and perspective of “centuries of deformed workers states.”

In the I.S. itself there was resistance to Pablo’s theses (from Germain, Frank and Privas). Immediately following the plenum, at the beginning of December 1950, the French CC met, criticizing revisionist elements in the Ninth Plenum theses and refusing to approve the document. It also approved a political report for the PCI’s upcoming Seventh Congress. There followed, in January and March 1951, CC meetings at which Pablo’s emissaries (initially Clarke from the U.S.) tried to browbeat the French majority into submission. Germain intimated to Bleibtreu his intention to write a document to counterbalance Pablo’s theses, and to submit it for a vote. Germain did eventually write his famous “Ten Theses” document, a veiled attack on Pablo’s “Where Are We Going?” But Pablo cracked the whip, ordering Germain to defend the Ninth Plenum theses or be expelled from the I.S., and sent a letter to the French CC demanding that they rewrite their perspectives document along the lines of his theses. At the March meeting Germain, Frank and Privas capitulated and spoke for Pablo’s theses. In April 1951, Pablo himself attended a French CC meeting to attack the leadership; the CC formally split into majority (anti-Pablo) and minority.<sup>122</sup>

Also in April the PCI’s principal leader, Marcel Bleibtreu, wrote a document “Where the Disagreements Lie,” which was later developed into his famous “Where Is Comrade Pablo Going?” (Neither of these, nor any of the other French documents, were ever translated and distributed internationally by the I.S.) When Germain’s “Ten Theses” was published in March (although dated 15 January 1951), the French PB adopted them as a resolution for the World Congress (minus the author’s preamble, which endorsed Pablo’s Ninth Plenum theses).<sup>123</sup> At the PCI’s Seventh Congress in July, there were counterposed majority and minority reports and resolutions on both international and national work,

and the majority voted down the Ninth Plenum theses. At the World Congress of the FI in August 1951, Bleibtreu spoke against Pablo's theses, and the PCI introduced a series of amendments. The French were isolated, a vote was not permitted on their amendments or on Germain's "Ten Theses," and the PCI delegates voted almost alone against the main resolution, which included Pablo's "Theses on Perspectives and Orientation." A French commission was set up to replace the PCI majority leadership. In the end Bleibtreu et al. were left in place, but with the proviso that if they didn't carry out the line of the World Congress, "the IEC and I.S. will be charged with taking all organizational measures to rectify the situation in the PCI."<sup>124</sup>

There was plenty of thunder and lightning. But did the French fight Pabloite liquidationism programmatically in all this, or was it simply an organizational power fight, as some (such as Workers Power) would have it? There were plenty of weaknesses and errors in the PCI majority's documents. Bleibtreu declared that "the essential difference concerns the revisionist view of the nature of the bureaucracy of the USSR" in Pablo's texts.<sup>125</sup> But Bleibtreu's definition of Stalinism excluded any ideological/programmatic elements: "When you speak of the *Stalinism* of a Communist Party, you are not speaking of a theory, of an overall program, of definite and lasting concepts, *but only* of its leadership's subordination to orders from the Kremlin bureaucracy."<sup>126</sup> Bleibtreu mocked the very idea of "Stalinism without Stalin." And the PCI did *not* object to the statement in the "Theses on Perspectives and Orientation" that under certain circumstances, "like those which occurred during the war in Yugoslavia, in China, and recently in Korea," certain CPs "can project a revolutionary orientation," and that "from that moment on, they would cease to be strictly Stalinist parties."<sup>127</sup>

Bleibtreu did not give a Trotskyist definition of Stalinism, for he excluded the programmatic components of "socialism in one country" and "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism, and ignored Stalinism's material base, a nationally limited bureaucracy—both of which were common to Yugoslavia and China as well as the USSR. Bleibtreu wanted to limit Stalinism to only those parties directly under the Kremlin's thumb, *in order* to exclude the Chinese and Yugoslavs. If anything, his texts were even more favorable to the Mao and Tito regimes than were Pablo's (e.g., declaring that "it is absurd to speak of a Stalinist party in China, and still more absurd to foster belief in even the resemblance of a 'victory of

Stalinism in China").<sup>128</sup> But this was an attempt, if flawed, to fight against Pablo's program, which ascribed revolutionary potential to Stalinism itself; Bleibtreu's answer to the question of how CPs could take power and still be counterrevolutionary was to define the problem away, describing them as non-Stalinist. In rejecting Pablo's assertion that "*defense of the USSR constitutes the strategic line* of the Fourth International," Bleibtreu correctly stated that the strategic line of Trotskyism is world socialist revolution. But he did not emphasize, as Trotsky did, that Soviet defensism was also a *strategic task* of the FI.

Despite these errors, the French did attempt to fight the Pabloites' policies of tailing after Stalinism. And thus they were an obstacle in the way of Pabloism's revisionist course. Round Two of the showdown came as Pablo returned to the offensive, demanding that the PCI liquidate into the Stalinist movement under the rubric of "entrism *sui generis*." Following his usual "salami tactics" Pablo had *not* called at the World Congress for entrism into the Stalinist parties, and in fact he had referred to the "necessarily independent" character of the Trotskyist organizations, as he admitted in his report to the February 1952 Tenth Plenum of the IEC. The policy of "entrism *sui generis*" was first raised in a January 1952 I.S. letter to the French leadership accusing the PCI of refusing to follow the line of the Third World Congress: "Let us define this policy once again clearly: what's involved in a country like France is carrying out, more and more, a sort of *sui generis* entrism policy toward the organizations and workers influenced by the Stalinists."<sup>129</sup>

When the January CC meeting of the PCI refused Pablo's ultimatum to hand over control of the party to the Pabloite minority (via a "parity" Political Bureau with a double vote for a representative of the I.S.), Pablo decreed on the spot the suspension of the 16 majority members of the Central Committee! This bureaucratic atrocity was subsequently ratified by the I.S., reportedly with the votes of the British (Gerry Healy) and American (George Novack) representatives. At the Tenth Plenum (February 1952), the IEC revoked the suspensions, but decreed that the PCI CC could not meet unless the minority Political Bureau judged it necessary.<sup>130</sup>

But even when, in order to buy time, the French majority submitted to this grotesque measure, it wasn't enough for Pablo, who demanded that discussion at the upcoming congress of the PCI be limited to implementing the entrism line of the Tenth Plenum, and that the CC elected at the previous

congress not be allowed to present its political report.<sup>131</sup> Seeing an impending split, in late June the Pabloites removed typewriters and mimeograph machines from the PCI office. Two months earlier they had secretly filed a statement with the police registering a "PCI" with a completely pro-Pablo leadership. So on 14 July 1952, two PCI congresses were held in Paris, on different floors of the same building. In November the anti-Pablo PCI was formally expelled, again with the votes of the British and Americans. But this only whetted Pablo's appetite. With the French out of the way, he then went after the big one, the Socialist Workers Party, led by James P. Cannon and conserving the largest group of Trotskyist cadres dating back to the time of Trotsky.

As in the case of the PCI, and even more so, the struggle against Pabloism in the SWP was fought out over the party question. The question of Yugoslavia seemed more remote on the American terrain, and an orientation of entrism into the discredited and relatively small American Stalinist party—which had gone semi-clandestine due to McCarthyite repression—was not only liquidationist but downright absurd for anyone with the slightest pretense of revolutionary politics. Cannon was able to easily demonstrate that the pro-Pablo minority was a rotten bloc consisting of New York petty bourgeois (led by George Clarke) who were looking to the popular-front milieu, and a layer of older Detroit trade unionists (led by Bert Cochran) who were looking for a way out of organized left politics altogether. But as we noted in "Genesis of Pabloism": "The SWP only joined the fight against revisionism when a pro-Pabloism tendency, the Clarke wing of the Cochran-Clarke faction, manifested itself within the American party." Moreover, when Cannon did finally take up the battle he did so in a way that "deepened [the SWP's] isolationism into virulent anti-internationalism," counterposed to international democratic centralism. In a review of Cannon's *Speeches to the Party*, which covers this fight, we wrote of:

...the major weakness revealed during the struggle—Cannon's failure to carry out an *international* faction fight against Pabloism. To avoid having to implement Pabloist policies, Cannon posited a federated International. (This deviation came home to roost in the later formation of the "United Secretariat" in which differences over the 1953 split, China and other questions were papered over as each national organization went its merry way.) Cannon's federalist concept of internationalism was reflected in a polemic against (of all things) "Cominternism!"<sup>132</sup>

The SWP leadership claimed to have disagreed with Pablo earlier, both politically and over some of his more blatant organizational atrocities. Thus for the Third World Congress, the SWP Political Committee sent off a "Contribution to the Discussion on International Perspectives" to "balance" Pablo's "Theses on Perspectives and Orientation." In particular, in this memo the SWP argued that "it is imperative to reaffirm our previous characterization of Stalinism as a counter-revolutionary force"; they opposed any recognition ("implicitly or explicitly") of "the perspective of 'deformed workers' states' as the line of historical development for an indefinite period"; they opined that it was "one-sided" to say that the CPs "may be compelled to outline a revolutionary orientation," since the Stalinists could also work to strangle revolutions; and they argued for reaffirming the central importance of the crisis of proletarian leadership.<sup>133</sup> But the SWP's "fraternal" delegate, Clarke, who happened to be one of Pablo's chief hatchetmen, didn't present this "contribution." In fact, he later said, he was so "ashamed" of it that he burned the document!

Be that as it may, none of the changes the SWP advocated on paper were made, except for a ritual mention (in the "Theses on Perspectives and Orientation") of "the selection of a new revolutionary leadership." Nonetheless the SWP supported the Third World Congress documents. They also supported the Tenth Plenum documents ordering entrism. Questioned on this in a letter by French PCI leader Daniel Renard, a trade unionist who had been expelled by the Stalinist-led CGT, Cannon replied: "We do not see any revisionism there....We consider these documents to be completely Trotskyist."<sup>134</sup> Cannon later claimed that the SWP leadership "hit the ceiling" and was "flabbergasted" when they heard about the International Secretariat *diktat* removing the elected Political Bureau of the French party and replacing it with a "parity committee" with an I.S. representative as arbiter.<sup>135</sup> But not only did the SWP do nothing about this travesty, its representative on the I.S. voted *for* the suspension of the French PB and then later for the expulsion of the PCI from the Fourth International.

Cannon admitted that the SWP consciously soft-pedaled and papered over differences with Pablo in order to boost the latter's "authority." A fellow party leader dissuaded Cannon from writing against the conception of "centuries of deformed workers states," arguing that this would damage Pablo's "prestige" and that "If it appears in the International

that Cannon is attacking Pablo, the whole alliance will appear to be broken." Cannon related that there were repercussions inside the American party as well, quoting SWP leader Arne Swabeck, who at a plenum "told us that a girl comrade got up in the Chicago branch and asked: 'What is this? If there are going to be centuries of Stalinism, what's the sense of my going out and selling ten papers on the street corner?'" "A very good question," commented Cannon, adding, "But we kept quiet about all this in the party."<sup>136</sup> After consulting with Cannon, Murry Weiss answered the Johnsonites in Los Angeles (who in 1950 were calling for "Cannonism against Pabloism"), saying: "You don't need to fear about us rushing into Pablo's arms; we're already in his arms."<sup>137</sup>

This false diplomacy and "prestige" building prevented the necessary fight for political clarity that perhaps could have headed Pablo off at the pass and prevented the destruction of the Fourth International. We have repeatedly and sharply criticized Cannon and the SWP's conduct during the 1950-53 fight along the lines given above. But it is also necessary to stress that when the decisive hour came, Cannon fought and fought hard. "We are at war with this new revisionism," he declared in his speech to the November 1953 SWP National Committee plenum. And he hammered away on the key question that had been given only secondary attention in the earlier battles with Pablo—the *question of leadership, the party question*: "The essence of Pabloist revisionism is the overthrow of that part of Trotskyism which is today its most vital part—the conception of the crisis of mankind as the crisis of the leadership of the labor movement summed up in the question of the party."<sup>138</sup>

This has been denigrated, in particular by the British Workers Power group. Thus they publish a snotty article by Emile Gallet, declaring:

The problem with the SWP majority's line on "Pabloism" was that they failed to get the true measure of the beast. They actually held to the fundamental tenets of the Pablo-Mandel method. However, like Bleibtreu, they balked at the logical conclusion of the third Congress view of Stalinist parties becoming transformed into centrist ones (e.g. Yugoslavia, China), that is, entry into the CPs. They therefore concentrated their fire on the most striking *yet superficial* aspect of "Pabloism," which for them "boils down to one point and is concentrated in one point...the question of the party" [our emphasis].<sup>139</sup>

Later on, the author argues that "the SWP, like the rest of the FI, was unable to measure up to the problem of re-applying Trotsky's method to the post-

war world," and thus "there are major centrist flaws which must lead us to reject any view which sees the SWP or Cannon as revolutionary communists in the post-war period."<sup>140</sup> This puerile polemic shows just the opposite, that while the SWP had major flaws in its analysis, when it came down to the question of questions, that of the revolutionary leadership, for all their faults *they fought liquidationism*. And the fact that the party question is "superficial" for the likes of Workers Power shows that they can *never* measure up to the little finger of a Cannon.

### Cannon: "At War with Pabloism"

Having finally decided it was war, Cannon declared, "We are finished and done with Pablo and Pabloism forever, not only here but on the international field."<sup>141</sup> A "Letter to Trotskyists Throughout the World," issued by the SWP's November 1953 NC plenum, restated basic principles of Trotskyism, including that Stalinism was the main obstacle to resolving the crisis of proletarian leadership, and attacked Pablo's revisionism as looking "to the Stalinist bureaucracy, or a decisive section of it, to so change itself under mass pressure as to accept the 'ideas' and 'program' of Trotskyism." The letter admitted that "the French comrades of the majority saw what was happening more clearly than we did," and declared: "The lines of cleavage between Pablo's revisionism and orthodox Trotskyism are so deep that no compromise is possible either politically or organizationally."<sup>142</sup>

The lengthy document, "Against Pabloist Revisionism," which accompanied the SWP letter noted:

By dumping the orthodox Trotskyist concept of the [Stalinist bureaucratic] caste as in essence representative of the tendency toward capitalist restoration...the Pabloites open the road to the completely revisionist concept that the bureaucracy can right itself....

This shifts the axis of the development of the political revolution away from the self-action of the masses and focuses it upon the rifts inside the bureaucracy....

The working class is transformed into a pressure group, and the Trotskyists into a pressure grouping along with it which pushes a section of the bureaucracy leftward toward the revolution. In this way, the bureaucracy is transformed from a block and a betrayer of the revolution into an auxiliary motor force of it.<sup>143</sup>

At the same time, the French PCI prepared a document which noted that "The principal theoretical ideas of Pabloism were formulated by Pablo as a personal contribution during the course of the discussion on the buffer zone (1949-50)." Declaring that "with the Third World Congress the Fourth

International entered upon a crisis which has steadily worsened and today threatens its very existence," it concluded:

For Pablo the historical mission of the Fourth International has lost all meaning. The "objective revolutionary process," under the aegis of the Kremlin, allied with the masses, is taking its place very well indeed. That is why he is mercilessly bent upon liquidating the Trotskyist forces, under the pretext of integrating them into the "movement of the masses as it exists."

The salvation of the Fourth International imperatively demands the immediate eviction of the liquidationist leadership.<sup>144</sup>

*With all the weaknesses of the anti-Pabloites' fight, this stand constituted a fundamental platform for struggle for the Trotskyist program and party that must be defended. Those who turn their backs on this, refusing to take sides in the 1953 fight, are liquidators no less than Pablo. At stake was the very existence of our world party!*

In the aftermath, the Pabloites generalized their liquidationist program, codifying it at their 1954 "Fourth World Congress," in a resolution on "The Rise and Decline of Stalinism"—a draft of which had already been circulated before the split and was the object of the SWP's critique published as "Against Pabloist Revisionism." The Pabloists' resolution included a "programme of political revolution" that did *not* call for the overthrow of the Stalinist bureaucracy or for the formation and leadership of a Trotskyist party, but again spoke rather of the "democratization of the workers' parties." Referring to "the impossibility for the Fourth International to become a leading force of this upsurge" after WWII, it now claimed openly that the CPs could "be led to project a revolutionary orientation...without abandoning the political and theoretical baggage inherited from Stalinism." And therefore the Pabloites sought not the "organizational disintegration" of Stalinism but rather its "gradual internal transformation."<sup>145</sup>

This was also expressed in practice. Thus when the East German workers uprising occurred in 1953, the I.S. issued a statement calling for "real democratization of the Communist parties"—but *not* for a Trotskyist party—and asserting of the Stalinists: "They have been obliged to continue along the road of still more ample and genuine concessions to avoid risking alienating themselves forever from support by the masses and from provoking still stronger explosions. From now on they will not be able to stop halfway!"<sup>146</sup> The extreme Pabloites, like Michèle Mestre in France and George Clarke in the U.S., carried out the entrism program and did

indeed liquidate into the respective CPs. (The Cochranite trade unionists in the U.S., as Cannon predicted, disappeared from the left scene.) Pablo himself pulled back when it became clear that there was no mileage in CP entrism, since Khrushchevite "peaceful coexistence" soon supplanted the immediate threat of World War III.

A week after the SWP's "Letter to Trotskyists Throughout the World" was published, and based on it, representatives of the American, British, French and Swiss sections formed the "International Committee of the Fourth International." The SWP was recognized as "the leading section of the world Trotskyist movement" by the Chinese Trotskyists, who also adhered to the IC, which consisted of the largest sections of the FI.<sup>147</sup> We have elsewhere dealt with the fate of the IC, which existed mostly as a paper organization:

[It] never met as a real international body, nor was a centralized leadership ever elected....Thus the anti-revisionist fight was deliberately *not* carried to the world movement, the IC consisting mainly of those groups which had already had their splits over the application of Pabloist policies in their own countries, and the struggle to defeat revisionism and reconstruct the Fourth International on the basis of authentic Trotskyism was aborted.<sup>148</sup>

Nor did the IC come to grips with the theoretical issues which gave rise to Pabloism. So when the SWP, its revolutionary fiber weakened by years of McCarthyite repression and national isolation, finally succumbed and joined with the I.S. to found the "United" Secretariat in 1963, their arguments for political support of Castro's Cuba could have been lifted word for word from Pablo's writings on Yugoslavia over a decade earlier.

It is out of the fight against a new edition of Pabloism in the early 1960s that our Spartacist tendency took form. At that time, the French section of the International Committee under Pierre Lambert and the British Socialist Labour League under Gerry Healy simply repeated the errors of Pablo's opponents over Yugoslavia and East Europe. Thus Healy declared that "the Castro regime is and remains a bonapartist regime resting on capitalist state foundations."<sup>149</sup> This could have been lifted straight from Germain's analysis ca. 1949 of East Europe (which he described as "an entirely special type of capitalism" ruled by "Bonapartist governments of a new type").<sup>150</sup> In turn, the Lambertistes' description of Cuba as a "workers and peasants government" of a "broken-down, decomposed, phantom bourgeois state"<sup>151</sup> could have been Germain on Yugoslavia 1944-48.

In contrast, the Revolutionary Tendency (RT) of the SWP analyzed the birth of a bureaucratically *deformed workers state* in Cuba, while pointing out that the petty-bourgeois Castro regime was not and could not become a revolutionary leadership (as the SWP and I.S. and subsequently the USec claimed). We warned that peasant-based guerrillaism was no road forward to socialist revolution. Looking backward, the RT's analysis of Cuba also provides the key to understanding Yugoslavia and China, and to understanding what was wrong with the Fourth International's analysis at the time. The issue was summed up in two counterposed documents at the time of the formation of the United Secretariat. The SWP Political Committee wrote in its March 1963 statement:

Along the road of a revolution beginning with simple democratic demands and ending in the rupture of capitalist property relations, guerilla warfare conducted by landless peasant and semi-proletarian forces, under a leadership that becomes committed to carrying the revolution through to a conclusion, can play a decisive role in undermining and precipitating the downfall of a colonial and semi-colonial power. This is one of the main lessons to be drawn from experience since the Second World War. It must be consciously incorporated into the strategy of building revolutionary Marxist parties in colonial countries.<sup>152</sup>

In direct opposition to this, the resolution submitted by the RT to the 1963 SWP convention, which became one of the basic documents of the Spartacist tendency, stated:

Experience since the Second World War has demonstrated that peasant-based guerilla warfare under petit-bourgeois leadership can in itself lead to nothing more than an anti-working-class bureaucratic regime. The creation of such regimes has come about under the conditions of decay of imperialism, the demoralization and disorientation caused by Stalinist betrayals, and the absence of revolutionary Marxist leadership of the working class. Colonial revolution can have an unequivocally progressive revolutionary significance only under such leadership of the revolutionary proletariat. For Trotskyists to incorporate into their strategy revisionism on the *proletarian* leadership in the revolution is a profound negation of Marxism-Leninism no matter what pious wish may be concurrently expressed for "building revolutionary Marxist parties in colonial countries."<sup>153</sup>

The understanding of the postwar formation of the deformed workers states achieved by the RT over Cuba was very late. And the situation of the Trotskyist forces was very different: where in the late 1940s there was a seemingly united Fourth International, in the early '60s the RT confronted a visibly fragmented Trotskyist movement. One can

only speculate what it would have meant if Marxist clarity had been achieved on East Europe and Yugoslavia almost a decade and a half earlier. In addition to countering Pablo's destructive work, there were the situations where sections of the Fourth International were locked in battle with Stalinism in the heat of revolutions: China and Vietnam. The Chinese comrades, faced with Pablo's enthusing for Mao while they were being jailed and murdered by the Maoist regime, clung to the false orthodoxy of continuing to label China a capitalist country. At a time of great turmoil, in the midst of the Korean War and the nationalization campaigns in China, this was politically disorienting to the point of absolute paralysis. (Meanwhile, Pablo and Germain were viciously slandering the Chinese Trotskyists as "refugees from a revolution" and refusing to publicize their imprisoned comrades' appeals for support.)

The situation of the Vietnamese Trotskyists was no less excruciating. After playing a leading role in the 1945 Saigon insurrection against the returning French imperialist troops, they were subjected to murderous repression at the hands of the Stalinist party led by Ho Chi Minh.<sup>154</sup> Although many of them were forced into exile, they sought to fight for orthodox Trotskyism. At the Third World Congress of the Fourth International in 1951, a Vietnamese anti-Pablo delegate declared dramatically:

The minority of the Vietnamese group is voting against all the political resolutions of the I.S. due to their confused and contradictory character and their tendency to subordinate Trotskyism to Stalinism.<sup>155</sup>

In Latin America, the damage wrought by Pabloism was enormous. Pablo advocated, and the Third World Congress endorsed, entrism in bourgeois nationalist movements like Argentine Peronism and the Bolivian Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario (MNR). This laid the basis for the capitulation by Guillermo Lora's Partido Obrero Revolucionario (POR) in 1952, when the MNR staged an insurrection and the POR gave it "critical" support; a section of the POR eventually entered the MNR. In Argentina, because of the lack of a real international fight by the International Committee, the "anti-Pablo" forces led by Nahuel Moreno carried out a classic Pabloite "deep entry" into the Peronist movement.

Throughout the world, the ravages caused by Pabloism are still being felt. It is to overcome this crisis of revolutionary leadership that the ICL fights to reforge an authentically Trotskyist Fourth International.

## Pseudo-Trotskyist Uses and Abuses of Yugoslavia

In later years, the Yugoslavia question has had a curious history among ostensibly Trotskyist currents. For the Healyites, claiming to be the direct continuity of the Fourth International in an organizational battle with Mandel's United Secretariat, the Yugoslav affair represented something of a problem. Since Healy was up to his neck in supporting Tito, organizing a "John MacLean Youth Work Brigade" from the Labour League of Youth to go to Yugoslavia,<sup>156</sup> it was imperative to assert that Pabloism only began with 1951, *after* the enthusiasm for Tito had passed. Healy solved this by hardly mentioning Yugoslavia at all.

Healy's one-time flunky Tim Wohlforth, however, tried to make a virtue of the FI's contortions over East Europe, providing a doctrinal precedent for the Healyite position that Castro's Cuba remained a bourgeois state by resuscitating 1948-49 vintage Germain to proclaim the "theory of structural assimilation." (Germain, at least, had had a sense of irony: he referred to the "metaphysics of structural assimilation.")<sup>157</sup> If one had truly "assimilated" the Wohlforthian construct, then one could "explain" the formation of a Yugoslav deformed workers state and the Tito-Stalin split by simply asserting that "Yugoslavia never *fundamentally* left the Soviet camp."<sup>158</sup>

David North, Wohlforth's replacement as Healy's American satrap, eventually turned on his master Healy and proclaimed himself heir to the mantle of the FI. He then published a giant tome, *The Heritage We Defend*, purporting to be "A Contribution to the History of the Fourth International," in which he takes as his own the multiple contradictory positions of the Fourth International on Yugoslavia from July 1948 on. To cover this up, he repeatedly lies about the content of the FI statements by leaving out their most embarrassing parts. Thus he extensively quotes (for several pages) the 13 July 1948 I.S. letter to the Yugoslav CP *without mentioning its call at the end for a common "Leninist International" with Tito*. He favorably cites the Seventh Plenum (April 1949) IEC document on East Europe *without mentioning that it described the "buffer zone" as still capitalist!* Healy/Wohlforth/North give new meaning to the word "charlatan."<sup>159</sup>

On the other hand, during the 1970s and early '80s, a host of centrist groups split off from both the USec and the IC, as well as from the Shachtman currents. Among these split-offs, quite a few suddenly "discovered" that the Fourth International as a

whole supposedly went revisionist over Yugoslavia in 1948, and therefore the 1951-53 split which destroyed the FI was not so important after all, since both Pabloites and anti-Pabloites were supposedly rotten centrists. This list includes, at least:

- the *Class Struggle League (CSL)*, U.S., of the professional ex- and anti-Spartacist Harry Turner;
- the "Chartist" group, Britain;
- the *Spartacus-BL*, West Germany, split from the Internationale Kommunisten Deutschlands, a split-off from the German USec group;
- the *Revolutionary Socialist League (RSL)*, U.S., split from the Shachtmanite International Socialists;
- the *Frazione Marxista Rivoluzionaria (FMR)*, Italy, of Roberto Massari, a split from the Italian USec;
- the *Workers Socialist League (WSL)*, Britain, led by Alan Thornett, which split from Healy's SLL;
- the *Gruppo Bolscevico-Leninista (GBL)*, Italy, of Franco Grisolia, which split from the Italian Lambertistes;
- the *Revolutionary Communist League-Internationalist (RCLI)*, U.S., a New Haven-based split from Sam Marcy's Workers World Party;
- the *Workers International League (WIL)*, Britain, which split from the ex-Healyite Workers Revolutionary Party of Sheila Torrance; and
- Workers Power (WP)*, Britain, which split from Tony Cliff's Socialist Workers Party.

In addition there are their various international lashups, such as the 1976-77 "Necessary International Initiative" (FMR, Spartacus-BL), the "Trotskyist International Liaison Committee" (WSL, GBL, LOB), the "League for a Revolutionary Communist International" (WP) and the "Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency" (WIL).

What's noteworthy about this list, aside from the short lifespan of most of the groups, is their common hatred of the Spartacist League. This is not accidental. A main reason for their neutralist stance on the 1951-53 fight is to deny the revolutionary political continuity of Trotskyism represented by the Spartacist tendency. If the Fourth International had already "degenerated" (WP) over Yugoslavia, or if this was the starting point for the FI's "complete abandonment of Trotskyism" (CSL), they assert, then the fight against Pablo's liquidationism in the '50s did not defend Trotskyism. Hence the RT's fight in the American SWP against the party's Pabloist adaptation to Fidel Castro was of no particular consequence. What this disavowal of the importance of the 1953 split reveals is the utter lack of seriousness of these dilettantes, for whom the destruction of the

Fourth International as the centralized world party of socialist revolution means nothing. Most of these self-styled “theoreticians” fancy themselves as the first Trotskyists since Trotsky (or, in the case of the RSL, the first Trotskyists ever). At least the CSL had the “consistency” to call for a “Fifth International.”

Typically, these groups explain the demise of the Fourth International by a *failure of analysis* and creative thought, rather than seeing that there was a *programmatic fight*, and they offer a recipe reflecting their particular peculiar origins. Thus the ex-Healyite British WSL, in its document on the USec, declares Pabloism to be a “method” reflecting “the ideological approach of the petty bourgeoisie.” The political basis for the 1953 split, they write, “lay implicitly in the revisionist political line that had from early 1950 through to mid 1953 been commonly accepted by the FI leadership,” and which “was first formulated by Pablo at the end of 1949...based on the surface appearances of events in Yugoslavia since the Stalin-Tito split of 1948.” The WSL’s diagnosis is that “The danger of such a method emerging remains acute wherever (for whatever reasons) Trotskyism becomes dependent for its existence upon middle class and intellectual forces.”<sup>160</sup>

More recently, the WIL’s “Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency” analyzed the demise of the Fourth International as a straight line from Yugoslavia to the 1953 split, in which they take a “plague on both your centrist houses” line:

From denying the possibility of Stalinism overturning capitalist property relations, the great majority of the FI’s leading cadre moved over to an accommodation and finally a capitulation to Stalinism, from the adulation of Tito in 1948 to the Third World Congress in 1951....The outcome of the 1953 split between the IS of Pablo and Mandel and the IC of Cannon, Healy and Lambert was two centrist currents, neither of which was capable of honestly assessing—still less correcting—the post-war crisis of the FI, the abandonment of Trotsky’s programme and the failure to meet the political challenge of the world after 1945.<sup>161</sup>

By far the most elaborate of these schemas is that offered by Workers Power, which has published two books supposedly demonstrating the complete “degeneration” of the FI by 1951. In *The Death Agony of the Fourth International and the Tasks of Trotskyists Today*, Workers Power proclaimed that the Fourth International’s post-WWII perspectives were “a combination of dogmatism and blind optimism” which spawned errors that “oscillated between sectarianism and opportunism,” and that eventually “the political vibrations broke up the FI

into two factions both equally tainted with these errors.” Issuing a death certificate, WP places the date of the FI’s demise at its 1951 Third World Congress: “The fact that no section voted against the Yugoslav resolution—the cornerstone of all the errors—is a fact of enormous significance. The FI as a whole had collapsed into centrism.” As for the International Committee, it “did not constitute a ‘left centrist’ alternative to the IS.”<sup>162</sup> Workers Power denies that “the continuity of Trotskyism had been safeguarded” by either side in the 1953 split, rejecting not only calls to “reconstruct” or “reunify” the FI, but *any* attempt to recreate Trotsky’s Fourth International:

Even the apparently more far-reaching call for “the rebirth of the FI” put forward by the Spartacist League (US), was an appeal for the reincarnation of an already degenerate (post-1951) FI.<sup>163</sup>

*Workers Power’s method is profoundly idealist and anti-Marxist.* There were far-reaching errors at the Second (1948) and Third (1951) Congresses of the Fourth International, and an escalating political degeneration as Pabloism took shape over the Yugoslav affair. Pablo certainly had a revisionist program by this time, but the liquidationist implications were in the process of being drawn out. It would be a mistake to equate the fully developed gangrene with the initial infection and its early stages. For one thing, the errors didn’t begin in 1948. The decimated European leadership of the Fourth International was badly disoriented on the direction of developments after 1945, continuing to insist on Trotsky’s perspective that the imperialist war would give rise to proletarian revolutions and bring about the demise of Stalinism. The defeat of the immediate post-war workers’ struggles, and the expansion of Stalin’s zone of domination as a result of the Red Army’s defeat of Hitler, confounded this prediction and confused the FI.

For that matter, we have long disagreed with the SWP’s usage of the slogan for a “Proletarian Military Policy” during World War II. And, of course, it was Trotsky himself who first raised the PMP, calling for trade-union control of military training, although he seemed to be thinking more of a situation of dual power, as in the Spanish Civil War, than of a consolidated bourgeois state.<sup>164</sup> The PMP was a serious deviation which undercut the SWP’s internationalist opposition to the imperialist war. Meanwhile, the French Trotskyists during World War II were split between two wings, one of which (the POI) subordinated its struggle to the Gaullist Resistance movement, while the other wing (the

CCI) limited itself to factory work and largely ignored the struggle against the German occupier.

Does this mean that already by the end of the war the Fourth International had “degenerated”? Lutte Ouvrière would say so; we would not. For at the same time, 18 leaders of the American SWP and the Minneapolis Teamsters were *jailed* by Roosevelt for their opposition to the imperialist war. And the very same wing of the French Trotskyists that capitulated to the bourgeois-nationalist Resistance leadership also carried out the heroic internationalist underground work that produced the *Arbeiter und Soldat* newspaper which circulated clandestinely in German Wehrmacht units in France. Moreover, at the end of the war there was a political reckoning, in which the Fourth International, in founding a fused organization, the Parti Communiste Internationaliste, criticized the weaknesses of both the POI and CCI.

Or let us go back further in history: the Fourth Congress of the Communist International in 1922 passed the famous “Theses on the Eastern Question” containing the call for an “anti-imperialist united front.” These theses were revisionist, laying the basis for popular-front politics in the colonial and backward capitalist countries. This followed on the Baku Congress of the Peoples of the East in 1920, which praised Kemal Pasha (Atatürk), at a time when he was repressing the Turkish Communists, and called for a “*jihad*” (Islamic holy war) against imperialism—also revisionist. The 1922 theses were a foretaste of advancing bureaucratic conservatism in the Comintern. And it was no abstract question: this was the theoretical basis that Stalin used to justify ordering the Chinese Communist Party to join and stay in the bourgeois-nationalist Kuomintang. That led of course to the Shanghai massacre of 1927.

So...at what point do you say that the Comintern and the Bolshevik Party degenerated? In 1922, or even in 1920, when there were revisionist responses on key questions? Or perhaps only in December 1924, when Stalin first formulated his revisionist “theory” of “socialism in one country”? No, *it was in 1923-24, when there was a fight, and the Stalinist-led bureaucracy usurped power, defeating the Bolshevik internationalists.* Likewise, when do you declare the Third International dead for the revolution and call for a new International? Trotsky insisted that only great events could decide such matters, and continued to fight as an expelled faction of the Comintern until 1933, when the CI let Hitler march unopposed to power (and then approved this criminal policy). Moreover, in the case of the Fourth

International, it is not just the question of a date. The FI was destroyed as a world party, but it did not *betray* the revolutionary proletariat; and its leading section, the SWP led by James P. Cannon, despite its many weaknesses, did not succumb to Pabloist liquidationism until some years later.

Serious communists do not write off their international party until it has shown in *deeds* that it is dead for the revolution, that it has *betrayed* the cause of the proletariat and gone over to the side of the bourgeoisie. Lenin continued to fight within the framework of the Second International until the German Social Democrats’ vote for the Kaiser’s war credits on 4 August 1914.

The Fourth International was *destroyed* as the result of the deep inroads of revisionism, but when and where did it *betray* the proletariat in world-historic events like wars or revolutions? Over Yugoslavia? The FI indeed had faulty analyses of East Europe, and it took a capitulatory line toward the Yugoslav leadership in the Stalin-Tito split, yet later drew back empirically under the impact of Yugoslavia’s support for the imperialist “UN” intervention in the Korean War. But such an opportunist political course should lead revolutionaries to wage a faction fight to save the world party of socialist revolution or resuscitate it, rather than to write it off. In fighting to *reforge the Fourth International*, we are continuing Trotsky’s proletarian stand of never abandoning any position until it is definitively lost, just as we fought a last-ditch fight for political revolution against the capitalist-restorationist onslaught in the former Soviet Union. It is not surprising that those who so lightly turn their backs on the Fourth International end up on Yeltsin’s counterrevolutionary barricades.

Workers Power’s most elaborate work arguing the bankruptcy of the Fourth International is *The Degenerated Revolution: The Origins and Nature of the Stalinist States*. In this tome they ascribe the postwar “programmatic confusion amongst those claiming to uphold the banner of Trotskyism” to “an inability to creatively elaborate Trotsky’s own analysis of Stalinism.” More specifically, “no section of the Fourth International (FI), nor any tendencies within the sections, developed a correct appraisal of the role of world Stalinism in East Europe.”<sup>165</sup> That’s not quite true—the Haston/Grant RCP did pretty well, at least on paper. But what WP thinks is a correct analysis is revealed by their statement that they “stand by the programmatic declarations of the 1948 Congress”—including its resolution on world Stalinism proclaiming East European states to

still be *capitalist*!<sup>166</sup> But then we read WP's supposedly creative and correct analysis which declares: "Wherever it occurs and whatever form it takes, Stalinist bureaucratic social revolutions are counter-revolutionary."<sup>167</sup> So there you have it: "counter-revolutionary revolutions"! This isn't dialectics but Stalinophobic flimflamery.

On the empirical level, it is simply false that such bureaucratic, top-down social revolutions are "carried through *against* the prevailing level of consciousness of the forces necessary for the proletarian revolution in the country — ie the working class," as Workers Power asserts.<sup>168</sup> Look at Prague in 1948, which the bourgeoisie described as a "coup." Here the workers responded enthusiastically when the Stalinist tops permitted a limited mobilization to sweep out the remaining bourgeois ministers: "On 21 February 1948 the Communists called on the population to form Committees of Revolutionary Action in the factories, in the local government offices, in towns and villages. Workers militias were quickly formed, to which arms were hastily distributed."<sup>169</sup> These committees and mobilizations, used to carry out a revolutionary overturn of property forms, were *bureaucratically controlled* and manipulated, not *smashed*, as any real counterrevolutionary action would require. More generally, as we pointed out in an article on Workers Power:

What could a counterrevolutionary overturn of capitalism mean — except, perhaps, a return to feudalism? The closest thing to this in recent times was the "Islamic revolution" in Iran. But there WP backed the mullah-led "mass movement" unconditionally, just as they supported Polish Solidarność' full-blown attempt at counterrevolution *despite* admitting the Solidarność leadership was committed to the restoration of capitalism.<sup>170</sup>

Behind this concoction of Stalinist-led "counter-revolutionary revolutions" lies a fundamental rejection of Trotsky's analysis of Stalinism. While claiming to reject the characterization that Stalinism is "counterrevolutionary through and through," WP declares that "Stalinism...is invariably a counter-revolutionary force."<sup>171</sup> Moreover, Workers Power declares, "we reject the notion that Stalinism has a dual nature."<sup>172</sup> One could cite Trotsky's numerous references to the "dual" role/function/position/character of the Stalinist bureaucracy, which are to be found in virtually every work where he analyzed the nature of this contradictory phenomenon. Trotsky emphasized that the bureaucracy is not a stable social formation, such as a class, but an intermediate layer, a parasitic outgrowth of the workers state that arose under certain conditions. Its

contradictory (zigzag) policy is a reflection of its contradictory position. You cannot understand the nature of the Stalinist bureaucracy by abstracting it from its parasitical relationship to the economic foundations of the workers state. In "The Class Nature of the Soviet State," Trotsky wrote that the Stalinist apparatus "defends the proletarian dictatorship with its own methods; but these methods are such as facilitate the victory of the enemy *tomorrow*. Whoever fails to understand this dual role of Stalinism in the USSR has understood nothing."<sup>173</sup> This dialectical understanding is basic to explaining how, under highly exceptional circumstances, the parasitic Stalinist caste could carry out bureaucratically deformed social revolutions such as in East Europe after World War II.

WP rejects the term "deformed workers state," saying Pablo used it to imply that "the bureaucratic deformation of the Yugoslav workers' state was only quantitative" and Yugoslavia was "not in need of political revolution."<sup>174</sup> In any case Pablo's use of the term doesn't invalidate this scientific characterization. In fact, at the Third World Congress Pablo and the rest of the FI termed the East European "buffer zone" deformed workers states and *did* call for political revolution. "*Bureaucratic deformations*," such as Soviet Russia had even under Lenin and Trotsky, are a matter of degree; a *bureaucratically deformed workers state* is something qualitatively different, separated from a revolutionary workers state by a political revolution. Workers Power's preferred term — WP called Yugoslavia a "*degenerate*" workers state — is not a Marxist definition at all but a term of opprobrium. Tito's Yugoslavia didn't degenerate, never having been a workers state based on soviet democracy, guided by revolutionary internationalism. So Workers Power can only mean that Yugoslavia was "degenerate" in the sense of debased, decadent, depraved, dissolute.

The use of such Stalinophobic verbiage by Workers Power, and their proclamation of the "degeneration" of the Fourth International over Yugoslavia, point straight back to their origins in Tony Cliff's International Socialists (now the British SWP). The Cliffites occasionally claim that they originated in a fight against "the shamelessly opportunist support for Tito's Yugoslavia by the rest of the Trotskyist movement."<sup>175</sup> This is a patent falsification. Cliff did not write his document criticizing the FI's line on Eastern Europe until *July 1950*,<sup>176</sup> just at the moment when the Cliffites got themselves expelled from the Fourth International for *publicly repudiating defense of the North Korean deformed workers*

state in the war with U.S. imperialism. In 1948 Tony Cliff was arguing that the Soviet Union (and Yugoslavia and the rest of East Europe) were “state capitalist”! For WP to locate the definitive “collapse” of the FI in 1948-51 is a way of alibiing their own past: it’s no big deal that Cliff was a “Third Campist” if Pablo and Cannon were both centrist revisionists as well. Workers Power’s line also facilitates international lashups: there being no revolutionary political continuity, everyone can wipe out their past and start with a clean slate. As we noted:

Seizing upon the disorientation that gripped the entire world Trotskyist movement in the face of the post-WWII Stalinist overturns of capitalism in East Europe, Workers Power contemptuously dismisses the Trotskyists who fought the liquidationism of Michel Pablo, albeit belatedly, partially and primarily on their own national terrain, and who reconstituted themselves as the IC. Cannon just isn’t up to snuff for Workers Power, because it took him a few years to catch on. But he led a fight to preserve Trotskyism against those who sought to destroy it.<sup>177</sup>

Workers Power (like WIL and the rest of the lot) argues that the Fourth International “degenerated” and “collapsed” because theoretically it just wasn’t “creative” enough to understand the postwar reality. This is the reasoning of self-satisfied petty-bourgeois academics—or, as gadfly gossips of the British Trotskyoid left characterize WP, “1970’s students, becoming Polytechnic lecturers.”<sup>178</sup> Following Trotsky’s principle in the 1939-40 fight against the Shachtman-Burnham opposition—“Any serious factional fight in a party is always in the final analysis a reflection of the class struggle”<sup>179</sup>—a Marxist would ask first what class forces were behind the split in 1953. WP portrays it more or less as Pablo’s Stalinophilia vs. SWP/PCI “Stalinophobia,” responding to the pressures of social democracy. But this ignores a key point: in 1948-51, *both* sides were complicit in tailing after the Stalinist Tito, and the supposed Stalinophobes of the SWP supported Pablo in ordering the French PCI to enter the Stalinist party. In supporting Pablo, Cannon argued that he suspected the French majority (Bleibtreu/Lambert) of...Stalinophobia.

What actually happened was described by the Revolutionary Tendency, precursor of the Spartacist League:

The emergence of Pabloite revisionism pointed to the underlying root of the crisis of our movement: abandonment of a working-class revolutionary perspective. Under the influence of the relative stabilization of capitalism in the industrial states of the West and of the partial success of petit-bourgeois movements in overthrowing imperialist rule in some of the

backward countries, the revisionist tendency within the Trotskyist movement developed an orientation away from the proletariat and toward the petit-bourgeois leaderships.<sup>180</sup>

It is not just a matter of individuals and their thought processes. The person and personality of Stalin were not decisive in explaining the rise of Stalinism, which was the result of the cohering of a conservative bureaucratic layer in an isolated, beleaguered workers state in a backward country. So also, the key to Pabloism was not that individuals became wedded to their peculiar theories, but rather that a liquidationist program reflected the tremendous pressures bearing down on an International consisting of tiny groups of cadres faced with the unexpected expansion of Stalinism and the relative restabilization of imperialism after the first postwar years. Among some of them, this led to doubt in the revolutionary capacity of the proletariat and in their own ability to lead it. And it produced a sharp conflict in the revolutionary party, in which it was necessary to take sides.

This points to a more general question: the relationship of program to theory. Many leftists are wont to cite Lenin’s phrase, “Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement.” Quite true. As he emphasized, “the *role of vanguard fighter can be fulfilled only by a party that is guided by the most advanced theory.*”<sup>181</sup> But over Yugoslavia the FI was faced with a theoretical failure. How do Marxists evaluate this and rectify it? We have synthesized this question in the aphorism, “program generates theory.” This arose in discussions with the Wohlforth group (predecessor of the Workers League) in the early 1960s, with particular reference to Pabloism. Wohlforth had split the Revolutionary Tendency on orders from Gerry Healy, and in acting as Healy’s man he also took on The Leader’s peculiar emphasis on disembodied “theory” as a club to beat opponents.

In discussions with Wohlforth, the Spartacist spokesman made the following point about Lenin’s pre-April 1917 call for the “democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry”: “The Bolsheviks and Lenin had an incorrect theory, a sufficient but not a correct theory, but up to the supreme moment they had the correct political conclusion of not making alliances with the liberals. In 1917 Lenin became a Trotskyist.”<sup>182</sup> (Trotsky, of course, while he had early on worked out the theory of permanent revolution, calling for the proletariat to take power *at the head of the peasantry*, was wrong on the fundamental party question, and not until 1917

did he become a Leninist.)

This question derives from the basic Marxist understanding of knowledge, namely that we know a thing by acting upon it. And program is the means by which the revolutionary party acts upon objective reality. Those who explain the “degeneration” of the FI by its *analytical failure* on Yugoslavia, while dismissing the *programmatic fight* with Pabloism during 1951-53 over the need for an independent Trotskyist vanguard party, proceed in the opposite, idealist, manner, and produce some pretty vacuous theory as a result.

The inroads of Pabloist revisionism in the Fourth International did not lead to a gradual collapse but came to a head in a hard political *fight*, just as is characteristic of the class struggle generally. In that fight, serious Marxists had to take sides against the liquidationists. Subsequently, under similar pressures in the United States, after a decade of McCarthyism, in the early 1960s the SWP’s central leadership belatedly went down the same path Pablo and Germain had followed a decade earlier. And once again that revisionist-liquidationist turn was fought, by the RT which gave rise to the Spartacist tendency and the International Communist League. It is this *political continuity* of Trotskyism that the WP and other revisionists seek to deny.

For Workers Power, the destruction of the Fourth International and the liquidation of independent Trotskyist parties was “the most striking yet superficial aspect of ‘Pabloism’.”<sup>183</sup> Since the FI had already “degenerated” due to an “inability” to “creatively elaborate” Trotsky’s analysis of Stalinism, Workers Power reasons, so what if it was then killed. This petty-bourgeois idealism and disdain for the centrality of the party question—that is, the crisis of revolutionary leadership—is typical for the British pseudo-Trotskyist left. Steeped in years of chummy hobnobbing in the Labour Party milieu—whether “deep entrism” like Grant’s Militant Tendency and a host of USec supporters over the years,

or perpetual “critical support” to Labour in elections à la Workers Power—for them Trotskyism consists of erudite analyses rather than *the fight to build an independent revolutionary vanguard*. And as they belittle Pablo’s liquidation of the party, they liquidate the Trotskyist program.

Thus Workers Power has not only called for a “new” (un-numbered) International, it has also declared the Transitional Program superseded by events since World War II. The *Trotskyist Manifesto*, published by the WP’s League for a Revolutionary Communist International (LRCI) in 1989, dismisses Trotsky’s statement that the productive forces have ceased to grow in the period of capitalism’s death agony, calling this a mere “conjunctural characterisation” which doesn’t take into account the postwar “long boom in the imperialist countries,” which laid the basis for a new surge of reformism. Consequently, rejecting Trotsky’s premise that the conditions for socialist revolution are not only ripe but overripe, these “Trotskyists” reject his central conclusion: “Today it would be wrong,” they assert, “simply to repeat that all contemporary crises are ‘reduced to a crisis of leadership’”<sup>184</sup> (see Appendix II on pages 35-36 of this bulletin).

The proletariat worldwide does indeed face the stark alternative of either socialism or descent into barbarism. And it is precisely the question of leadership that is key. The task that the International Communist League sets itself, in fighting to reforge a Fourth International that Trotsky would have recognized as his own, is to point the way and lead the fight to resolve that burning contradiction, so powerfully stated in the Transitional Program and no less valid today than when it was written: “The historical crisis of mankind is reduced to the crisis of the revolutionary leadership.” As Trotsky defined the central lesson in 1924: “Without a party, apart from a party, over the head of a party, or with a substitute for a party, the proletarian revolution cannot conquer.”<sup>185</sup>

## The British Revolutionary Communist Party

In digging up the history of the discussion in the Fourth International about Yugoslavia and East Europe, we have discovered that the positions of the Haston/Grant RCP were not only ignored, they were systematically *distorted*. Thus Morris Stein claimed, during the continuation of the discussion on East Europe in the SWP leadership, that “To the RCP, Stalinist control of state power also amounts to an automatic social change but they term it a workers’ state.”<sup>186</sup> Ernest Germain (Mandel) likewise claimed that, for the RCP, “Since from all evidence the bourgeoisie of the buffer countries no longer controls the state apparatus which has now fallen into the hands of the Stalinists...it logically follows that the state has ceased being a bourgeois state.”<sup>187</sup>

Following this same characterization, we have ourselves written that:

...the analysis of the British Haston-Grant RCP majority, borrowed by the SWP’s Los Angeles Vern-Ryan grouping, achieved the beginning (but only the beginning) of wisdom in recognizing that in the immediate post-war period an examination of native property forms would hardly suffice since the state power in Eastern Europe was a foreign occupying army, the Red Army.<sup>188</sup>

Yet the RCP’s amendments at the FI’s Second World Congress (which were never published by the SWP) did *not* say that the countries of East Europe became deformed workers states with the Red Army victory in 1945 (as Vern-Ryan did), but rather that this was a process still under way in 1948. As the basis for the overthrow of capitalist rule, the amendments listed not only the preponderance of Soviet military force, but also “the balance of forces between the workers and Stalinist forces and the residues of the ruling class.”<sup>189</sup> Moreover, Bill Hunter’s May 1949 document, written for the RCP majority, noted it was the change in the international situation—namely, the onset of the Cold War—that led Stalin to change his policy from coddling the East European bourgeoisies to expropriating them:

True, for a period there existed Stalinist coalitions with the bourgeoisie, or with the shadow of the bourgeoisie....In the first period following the war, the shadow of the bourgeoisie could have gained and was gaining substance. Given a different relationship of forces internationally, developments could have been entirely different to those which actually took place. However, because it could not afford to share the

power, and because of its struggle against world imperialism, the bureaucracy, calling on the pressure of the masses, shattered the bourgeoisie completely.<sup>190</sup>

It is indeed unfortunate that the RCP’s writings on East Europe and Yugoslavia were ignored, dismissed and largely suppressed. The Haston/Grant grouping was characterized by impressionism, earlier supporting the rightist Goldman/Morrow opposition in 1945-46 and later liquidating into the Labour Party. Moreover, a political tendency is more than just its stated program—and there is much we don’t know about the actual functioning of the Haston/Grant-led RCP. But the struggle in the FI might have followed a different course had their voices been around in 1951-53 to add theoretical understanding to the fight against Pabloism—and Pablo’s bureaucratic treatment of them certainly foreshadowed the organizational methods he was to use again on the French PCI, and attempt to use on the American SWP. It is suggestive that, explaining the “impasse” of the RCP in 1950, Ted Grant pointed first of all to the “capitulation to Tito-Stalinism internationally.” Among the factors which permitted the rise of Stalinist-ruled, bureaucratically deformed workers states in the postwar period, he listed:

The fact that the revolution in China and Yugoslavia could be developed in a distorted and debased character is due to the world factors of

- (a) The crisis of world capitalism.
- (b) The existence of a strong, deformed workers state adjacent to these countries and powerfully influencing the workers’ movement.
- (c) The weakness of the Marxist current of the IVth International.

These factors have resulted in an unparalleled development which could not have been foreseen by any of the Marxist teachers: the extension of Stalinism as a social phenomenon over half Europe, over the Chinese sub-continent and with the possibility of spreading over the whole of Asia.

This poses new theoretical problems to be worked out by the Marxist movement. Under conditions of isolation and of paucity of forces, new historical factors could not but result in a theoretical crisis of the movement, posing the problem of its very existence and survival.<sup>191</sup>

These comments could have been the beginning of wisdom, and they foreshadow in many respects the Spartacist analysis of the formation of a deformed workers state in Cuba a decade later. But by then the ravages of Pabloism had destroyed the Fourth International.

## Workers Power: New International, New Program, New World Reality

In *The Death Agony of the Fourth International*, Workers Power snootily remarks, "The fighting propaganda group is not, for the Spartacists, a vehicle for programmatic re-elaboration (they do not do any)...."<sup>192</sup> Workers Power's own "creative re-elaboration" of Trotskyism leads them quite far afield. Having pronounced the death of the Fourth International due to terminal political degeneration and calling for a new, undefined "revolutionary communist international," Workers Power has also rejected the *program* of Trotsky's FI. In a 1988 article WP honcho Mark Hoskisson called for "re-elaborating the Transitional Programme" on the grounds that since it was written "much has occurred that Trotsky's programme neither foresaw nor prepared for."<sup>193</sup>

But this is no mere "updating." Hoskisson's article rejects the key premise of Trotsky's strategy of world socialist revolution, which was also that of the Communist International in the days of Lenin, to wit:

The economic prerequisite for the proletarian revolution has already in general achieved the highest point of fruition that can be reached under capitalism. Mankind's productive forces stagnate.<sup>194</sup>

Yet, claims Hoskisson, "in the metropolitan countries the second imperialist war was followed by an unprecedented economic boom for almost twenty years." Judging that Trotsky "and the FI as a whole" had "an inadequate understanding" of political economy, this arrogant twit proclaims: "Now, with the reality of the post-war boom behind us, only an idiot, or perhaps a charlatan like Gerry Healy, would describe Trotsky's categorical declaration as correct."<sup>195</sup>

We demonstrated two decades ago that the "long postwar boom," with its periodic crises, is a revisionist myth.<sup>196</sup> But the statement that the productive forces had ceased to grow was not a conjunctural prognosis, it was a characterization of the entire imperialist epoch and the basis for the Fourth International's program for world socialist revolution. Trade unions "can no longer be reformist," wrote Trotsky, "because the objective conditions leave no room for any serious and lasting reforms."<sup>197</sup>

WP, in contrast, claims that the alleged "boom created the conditions for the resurgence of social-democratic reformism."<sup>198</sup> Trotsky argued that "the independence of the trade unions in the class sense, in their relations to the bourgeois state, can, in the present conditions, be assured only by a completely revolutionary leadership, that is, the leadership of the Fourth International."<sup>199</sup> Workers Power calls instead for "developing the tactic of the rank and file movement" as "the united front in the unions."<sup>200</sup>

The Hoskisson article solidarizes with Felix Morrow, who led a rightist social-democratic opposition in the SWP after World War II. While Morrow's immediate economic prognosis turned out to be more accurate than Cannon's prediction of imminent economic crisis, he derived from this a program of democratic demands. Similarly Hoskisson calls for a "strategic retreat" in the postwar period:

The failure to carry out a "strategic retreat" for the imperialist countries by formulating a policy for the unions was mirrored by the failure to re-elaborate the programme to deal with the resurgence of reformism....In place of the *Transitional Programme's* general denunciation of reformism a programme of action utilising the tactics of the united front was required.<sup>201</sup>

Hoskisson then claims that the absence of such a program for a "united front with reformism" was the problem in the Belgian general strike of 1961 and in France 1968. But contrary to the WP myth of a "long boom" filling the sails of reformism and requiring a "strategic retreat" into united-front tactics, what was lacking in Brussels in 1961 and in Paris in 1968 was precisely a revolutionary program for the struggle for power!

Rejecting the Transitional Program's central premise and its central conclusion, Workers Power launches a frontal assault on the founding document of the Fourth International as a program preparing the revolutionary struggle for power. In its stead WP elaborates a "method of transitional demands" leading to a "system of workers control"—that is, dual power in the factories—while relegating socialist revolution to the sweet by-and-by. "Transitional demands...could introduce a reformist led proletariat

to the very need for revolution,” writes Hoskisson, and at some later date, when “the working class, or its vanguard, are fighting in this manner, the transitional programme will be transformed into the programme of soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat.”<sup>202</sup> Wrong. The Transitional Program was written as the program for achieving the dictatorship of the proletariat. As Trotsky wrote, transitional demands are to organize the struggle of the proletariat leading it to the conquest of power: “It is necessary to help the masses in the process of the daily struggle to find the bridge between present demands and the socialist program of the revolution.”<sup>203</sup> While the demise of the Soviet Union and the tendency toward de-industrialization beginning in the older imperialist powers necessitate certain revisions today, the Transitional Program’s central premises and conclusions remain sound.

Hoskisson’s article was the lead-up; *The Trotskyist Manifesto*, published in 1989 by Workers Power’s “League for a Revolutionary Communist International,” is the result. Declaring that “the FI was politically destroyed” in 1951 as the result of “the adoption of a systematic centrist method” whose “first and most dramatic example was that of Yugoslavia,” the WP/LRCI’s new program declares:

Trotsky, in the *Transitional Programme*, remarked that “Mankind’s productive forces stagnate.” This statement was part of a correct perspectival analysis of the 1930s, culminating in the cataclysm of the Second World War. However, no conjunctural or periodic characterisation holds good for an indefinite period....

In a number of major and minor imperialist powers “economic miracles” marked the boom years of the 1950s and 1960s....

During the long boom in the imperialist countries, a prolonged period of relative social peace reigned. This was based on rising real wages, near full employment and, in Europe at least, an unprecedented social welfare system. The Labour and Social Democratic bureaucracies tied the mass workers’ organisations to imperialism.<sup>204</sup>

Here you have the old New Left view of the bought-

off working class and the new rise of reformism producing a prolonged social peace. Just to take the one example of France, this ignores the mammoth 1953 general strike, the miners strike and possibility of a working-class uprising against De Gaulle’s coup in 1958, extensive workers unrest over the Algerian War in the early ’60s, and the prerevolutionary situation of May 1968.

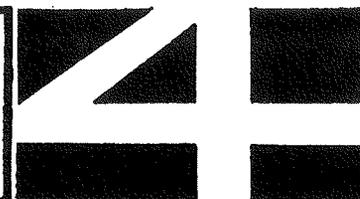
Rejection of Trotsky’s premise is followed by rejection of Trotsky’s revolutionary conclusion as well, writing it off as peculiar to the pre-WWII period. The WP/LRCI program states:

Trotsky’s *Transitional Programme*, written in these years, pronounced that the crisis of humanity was reduced to the crisis of leadership. However, today it would be wrong simply to repeat that all contemporary crises are “reduced to a crisis of leadership.”

The proletariat worldwide does not yet face the stark alternative of either taking power or seeing the destruction of all its past gains.<sup>205</sup>

Try telling that brazen lie to American unionists who have seen a massive onslaught against the unions, whose real wages have fallen steadily for the last two decades; tell it to ghetto black youth, an entire generation that capitalism has thrown on the scrap heap with no hope of ever getting jobs; tell it to British, French and West German workers who have suffered almost a decade of double-digit unemployment; tell it to the working people of East Germany, fully half of whom (and even more among women) have been thrown out of work as a result of the counterrevolution of capitalist reunification; tell it to the immigrant workers, who are the target of racist terror and suffer the sharpest blows of capitalist austerity; tell it to the masses of East Europe, reduced to starvation wages and soup kitchens; tell it to the interpenetrated peoples of Yugoslavia being ripped apart in bloody nationalist war; tell it to the masses of the “Third World,” including tens of millions of industrial workers producing for the imperialist markets, who are sinking ever deeper into immiseration! What profound confidence in capitalism Workers Power has.

# SPARTACIST



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*The SWP and the Fourth International, 1946-54:*

## Genesis of Pabloism

The American Socialist Workers Party and the European Pabloists travelled at different rates along different paths to revisionism, to converge in uneasy alliance in the early 1960's in an unprincipled "reunification," which has now broken down as the American SWP has completed the transition from Pabloist centrism to outright reformism. The "United Secretariat" which issued out of the 1963 "reunification" teeters on the edge of an open split; the "anti-revisionist" "International Committee" fractured last year. The collapse of the various competing pretenders to the mantle of the Fourth International provides a crucial opportunity for the reemergence of an authentic Trotskyist international tendency. Key to the task of reconstructing the Fourth International through a process of splits and fusions is an understanding of the characteristics and causes of Pabloist revisionism and the flawed response of the anti-Pabloists who fought, too little and too late, on national terrain while in practice abandoning the world movement.

### World War II: U.S. and France

Before the onset of the war, Trotsky and the Fourth International had believed that decaying capitalism and the rise of fascism removed the possibility for reformism and therefore for bourgeois-democratic illusions among the masses. Yet they could not but become increasingly aware that the revulsion of the working class against fascism and the threat of fascist occupation gave rise to social chauvinism and a renewal of confidence in the "democratic" bourgeoisie permeating the proletarian masses throughout Europe and the U.S. Faced with such a contradiction, the powerful pressures of nationalist backwardness and democratic illusions in the working class tended to pull the sections of the Fourth International apart, some adopting a sectarian stance, others capitulating to the social patriotism which was rampant among the masses. The SWP briefly adopted the "Proletarian

Military Policy" which called for military training under trade union control, implicitly posing the utopian idea that U.S. workers could fight German fascism without the existence of a workers state in the U.S., through "controlling" U.S. imperialism's army. British Trotskyist Ted Grant went even further, in one speech referring to British imperialism's armed forces as "our Eighth Army." The German IKD returned to outright Menshevism with the theory that fascism had brought about the need for "an intermediate stage fundamentally equivalent to a democratic revolution." ("Three Theses," 19 October 1941)

The French Trotskyist movement, fragmented during the course of the war, was the best example of the contradiction. One of its fragments subordinated the mobilization of the working class to the political appetites of the Gaullist wing of the imperialist bourgeoisie; another grouping renounced any struggle within the resistance movement in favor of work exclusively at the point of production and, not recognizing the existing level of reformist consciousness among the workers, adventurously attempted to seize the factories during the "liberation" of Paris while the working masses were out on the streets. The February 1944 European Conference document which was the basis for a fusion between two French groupings to form the Parti Communiste Internationaliste characterized the two groups:

"Instead of distinguishing between the nationalism of the defeated bourgeoisie which remains an expression of its imperialist preoccupations, and the 'nationalism' of the masses which is only a reactionary expression of their resistance against exploitation by the occupying imperialism, the leadership of the POI considered as progressive the struggle of its own bourgeoisie . . . ."

"the CCI . . . under the pretext of guarding intact the heritage of Marxism-Leninism, refused obstinately to

(Continued next page)

## ...Pabloism

distinguish the nationalism of the bourgeoisie from the resistance movement of the masses."

### I. SWP ISOLATIONISM

European Trotskyism and American Trotskyism responded in initially different ways to different tasks and problems following World War II. The precarious internationalism of the American SWP, maintained through intimate collaboration with Trotsky during his exile in Mexico, did not survive the assassination of Trotsky in 1940 and the onset of world war. The American Trotskyists retreated into an isolation only partially forced upon them by the disintegration of the European sections under conditions of fascist triumph and illegalization.

Anticipating the difficulties of international coordination during the war, a resident International Executive Committee had been set up in New York. Its only notable achievement, however, appears to have been the convening of an "Emergency Conference" of the International, held 19-26 May 1940 "somewhere in the Western Hemisphere," "on the initiative of its U.S., Mexican and Canadian sections." A rump conference attended by less than half of the sections, the "Emergency Conference" was called for the purpose of dealing with the international ramifications of the Shachtman split in the U.S. section, which had resulted in the defection of a majority of the resident IEC. The meeting solidarized with the SWP in the faction fight and reaffirmed

its status as the one U.S. section of the Fourth International. The conference also adopted a "Manifesto of the Fourth International on the Imperialist War and the Proletarian World Revolution" written by Trotsky. Following Trotsky's death, however, the resident IEC lapsed into oblivion.

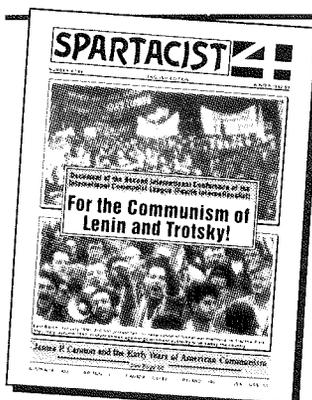
At least in hindsight, the American section of the Fourth International should have initiated a clandestine secretariat in a neutral country in Europe, staffed by qualified SWPers and emigres from other sections, to centralize and directly supervise the work of Trotskyists in fascist-occupied countries. But the SWP was content to limit its international activities during the war to the publication in its internal bulletins of letters and factional documents from European Trotskyists. The passage of the Voorhis Act in 1941 inhibiting U.S. groups from affiliation with international political organizations—a law which to this day has never been tested—also gave the SWP a rationalization for downplaying its international responsibilities.

The SWP's work during the war did evidence an internationalist perspective. SWP longshoremen used the opportunity of ships from Vladivostok docking on the West Coast to clandestinely distribute Trotsky's "Letter to Russian Workers" in Russian to the Soviet seamen. The SWP concentrated its merchant marine comrades on the supply runs to Murmansk until the extremely heavy casualties compelled the party to discontinue the Murmansk concentration. (It was in response to such activities that the GPU was directed to activate the Soblen anti-Trotskyist espionage net. Testimony years afterward revealed that Cannon's telephone was tapped by the GPU and that the business manager of the SWP's **Fourth International** magazine, one "Michael Cort," was one

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of the GPU agents.) But the maintenance and direction of the Fourth International was part of the SWP's internationalist responsibility, and should have been a priority as urgent as the work which the SWP undertook on its own.

The leadership of the SWP came through the war period essentially intact, but reinforced in its insularity and ill-equipped theoretically to deal with the post-war situation.

During the later years of the war and the immediate post-war period, the SWP had registered some impressive successes in implanting its cadres in industry during the boom and in recruiting a new layer of proletarian militants drawn to the Trotskyists because of their opposition to the Communist Party's policies of social patriotism and class peace.

### Optimism and Orthodoxy

The SWP entered the post-war period with buoyant optimism about the prospects for proletarian revolution. The 1946 SWP Convention and its resolution, "The Coming American Revolution," projected the indefinite continuation of successes for the SWP. The isolationist perspective of the Party was in evidence at the Convention. The necessarily international character of crises and revolutions is recognized, but not the concomitant international character of the vanguard party. The resolution in effect makes excuses for the political backwardness of the U.S. working class while praising its militancy and presents the following syllogism: the decisive battles of the world revolution will be fought in the advanced countries where the means of production are highly developed and the proletariat powerful—above all in the U.S.; therefore all that is necessary is to build the American revolution and world capitalism will be overthrown. Profound impressionism led the SWP to see the world through the eyes of American capitalism which had emerged from the war as the unquestioned pre-eminent capitalist world power.

The post-war stabilization of European capitalism, the emergence of the Stalinist parties as the dominant reformist workers parties in Europe, the expansion of Stalinism in Eastern Europe (apparently flying in the face of the Trotskyist analysis that Stalinism could only betray), the destruction of capitalism by peasant-based nationalist-Stalinist formations in Yugoslavia and China—all these developments posed new theoretical problems for the Trotskyist movement which the SWP, stripped of a layer of talented intellectuals by the petty-bourgeois Shachtman split and shortly thereafter deprived of Trotsky's guidance, could not handle. The SWP's immediate response was to retreat into a sterile "orthodoxy" stripped of real theoretical content, thus rendering its isolation more complete.

The 1950's brought a new wave of spontaneous working-class struggles in West and East Europe, but to the SWP they brought the onset of the Cold War witchhunt: the Smith Act prosecutions of CPers and former CPers; the deadening of every aspect of social and intellectual life; the relentless purge of known "reds" and militants from the union movement, severing the SWP's connection with the working-class movement which had taken years to build up; the dropping away of the whole layer of workers recruited to the SWP during the late 1940's. The objective pressure to become a mere cheering section for European and colonial

developments was strong but the SWP hung on to its verbal orthodox commitment to making the American revolution.

## II. THE BREAK IN CONTINUITY IN EUROPE

The vulnerability of the European Trotskyist movement to revisionism hinged on the historic weaknesses of the European organizations combined with the thorough shattering of their continuity to the earlier period. When Trotsky in 1934 launched the struggle to found the Fourth International, the European working class, confronted with the decisive choice of socialism or barbarism, lacked a communist leadership. The task facing the Fourth Internationalists was clear: to mobilize the class against the threat of fascism and

**"By its very nature opportunism is nationalistic, since it rests on the local and temporary needs of the proletariat and not on its historic tasks. Opportunists find international control intolerable and they reduce their international ties as much as possible to harmless formalities . . . on the proviso that each group does not hinder the others from conducting an opportunist policy to its own national task. . . . International unity is not a decorative facade for us, but the very axis of our theoretical views and our policy. Meanwhile there are not a few ultra-Lefts . . . [who] carry on a semi-conscious struggle to split up the Communist Opposition into independent national groups and to free them from international control."**

(Leon Trotsky, "The Defense of the Soviet Union and the Opposition," 7 September 1929)

**"We stand not for democracy in general but for *centralist* democracy. It is precisely for this reason that we place national leadership above local leadership and international leadership above national leadership."**

(Leon Trotsky, "An Open Letter to All Members of the Leninbund," 6 February 1930)

war, to amass the cadres for the world revolutionary party which would stand for proletarian internationalism in the face of the march toward imperialist war and the social chauvinist capitulation of the Second and Third Internationals. But Trotsky had noted the immense difficulty for the conscious vanguard to go forward in a period of crushing defeat for the class and the "terrible disproportion between the tasks and the means." ("Fighting Against the Stream," April 1939) The weakness of the European movement was exemplified by the French section, which was repeatedly criticized by Trotsky and whose petty-bourgeois "workerist" deviation and diletantism were the subject of a special resolution at the founding conference of the Fourth International in 1938.

The Fourth International geared itself up for the decisive struggle against fascism and war—and lost. During the course of the war and the Nazi occupations the very rudiments of international, and even national, coordination were destroyed. The International disintegrated into small groups of militants pursuing improvised policies: some opportunist, some heroic. The 65 French and German comrades who were

(Continued next page)

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shot by the Gestapo in July 1943 because of their revolutionary defeatist fraternization and the building of a Trotskyist cell in the German armed forces are a monument to the internationalist courage of a weak revolutionary movement fighting against insurmountable odds.

### Trotskyist Cadres Decimated

In August 1943 an attempt was made to reestablish the rudiments of organization in Europe. The European Secretariat set up at this meeting in Belgium included exactly one surviving member of the pre-war leadership and largely as a result of the nonexistence of tested cadres, Michel Pablo (*Raptis*), a skilled clandestine organizer not known for ability as a political leader or theoretician, emerged as the head of the International. When in June 1945 a European Executive Committee met to prepare for the holding of a World Congress, the experienced leading cadres and the most promising of the young Trotskyists (A. Leon, L. Lesoil, W. Held) had been killed at the hands of the Nazis or the GPU. The continuity of Trotskyism in Europe had been broken. This tragic process was duplicated elsewhere with the imprisonment and eventual execution of Ta Thu-tau and the Vietnamese Trotskyists, the virtual extinction of the Chinese Trotskyists and the liquidation of the remaining Russian Trotskyists (including, besides Trotsky, Ignace Reiss, Rudolf Klement and Leon Sedov). The Europeans were apparently so starved for experienced leading cadres that Pierre Frank (leading member of the Molinier group which Trotsky denounced as "demoralized centrists" in 1935 and expelled in 1938 for refusing to break with the French social-democracy after the "French Turn") was enabled to become a leader of the post-war French section.

At this crucial juncture the intervention and leadership of a truly internationalist American Trotskyist party might have made a great difference. But the SWP, which should have assumed leadership in the International throughout the war years, was sunk in its own national preoccupations. Cannon noted later that the SWP leadership had deliberately built up Pablo's authority, even going "so far as to soft-pedal a lot of our differences" (June 1953). The urgent responsibility of the SWP, which whatever its deficiencies was the strongest and most experienced Trotskyist organization, was precisely the opposite.

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### III. ORTHODOXY REASSERTED

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The immediate task facing the Trotskyists after the war was to reorient its cadres and reassess the situation of the vanguard and the class in light of previous projections. The Trotskyists' expectations of tottering West European capitalist regimes and the renewal of violent class struggle throughout Europe, and especially in Germany where the collapse of Nazi state power left a vacuum, had been confirmed. However the reformists, particularly the Stalinist parties, reasserted themselves to contain the spontaneous working-class upsurges. Control of the French working class through the CGT passed from the social democracy (SFIO) which had controlled the CGT before the war to the French Stalinists. Thus despite the manifest revolutionary spirit of the European working class and the great waves of general

strikes, especially in France, Belgium, Greece and Italy, throughout West Europe, the proletariat did not take power and the Stalinist apparatus emerged with new strength and solidity.

The Fourth International responded by falling back on sterile orthodoxy and stubborn refusal to believe that these struggles had been defeated for the immediate period:

"Under these conditions partial defeats... temporary periods of retreat... do not demoralize the proletariat... The repeated demonstration by the bourgeoisie of its inability to restabilize an economy and political regime of the slightest stability offers the workers new opportunities to go over to even higher stages of struggle.

"The swelling of the ranks of the traditional organizations in Europe, above all the Stalinist parties... has reached its peak almost everywhere. The phase of decline is beginning."

(European Executive Committee, April 1946)

Right-opportunist critics in the Trotskyist movement (the German IKD, the SWP's Goldman-Morrow faction) were correct in noting the over-optimism of such an analysis and in pointing out that the traditional reformist leaderships of the working class are always the first inheritors of a renewal of militancy and struggle. Their "solution," however, was to argue for a limitation of the Trotskyist program to bourgeois-democratic demands, and such measures as critical support to the post-war French bourgeois Constitution. Their advocacy of an entrism policy toward the European reformist parties was dismissed out of hand by the majority, which expected the workers to more or less spontaneously regroup under the Trotskyist banner. This attitude prepared the way for a sharp reversal on the entrism question when the implicit position of ignoring the reformists' influence could no longer be maintained.

The Fourth International's immediate post-war perspective was summed up by Ernest Germain (Mandel) in an article called "The First Phase of the European Revolution" (*Fourth International*, August 1946). The title already implies the outlook: "the revolution" was implicitly redefined as a metaphysical process enduring continuously and progressing inevitably toward victory, rather than a sharp and necessarily time-limited confrontation over the question of state power, the outcome of which will shape the entire subsequent period.

### Stalinophobia

The later, Pabloist, capitulation to Stalinism was prepared by impressionistic overstatement of its opposite: Stalinophobia. In November 1947 Pablo's International Secretariat wrote that the Soviet Union had become:

"a workers state degenerated to the point where all progressive manifestations of the remains of the October conquest are more and more neutralized by the disastrous effects of the Stalinist dictatorship."

"What remains of the conquests of October is more and more losing its historic value as a premise for socialist development."

"... from the Russian occupation forces or from pro-Stalinist governments, which are completely reactionary, we do not demand the expropriation of the bourgeoisie..."

Within the SWP, the rumor circulated that Cannon was flirting with the characterization that the Soviet Union had become a **totally** degenerated workers state, i.e., a "state

capitalist” regime—a position which Natalia Trotsky shortly embraced.

On the question of the Stalinist expansion into East Europe, the Fourth International was united in simple-minded orthodoxy. An extensive discussion of “The Kremlin in Eastern Europe” (*Fourth International*, November 1946) by E. R. Frank (Bert Cochran) was shrill in anti-Stalinist tone and tended toward the view that the countries occupied by the Red Army would be deliberately maintained as capitalist states. A polemic against Shachtman by Germain dated 15 November 1946 was still more categorical: the theory of “a degenerated workers state being installed in a country where there has not yet previously been a proletarian revolution” is dismissed, simply, as “absurd.” And Germain rhetorically queries, “Does [Shachtman] really think that the Stalinist bureaucracy has succeeded in overthrowing capitalism in half of our continent?” (*Fourth International*, February 1947)

The methodology here is the same as that pursued, more cynically, by the “International Committee” in later years over the question of Cuba (perplexed? then deny reality!) with the difference that the class character of East Europe, with capitalist economic institutions but the state power held by the occupying army of a degenerated workers state, was far more difficult to understand. Empiricists and renegades, of course, had no difficulty in characterizing the East European states:

“Everyone knows that in the countries where the Stalinists have taken power they have proceeded, at one or another rate of speed, to establish exactly the same economic, political, social regime as exists in Russia. Everyone knows that the bourgeoisie has been or is rapidly being expropriated, deprived of all its economic power, and in many cases deprived of mortal existence. . . . Everyone knows that what remnants of capitalism remain in those countries will not even be remnants tomorrow, that the whole tendency is to establish a social system identical with that of Stalinist Russia.”

(Max Shachtman, “The Congress of the Fourth International,” October 1948 *New Internationalist*)

Excruciating as this ridicule must have been for them, however, the orthodox Trotskyists were trapped in their analysis because they could not construct a theory to explain the East Europe transformation without embracing non-revolutionary conclusions.

Germain, as was typical for him in those years, at least posed the theoretical dilemma clearly: is the Trotskyist understanding of Stalinism correct if Stalinism shows itself willing in some cases to accomplish any sort of anti-capitalist social transformation? Clinging to orthodoxy, the Trotskyists had lost a real grasp of theory and suppressed part of Trotsky’s *dialectical* understanding of Stalinism as a parasitic and counter-revolutionary caste sitting atop the gains of the October Revolution, a kind of treacherous middle-man poised between the victorious Russian proletariat and world imperialism. Having thus reduced dialectical materialism to static dogma, their disorientation was complete when it became necessary to answer Germain’s question in the affirmative, and the way was prepared for Pabloist revisionism to leap into the theoretical void.

#### Fourth International Flirts with Tito

Virtually without exception the Fourth International was disoriented by the Yugoslav revolution. After some twenty

years of Stalinist monolithism, the Trotskyists were perhaps ill-disposed to scrutinize the anti-Stalin Yugoslav CP too carefully. The Yugoslav Titoists were described as “comrades” and “left centrists,” and Yugoslavia as “a workers state established by a proletarian revolution.” In one of several “Open Letters” to Tito, the SWP wrote: “The confidence of the masses in it [“your party”] will grow enormously and it will become the effective collective expression of the interests and desires of the proletariat of its country.” The Yugoslav revolution posed a new problem (later recapitulated by the Chinese, Cuban and Vietnamese experiences): unlike East Europe, where the social transformations were accomplished by the army of a foreign degenerated workers state, the Yugoslav revolution was clearly an indigenous social revolution which, without the intervention of the working class or the direction of a Trotskyist party, succeeded in establishing a (deformed) workers state. The Fourth International avoided the theoretical problem by dubbing the revolution “proletarian” and the Titoists “left centrists.” (The SWP avoided the question of China by refusing to unambiguously characterize the Maoist regime as a deformed workers state until 1955. As late as 1954 two articles by the Phillips tendency, characterizing China as state capitalist, were published in the SWP’s *Fourth International*.)

Again orthodoxy is maintained but robbed of its content. The impulse, resisted until Pablo was to give it consistent expression, was that the ability of non-proletarian, non-Trotskyist forces to accomplish any form of social overturn robbed the Fourth International of its reason for existence. The crucial qualitative distinction between a workers state and a deformed workers state—demarcated in blood in the need for **political revolution** to open the road to socialist development and the extension of the revolution abroad—had been lost.

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#### IV. PABLOISM CONQUERS

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The numerically weak, socially isolated, theoretically unarmed and inexperienced cadres of the post-war Fourth International were easy prey for disorientation and impatience in a situation of repeated pre-revolutionary upsurges whose course they could not influence. Beginning in early 1951 a new revisionism, Pabloism, began to assert itself, responding to the frustrating objective situation by posing an *ersatz* way out of the isolation of the Fourth International from the main motion of the working class. Pabloism was the generalization of this impulse in a revisionist body of theory offering impressionistic answers which were more consistent than the one-sided orthodoxy of the early post-war Fourth International.

It is crucial that the organizational weakness, lack of deep roots in the proletariat and theoretical incapacity and disorientation which were the **precondition** for the revisionist degeneration of the Fourth International not be simply equated with the consolidation and victory of that revisionism. Despite grave political errors, the Fourth International in the immediate post-war period was still revolutionary. The SWP and the International clung to sterile orthodoxy as a talisman to ward off non-revolutionary conclusions from

(Continued next page)

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world events which they could no longer comprehend. History had demonstrated that at crucial junctures revolutionary Marxists have been able to transcend an inadequate theory: Lenin before April 1917 was theoretically unequipped to project a proletarian revolution in a backward country like Russia; Trotsky until 1933 had equated the Russian Thermidor with a return to capitalism. Pabloism was more than a symmetrical false theory, more than simply an impressionistic over-reaction against orthodoxy; it was a theoretical justification for a non-revolutionary impulse based on giving up a perspective for the construction of a proletarian vanguard in the advanced or the colonial countries.

In January 1951 Pablo ventured into the realm of theory with a document called "Where Are We Going?" Despite whole paragraphs of confused crackpotism and virtually meaningless bombast, the whole revisionist structure emerges:

- "The relation of forces on the international chess-board is now evolving to the disadvantage of imperialism.
- "An epoch of transition between capitalism and socialism, an epoch which has already begun and is quite advanced . . . . This transformation will probably take an entire period of several centuries and will in the meantime be filled with forms and regimes transitional between capitalism and socialism and necessarily deviating from 'pure' forms and norms.
- "The objective process is in the final analysis the sole determining factor, overriding all obstacles of a subjective order.
- "The Communist Parties retain the possibility in certain circumstances of roughly outlining a revolutionary orientation."

Pablo's elevation of the "objective process" to "the sole determining factor" reducing the subjective factor (the consciousness and organization of the vanguard party) to irrelevance, the discussion of "several centuries" of "transition" (later characterized by Pablo's opponents as "centuries of deformed workers states") and the suggestion that revolutionary leadership might be provided by the Stalinist parties rather than the Fourth International—the whole analytic structure of Pabloist revisionism emerged.

In another document, "The Coming War," Pablo put forward his policy of "entrism *sui generis*" (entrism of its own kind):

- "In order to integrate ourselves into the real mass movement, to work and to remain in the masses' trade unions for example, 'ruses' and 'capitulations' are not only acceptable but necessary."

In essence, the Trotskyists were to abandon the perspective of short-term entrism whose purpose had always been to split the working-class organizations on a hard programmatic basis as a tactic for building the Trotskyist party. The new entrism policy flowed directly from Pablo's analysis. Since the asserted shift in the world relationship of forces in favor of the advance of the revolution would compel the Stalinist parties to play a revolutionary role, it was only logical that the Trotskyists should be a part of such parties pursuing essentially a policy of pressuring the Stalinist apparatus.

All this should have exploded a bomb in the heads of the

international Trotskyist cadres. Pablo was after all the head of the International Secretariat, the resident political body of the Fourth International! But there is little evidence of even alarm, let alone the formation of the international anti-revisionist faction which was required. One long document by Ernest Germain ("Ten Theses"), and perhaps some subterranean rumbling, did force Pablo to produce an attempt at orthodoxy on the question of the "transitional period" but no other literary notice was taken of Pablo's most overt assault against the program of Trotskyism.

### Germain Resists

In March 1951 Germain produced "Ten Theses," which was a veiled attack on "Where Are We Going?" but did not attack Pablo or the document by name. Germain restated the Marxist use of "transitional period" as the period between the victory of the revolution (the dictatorship of the proletariat) and the achievement of socialism (the classless society). Without any explicit reference to Pablo's position, he wrote: "No more than the bourgeoisie will it [Stalinism] survive a war which will be transformed into a world upsurge of the revolution." Germain insisted on the contradictory Bonapartist character of Stalinism, based on proletarian property forms while safeguarding the privileged position of the bureaucracy against the workers. He emphasized the dual nature of the mass CPs outside the USSR as determined by their proletarian base on the one hand and their subservience to the Stalinist bureaucracies in power on the other.

Germain attempted to present the orthodox response to the Pabloist impulse that the destruction of capitalism in Eastern Europe, China and Yugoslavia without a Trotskyist leadership made the Fourth International superfluous. Again, he did not refer to the positions he was attacking; one would have thought that the "Ten Theses" simply dropped from the sky as an interesting theoretical exercise, rather than in response to the emergence of a revisionist current completely counterposed to Germain's thrust. Insisting that a new worldwide revolutionary upsurge would not stabilize Stalinism but rather was a mortal danger to it, he wrote:

- "It is because the new revolutionary wave contains in embryo the destruction of the Stalinist parties as such that we ought to be much closer today to the Communist workers. This is only one phase of our fundamental task: to construct new revolutionary parties . . ." [our emphasis]

"To be 'closer to the Stalinist workers' then signifies at the same time to affirm more than ever our own program and our own Trotskyist policy."

The "Ten Theses" showed that all wings of the Trotskyist movement were still incapable of grasping the nature of the social transformations which had occurred in Eastern Europe (although the analysis of the British Haston-Grant RCP majority, borrowed by the SWP's Los Angeles Vern-Ryan grouping, achieved the beginning (but only the beginning) of wisdom in recognizing that in the immediate post-war period an examination of native property forms would hardly suffice since the state power in Eastern Europe was a foreign occupying army, the Red Army). In 1951 Germain still considered the process of "structural assimilation" uncompleted (!) and predicted the assimilation of the armies of the East European states into the Soviet army—i.e., that Eastern Europe would simply be incorporated into the Soviet Union.

Germain did recognize that the transformation in Eastern Europe destroyed capitalism but contained within it, even in victory, a decisive bureaucratic obstacle to socialist development; he stressed that the expansion of the USSR's non-capitalist mode of production "is infinitely less important than the destruction of the living workers' movement which has preceded it."

No such inbuilt obstacle was recognized with regard to China and, especially, Yugoslavia. The Trotskyists were unable to disassociate the phenomenon of Stalinism from the person of Stalin; the Titoists' break from the Kremlin obscured any recognition that Yugoslavia would necessarily pursue qualitatively identical domestic and diplomatic policies in safeguarding the interest of its own national bureaucratic regime against the working class. Uneasy about admitting that Stalinist forces heading peasant masses could ever consummate an anti-capitalist revolution, Germain in "Ten Theses" termed both the Yugoslav and Chinese events **proletarian** revolutions and also argued that "under such conditions, these parties cease being Stalinist parties in the classical sense of the term."

Whereas Pablo took these events as the new revolutionary model which invalidated "pure" forms and norms" (i.e., the Russian Revolution) Germain—again without referring to Pablo—stressed that they were as a result of exceptional circumstances which in any case would not be relevant to advanced industrial countries. He contrasted "the de facto United Front which today exists between the colonial revolutions in Asia and the Soviet bureaucracy, which has its objective origin in their being both menaced by imperialism..." with the possibilities for Europe. He concurred in the prediction of an imminent World War III between "the united imperialist front on the one hand and the USSR, the buffer countries and the colonial revolutions on the other" but rather than hailing it, termed it a **counter-revolutionary** war.

The crux of Germain's argument was:

"What matters above all in the present period is to give the proletariat an international leadership capable of coordinating its forces and proceeding to the world victory of communism. The Stalinist bureaucracy, forced to turn with a blind fury against the first victorious proletarian revolution outside the USSR [Yugoslavia!], is socially incapable of accomplishing any such task. Herein lies the historical mission of our movement... The historical justification for our movement... resides in the incapacity of Stalinism to overturn world capitalism, an incapacity rooted in the social nature of the Soviet bureaucracy."

With the advantage of hindsight and the experience of the past 20 years—the counter-revolutionary nature of Stalinism reaffirmed most clearly in Hungary in 1956; the 1960 Cuban revolution in which petty-bourgeois nationalism at the head of peasant guerillas uprooted capitalism only to merge with the Stalinist apparatus internally and internationally; the consistently nationalist and Stalinist policies of the Chinese CP in power—it is easy to recognize that "Ten Theses" is flawed in its analysis and predictions. What is much more important, however, is the document's consistent and deliberate non-factional tone which presaged Germain's refusal to place himself in the anti-Pabloist camp. Divorced from the determination to fight for a correct line in the

Fourth International, Germain's theoretical defense of the necessity of Trotskyism meant very little. This was Pabloism merely at one remove, the denial of the subjective factor in the revolutionary process.

### Third World Congress

The Third World Congress of the Fourth International was held in August-September 1951. The main political report attempted to distinguish between the Communist Parties and "reformist parties" on the grounds that only the former were contradictory, and projected that under the pressure of a strong mass upsurge the CPs could become revolutionary parties. The opportunist nature of Pablo's version of an entrism tactic was sharply revealed in the repudiation of the principled entrism goal of sharp polarization and split: "The possibilities of important splits in the CPs... are replaced by a leftward movement within the CPs among its rank and file." There was no recognition of decisive deformations in the East European and Chinese workers states; thus implicitly the Congress posed only a **quantitative** difference between the Soviet Union of Lenin and the degenerated and deformed workers states. The report projected the possibility that Tito might "head a regroupment of revolutionary forces independent of capitalism and of the Kremlin... playing a major role in the formation of a new revolutionary leadership." There was no mention of the perspective of permanent revolution for the colonial countries.

The application of Pablo's policy of "entrism *sui generis*" was elaborated in the Austrian Commission:

"The activity of our members in the SP will be governed by the following directives: A. Not to come forward as Trotskyists with our full program. B. Not to push forward programmatic and principled questions..."

No quantity of verbal orthodoxy in resolutions could have any longer obscured the vision of those who wanted to see.

The Parti Communiste Internationaliste of France submitted Germain's "Ten Theses" for a vote (after Germain himself had apparently backed out of doing so) and proposed amendments to the main document. No vote was taken on the "Ten Theses" or the French amendments. The PCI voted against adopting the thrust of the main document; it was the only section to do so.

In the months that followed, the Pabloist line was elaborated along the lines already made clear before and at the Third World Congress:

"We are entering [the Stalinist parties] in order to remain there for a long time banking on the great possibility of seeing these parties, placed under new conditions ["a generally irreversible pre-revolutionary period"], develop centrist tendencies which will lead a whole stage of the radicalization of the masses and of the objective revolutionary processes..."

(Pablo, Report to the 10th Plenum of the International Executive Committee, February 1952)

"Caught between the imperialist threat and the colonial revolution, the Soviet bureaucracy found itself obliged to ally with the second against the first... The disintegration of Stalinism within these parties ought not to be understood... as an organizational disintegration... or a

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## ...Pabloism

public break with the Kremlin but as a progressive internal transformation.”

(“The Rise and Decline of Stalinism,” International Secretariat, September 1953)

### V. THE ANTI-PABLOISTS

With the capitulation of Germain, whose role in the preliminary conflicts over Pabloist policies is ambiguous but in whom the French appear to have placed some degree of confidence, the task of fighting Pabloism fell to the French PCI majority of Bleibtreu-Lambert and the American SWP. Despite a considerable body of mythology to the contrary, both the PCI and SWP vacillated when revisionism manifested itself at the head of the Fourth International, balking only at applying it to their own sections. Both groups compromised themselves by uneasy acquiescence (combined in the case of the PCI with sporadic resistance) to Pablo's policies until the suicidal organizational consequences to their sections necessitated sharp fights. Both abdicated the responsibility to take the fight against revisionism into every body and every section of the Fourth International and both retreated from the struggle by the foundation of the “International Committee” on the basis of “the principles of orthodox Trotskyism.” The IC from its inception was only a paper international tendency consisting of those groups which had already had splits between pro-Pabloist and orthodox wings.

#### PCI Fights Pablo

The PCI majority, having been placed in receivership by the International Secretariat (which had installed the Pablo-loyal minority led by Mestre and Frank as the leadership of the French section), continued to claim agreement with the line of the Third World Congress, arguing that Pablo and the IS and IEC were violating its decisions! According to the French, Pabloism “utilizes the confusions and contradictions of the World Congress—where it could not impose itself—in order to assert itself after the World Congress.” (undated “Declaration of the Bleibtreu-Lambert Tendency on the Agreements Concluded at the IEC,” March or April 1952)

An important letter dated 16 February 1952 from Renard on behalf of the PCI majority to Cannon appealed to the SWP. Renard's letter claimed agreement with the Third World Congress, including its French Commission, and contrasted the supposedly non-Pabloist World Congress (citing vague platitudes to demonstrate its presumably orthodox thrust) with Pablo's subsequent actions and line in the IEC and IS. Renard asserted that “Pabloism did not win out at the Third World Congress.” (He wisely did not attempt to explain why his organization voted against the main Congress documents!) The main argument of the letter is an appeal against the Pabloist international leadership's intervention into the French national section.

Cannon's reply of 29 May accused the PCI majority of Stalinophobic opportunism in the union movement (a bloc with progressive anti-communists against the CP) and denied the existence of any such thing as Pabloism.

The PCI majority evidenced a clear understanding of the

implications of the Pabloist entrisism. In a polemic against minority theoretician Mestre the majority had written:

“If these ideas are correct, stop chattering about the tactic of entrisism, even entrisism *sui generis*, and pose clearly our new tasks: that of a more consistent **tendency**, not even a left opposition... whose role is to aid **Stalinism** to overcome its hesitation and to pose under the best conditions the decisive clash with the bourgeoisie... If Stalinism has changed... [it means that] it no longer reflects the particular interests of a bureaucratic caste whose very existence depends on the unstable equilibrium between classes, that it is no longer bonapartist, but that it reflects solely... the defense of the workers state. That such a transformation should be produced without the intervention of the Soviet proletariat... but on the contrary by an **evolution of the bureaucracy** itself... would lead us not merely to revise the Transitional Program [but] all the works of Leon Trotsky since 1923 and the foundation of the Fourth International.”

(“First Reflections of Zig Zag,” PCI Internal Bulletin No. 2, February 1952)

But the PCI majority, not unlike the SWP, demonstrated a failure of concrete internationalism when faced with the prospect of all alone carrying through the fight against Pabloism.

On 3 June 1952 the PCI majority asked for recognition of two French sections of the Fourth International, thus permitting the PCI majority to carry out its own policies in France. This was in clear violation of the founding statutes of the Fourth International and meant the liquidation of the International as a disciplined world body. What was required was an **international** faction fight over the political line of the Fourth International. But the PCI majority was unwilling to subordinate work in France to the crucial fight for the legitimacy and continuity of the Fourth International. Pablo's refusal to accede to this demand led directly to the split of the PCI majority.

#### SWP Enters the Struggle

The SWP only joined the fight against revisionism when a pro-Pabloist tendency, the Clarke wing of the Cochran-Clarke faction, manifested itself within the American party. In his reply to Renard dated 29 May 1952 Cannon had said:

“We do not see [“any kind of pro-Stalinist tendency”] in the International leadership of the Fourth International nor any sign nor symptom of it. We do not see any revisionism [in the documents]... we consider these documents to be completely Trotskyist... It is the unanimous opinion of the leading people in the SWP that the authors of these documents have rendered a great service to the movement.”

The story that the SWP had prepared some amendments to the Third World Congress documents which Clarke (SWP representative to the International) had burned instead of presenting is quite possibly true but not very significant, in view of Cannon's declaration of political allegiance to Pablo when it counted, in refusing to solidarize with the anti-Pabloist PCI majority.

Against Cochran-Clarke's advocacy of an orientation toward the CP fellow-travellers, the SWP majority affirmed support to the Pabloist CP entrisism tactic in general but insisted on a kind of American exceptionalism, contrasting the mass European parties with the pathetic American CP milieu, lacking a working-class base and peopled with shoddy

third-rate intellectuals.

In response to the Cochran-Clarke threat, Cannon set about forming a faction in the SWP aided by the Weiss leadership in Los Angeles. Cannon sought to line up the old party cadre around the question of conciliation to Stalinism and appealed to the party trade unionists like Dunne and Swaback by drawing an analogy between the need for factional struggle within the party and the struggle within the class against the reformists and sellouts as parallel processes of factional struggle against alien ideology. He told the May 1953 SWP Plenum:

“During the course of the past year, I had serious doubts of the ability of the SWP to survive . . . I thought that our 25 year effort . . . had ended in catastrophic failure, and that, once again, a small handful would have to pick up the pieces and start all over again to build the new cadre of another party on the old foundations.”

(Closing speech, 30 May)

But Cannon chose another road. Instead of pursuing the necessary struggle wherever it might lead, Cannon made a bloc with the Dobbs-Kerry-Hansen apparatus over the organizationally liquidationist implications of the Cochran-Clarke line. In return for their support Cannon promised the routinist, conservative Dobbs administration total control of the SWP with no further interference from him (“a new regime in the party”).

The SWP’s response to finding the dispute in the International reflecting itself inside the American section was to deepen its isolationism into virulent anti-internationalism. Cannon’s speech to the SWP majority caucus on 18 May 1953 stated, “We don’t consider ourselves an American branch office of an international business firm that receives orders from the boss” and extolled discussion in which “we work out, if possible [!], a common line.” Cannon denied the legitimacy of an international leadership and referred to “a few people in Paris.” He contrasted the Fourth International with Lenin’s Comintern, which had state power and a leadership whose authority was widely recognized, and thus denied that the contemporary Fourth International could be a democratic centralist body.

Cannon belatedly took exception to Pablo’s conduct against the French majority, but only over the organizational question in keeping with the proposition that the International leadership should not intervene in the affairs of national sections. He wrote:

“... we were flabbergasted at the tactics used in the recent French conflict and split, and at the inconceivable organizational precedent established there. That is why I delayed my answer to Renard so long. I wanted to help the IS politically, but I didn’t see how I could sanction the organizational steps taken against the majority of an elected leadership. I finally resolved the problem by just ignoring that part of Renard’s letter.”

(“Letter to Tom,” 4 June 1953)

The “Letter to Tom” also reiterated the position that the Third World Congress was not revisionist.

The crucial defects in the anti-Pabloist struggle of the PCI and SWP were duly utilized by the Pabloists. The 14th IEC Plenum took Cannon to task for his concept of the

International as a “federative union.” It noted that the SWP had never opposed the Pabloist entrism policy in principle and accused the SWP-PCI of an unprincipled bloc on China. Seizing on the SWP’s one-sided orthodoxy (Hansen’s defense of an SWP majorityite’s formulation that Stalinism is “counterrevolutionary through and through”—a characterization which fits only the CIA!) the Pabloists were able to cloak their liquidation of an independent Trotskyist program with pious reaffirmations of the contradictions of Stalinism as a counterrevolutionary caste resting atop the property forms established by the October Revolution.

### IC Formed

Following the Cochran-Clarke split, the SWP precipitously broke publicly with Pablo. On 16 November 1953 *The Militant* carried “A Letter to Trotskyists Throughout the World” which denounced Cochran-Clarke and Pablo and belatedly solidarized with the “unjustly expelled” PCI majority. The SWP’s previous characterizations of the Third World Congress as “completely Trotskyist” necessitated an attempt in this so-called “Open Letter” to locate the emergence of Pabloism after the Congress, which doomed the SWP to present a somewhat unconvincing case leaning heavily on a leaflet or two of the Pabloist French minority from 1952. At about the same time the SWP produced “Against Pabloite Revisionism” dated November 1953, which contained a more competent analysis of Pablo’s liquidationist accommodation to Stalinism:

“The conception that a mass Communist Party will take the road to power if only sufficient mass pressure is brought to bear is false. It shifts the responsibility for revolutionary setbacks from the leadership to the mass . . .”

“The working class is transformed [by Pablo’s theories] into a pressure group, and the Trotskyists into a pressure grouping along with it which pushes a section of the bureaucracy toward the revolution. In this way, the bureaucracy is transformed from a block and a betrayer of the revolution into an auxiliary motor force of it.”

In 1954 the “International Committee” was formed. It included the French PCI majority, the American SWP (fraternal) and the Healy (Burns) grouping in England. The latter did not play any significant or independent role in the fight against revisionism. The Healy-Lawrence split from the disintegrating Revolutionary Communist Party after the war, impelled by the Healy-Lawrence faction’s deep entrism perspective toward the British Labour Party, had been backed by Pablo’s International Secretariat, which recognized two sections in Britain and gave them equal representation on the IEC. Healy was Cannon’s “man” in England and had been consistently supported by the SWP in disputes within the RCP. When the SWP broke from Pablo, the Healy-Lawrence faction split, Healy aligning with the SWP and Lawrence with Pablo (Lawrence later went over to Stalinism as did the PCI minority’s Mestre). Despite being part of the new anti-Pabloist international bloc, the Healy group continued its arch-Pabloist Labour Party opportunism. It had no

(Continued next page)

## ... *Pabloism*

weight in the IC bloc until its recruitment of an impressive layer of CP intellectuals and trade unionists (most of whom it later lost) following the 1956 Hungarian Revolution made it considerably more substantial in the British left.

The IC also claimed the adherence of the Chinese (emigre) section, which had already undergone a split, and the small Swiss section.

The IC managed to produce a couple of internal bulletins in early 1954 but never met as a real international body, nor was a centralized leadership ever elected. The tactic adopted by the SWP was to boycott the Fourth World Congress, as merely a meeting of Pablo's faction having no legitimacy as the Fourth International.

The world movement paid a high price for this evasion. To cite only one example: Ceylon. The Ceylonese LSSP took a non-factional position on Pabloism, appealing to the SWP not to split and to attend the Fourth Congress. A hard fight should have been aggressively pushed toward the passive Ceylonese doubtists, forcing a polarization and forging a hard cadre in the struggle. Instead the Ceylonese drifted along with Pablo. Some seven years later, the revolutionary reputation of Trotskyism was besmirched in the eyes of militants throughout the world by the LSSP's entry into the bourgeois Ceylonese coalition government, precipitating a last-minute split by the international Pabloist leadership. Had a hard principled anti-revisionist fight been waged in the Ceylon section in 1953, a hard revolutionary organization with an independent claim to Trotskyist continuity might have been created then, preventing the association of the name of Trotskyism with the fundamental betrayal of the LSSP.

Thus the anti-revisionist fight was deliberately **not** carried to the world movement, the IC consisting mainly of those groups which had already had their splits over the application of Pabloist policies in their own countries, and the struggle to defeat revisionism and reconstruct the Fourth International on the basis of authentic Trotskyism was aborted.

### From Flirtation to Consummation

In 1957 Pablo's International Secretariat and the SWP flirted with possible reunification (the Hansen-Kolpe correspondence). The basis at that time was formal orthodoxy—the similarity of line between the IS and SWP in response to the 1956 Hungarian revolution. The SWP, perhaps naively expecting a repetition of Clarke's 1953 position on the possibility of self-liquidation of the Stalinist bureaucracies, tended to accept the IS's formally Trotskyist conclusions over Hungary as good coin. These early reunification overtures came to naught because of the opposition of the British and French IC groups, as well as Cannon's suspicions that Pablo was maneuvering. The issue was posed in a defective way—simply apparent empirical agreement without an examination of past differences and present motion.

When the question of reunification, consummated in 1963 with the formation of the United Secretariat, came up again, the entire political terrain had shifted. The IS and the

SWP found themselves in agreement over Cuba. But the basis was no longer an apparent convergence on orthodoxy, but the SWP's abandonment of Trotskyism to embrace Pabloist revisionism (which the SWP in its class-collaborationist line on the Vietnamese war has now transcended on the path to outright reformism).

The basis for the 1963 reunification was a document titled "For Early Reunification of the World Trotskyist Movement—Statement by the Political Committee of the SWP," 1 March 1963. The key new line was section 13:

"Along the road of a revolution beginning with simple democratic demands and ending in the rupture of capitalist property relations, guerilla warfare conducted by landless peasant and semi-proletarian forces, under a leadership that becomes committed to carrying the revolution through to a conclusion, can play a decisive role in undermining and precipitating the downfall of a colonial and semi-colonial power. This is one of the main lessons to be drawn from experience since the Second World War. It must be consciously incorporated into the strategy of building revolutionary Marxist parties in colonial countries."

In "Toward Rebirth of the Fourth International," 12 June 1963, the Spartacist tendency counterposed:

"Experience since the Second World War has demonstrated that peasant-based guerilla warfare under petit-bourgeois leadership can in itself lead to nothing more than an anti-working-class bureaucratic regime. The creation of such regimes has come about under the conditions of decay of imperialism, the demoralization and disorientation caused by Stalinist betrayals, and the absence of revolutionary Marxist leadership of the working class. Colonial revolution can have an unequivocally progressive revolutionary significance only under such leadership of the revolutionary proletariat. For Trotskyists to incorporate into their strategy revisionism on the **proletarian** leadership in the revolution is a profound negation of Marxism-Leninism no matter what pious wish may be concurrently expressed for 'building revolutionary Marxist parties in colonial countries.' Marxists must resolutely oppose any adventurist acceptance of the peasant-guerilla road to socialism—historically akin to the Social Revolutionary program on tactics that Lenin fought. This alternative would be a suicidal course for the socialist goals of the movement, and perhaps physically for the adventurers."

Ironically, the SWP's further rightist evolution leads it to now repudiate the basic line of section 13, from the other side—the U.Sec.'s advocacy of petty-bourgeois armed struggle is far too adventurous for the legalistic SWP which aims to become the mass party of American reformism.

### Spartacist and the Fourth International

In his struggle to found the Fourth International, Trotsky repeatedly underscored the imperative need for revolutionary organization on an **international** basis. Prolonged national isolation within one country must ultimately disorient, deform and destroy any revolutionary grouping no matter how subjectively steadfast. Only a principled and disciplined international collaboration can provide a counterbalance to the fierce pressures toward insularity and social chauvinism

generated by the bourgeoisie and its ideological agents within the working-class movement. As Trotsky recognized, those who deny the need for a programmatically founded democratic centralist world party deny the Leninist concept of the vanguard party itself. The destruction of the Fourth International by Pabloist revisionism, paralleled by organizational fracturing into numerous competing international blocs, necessitates unremitting struggle for its rebirth.

In our ten year history, the Spartacist tendency has faced and resisted powerful objective pressures toward abandonment of an internationalist perspective. Cut off from the possibility of disciplined international ties as a result of the organizational sectarianism and subsequent political degeneration of Gerry Healy's International Committee, the Spartacist League has refused to passively acquiesce to the national isolation forced upon us. We have emphatically rejected the ersatz "internationalism" which achieves its international connections at the price of a **federalist** non-aggression pact thus renouncing in advance the struggle for disciplined international organization. We have sought to develop fraternal ties with groupings in other countries as part of a process of clarification and polarization. Our aim is the crystallization of a cohesive democratic centralist **international tendency** based on principled programmatic unity, the

embryo of a reborn Fourth International.

The current cracking of the several international "Trotskyist" blocs now provides heightened opportunity for the Spartacist tendency to intervene in the world movement. Our history and program can serve as a guide for currents now in motion towards authentic Trotskyism, because despite involuntary national isolation for a time, we upheld our internationalist determination and continued to wage a principled fight against revisionism.

The shattering of the revisionists' and centrists' pretensions to international organization—the revelation that the United Secretariat, the International Committee, etc. have been nothing more than federated rotten blocs—combined with the worldwide renewal of proletarian combativeness in a context of sharpened inter-imperialist rivalry and intensified deep-seated capitalist crisis, provide an unprecedented objective opportunity for the crystallization and development of the Spartacist tendency internationally. As the political corpses of the revisionist blocs continue to decay, the Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution, must be reborn.

**FOR THE REBIRTH OF  
THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL!**

# Circular

## To the Leadership of All Sections

*The following circular was issued by the International Secretariat of the Fourth International. The original is in the archives of Natalia Sedova Trotsky at the Trotsky Museum in Coyoacán, Mexico; a photocopy is in the collection of the Prometheus Research Library.*

June 30, 1948

Circular No. 16

To the Leadership of All Sections

Comrades,

The Tito affair has an exceptional importance from two points of view: externally for our attitude to Stalinist workers in particular and to revolutionary workers in general, and the conclusions that we can draw in regard to our appreciation of the USSR and Stalinism.

It goes without saying that the leaderships of all sections will have understood immediately the importance of the events and the necessity of taking the initiative in this respect. However, the I.S. thinks it necessary to make known its point of view in order to facilitate prompt and coordinated action of the whole International.

### Significance of the Conflict

The resolution of the Cominform and the reply of the Central Committee of the Yugoslav Communist Party clearly show that the origin of the conflict lies in the attempt of the Kremlin to strangle completely the latter and the Tito government.

GPU agents endeavoured to create a tendency inside the Yugoslav CP to "Russify" it completely, to undermine the personal prestige of Tito and to get rid of him. The Kremlin, estimating that in Yugoslavia it did not possess an absolutely docile instrument, and fearing an independent role on the part of Tito, however limited, attacked him by mobilising at the same time its direct agents in Yugoslavia and the prestige of the Russian Communist Party and the Cominform against the Yugoslav Communists; it attempted to create a faction of its own in the Yugoslav CP capable of overthrowing them.

This is an example of the extreme rigidity of the Stalinist bureaucratic machine, incompatible with the least opposition and which, driven by its own internal logic, is forced to nip in the bud the slightest sign of independence, in order to safeguard its prestige as well as its apparent unity and stability. But the attempt of the Kremlin in Yugoslavia misfired for a whole series of reasons. Tito and the leadership of the CP were strongly entrenched in a movement and a party which they had led during the last few years of struggle under the occupation and immediately after, without the direct support of the Kremlin, and of which they have been considered as the natural leaders. They have constructed on the other hand a strong state apparatus, which inspires them with a different assurance from that which formerly characterised various attempts at opposition in the Communist parties of the capitalist countries in the face of the all-powerful Kremlin. Yugoslavia is the only country of the glaxis where the government had not been imposed by the entry of the Red Army and the Soviet occupation, but which had been brought to power by the revolutionary movement of the masses.

Tito personally is a bureaucrat to the hilt, past master in the bureaucratic and GPU Kremlin machine he served for several years and which he has known how to stand up to energetically in his own country.

The resistance of Tito has probably surprised and exasperated Stalin. Before the failure of his attempt, Stalin could either try to secure the unconditional submission of Tito, or eliminate him through the action of his agents in Yugoslavia. Stalin has preferred the former course despite all the inconveniences of mobilising his international machine and openly excommunicating Tito.

We shall see in the days and weeks to come on what supplementary trump cards Stalin has in the

long run based his decision, and what will be the breadth of Tito's resistance.

### **The Cominform Resolution and the Yugoslav Reply**

The charge sheet of the Cominform against Tito is a typical product of the Kremlin machine of lies, calumnies, and amalgams. Tito is accused at the same time of "nationalism," "Trotskyism," "Bukharinism," of basing himself on the kulaks and wishing to destroy the kulaks, etc.... This document is conceived in order to drown the facts of the case in an ocean of assertions, in appearance "Marxist-Leninist," contradictory and confused, which allows anyone in Stalinist world public opinion or in Yugoslavia to find reasons to criticise and condemn Tito. The reply of the Yugoslav party enables us, naturally without solidarising with it or Tito, to attack the resolution of the Cominform and the attitude taken by the different Communist parties, who have rushed to align themselves completely with the resolution, without even knowing Tito's reply and without even publishing in their press an objective résumé of that reply.

The reply of the Yugoslav party shows in effect that its case has been judged by the leaderships of the various Communist parties and the Cominform on the basis of unilateral accusations brought against it by the Russian Communist Party and without it even being able to make known its point of view. Our organisations, in their press and by special leaflets addressed to the Stalinist workers and to revolutionary workers in general, should underline the enormous proof, afforded by this action of the Kremlin, of the monstrously bureaucratic character of Stalinism. Between one day and the next, a whole party, standing at the head of a country considered to be the vanguard of all glaxis countries, was condemned solely on the basis of unilateral accusations, without the contrary point of view of the accused party ever having been discussed by the militants of the Stalinist organisations.

This enables us to make clear before the masses the whole nature of Stalinism and to recall examples from the past, the accusations brought against Trotskyism, the Moscow Trials, etc.

### **Activities Towards the Yugoslavs**

The International Secretariat is preparing a document addressed to the Yugoslav Communist Party which it will try to send to Yugoslavia and circulate amongst the Communist workers of Yugoslavia. We ask all sections, when they receive the text, to trans-

mit it by delegations to Yugoslav consulates and embassies asking them to forward it to the CC of the Yugoslav CP. On the other hand, we ask all sections to let us know immediately any contacts or any means which will permit an intervention on the part of the International in Yugoslavia, and to send by these means their own publications on this subject.

### **Conclusions on the USSR and Stalinism**

The Tito affair permits us to draw important conclusions on the following points:

- a) Concerning the stability of the Stalinist bureaucracy;
- b) Concerning the question of the extension of Stalinism in the world without rifts, and the revisionist theory of "bureaucratic collectivism";
- c) Concerning the nature of the glaxis countries.

The Tito affair shows that the extreme rigidity of the Stalinist bureaucratic machine will have considerable difficulty in incorporating in its complicated and contradictory movements, without cracks, fissures and grave crises, the glaxis countries as a bloc, each component part of which has been submitted to a whole series of different economic, historical and political conditions.

Stalinism is not a product that is capable of universal export and in proportion to its expansion its internal contradictions, far from disappearing, become more violent and explosive. The attempted assimilation of the glaxis by Stalinism can well produce centrifugal forces in the international Stalinist edifice and even in the USSR itself.

In the Stalin-Tito controversy the Stalinists themselves put their finger on the capitalist nature of the structure of these countries in alleging that the regime of private property [exists] in agricultural production, commerce and petty enterprises, that is to say in the essential domain of the whole economy in these countries, where petty individual exploitation constantly engenders capitalism.

### **Where Is Tito Going?**

We should follow with great interest but also with caution the evolution of the Moscow-Belgrade conflict.

The reply of the Yugoslav party indicates that Tito is not ready to capitulate and his reconciliation with the Kremlin remains problematical, if not impossible, after such a passage at arms.

There remain consequently three possibilities:

a) That Tito will be overthrown by the revolt of the Stalinist wing of the Yugoslav party, which does not appear in any case to be very important.

b) That he will maintain his present line of independence, which poses necessarily a more radical rupture with the Kremlin and the Stalinists.

c) That he will go over to American imperialism and the bloc of Western democracies. But this last eventuality seems in any case only capable of realisation after a long evolution, his present base having been established on socialist ideas and anti-

capitalist and anti-imperialist struggles. Above all the most important point for us is not the personal case of Tito, a bureaucrat of the old stock with bonapartist ambitions and tendencies, but the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, the proletariat and poor peasantry placed by the conflict with Moscow in a favourable situation to advance in the path of a more radical rupture with Stalinism.

It is in this direction that the International should act.

The International Secretariat

# An Open Letter

## To the Communist Party of Yugoslavia

*The following letter by the International Secretariat of the Fourth International was published in the newspaper of the American Socialist Workers Party, the Militant, 26 July 1948.*

Paris  
July 1, 1948

To the Central Committee and to All Members  
of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia

Comrades,

We want to let you know that the attention of the entire international revolutionary workers' movement is today centered on the conflict in which you have, for some time, been pitted against the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party and the Cominform.

The official press of the Communist parties is seeking to engulf you in a flood of slanders and insults. Their conduct is a good example of how proletarian democracy is dragged in the mud by these people who operate from Moscow the entire international machine which is at the service of the Soviet bureaucracy.

But we are not in the least duped by this system of slander campaigns which has in the past destroyed so many precious forces in the labor movement. Because under the worst difficulties, we have never ceased for one moment, ever since Lenin died, to continue his struggle in Russia and in the entire world for the world communist revolution, against capitalist and imperialist reaction, and against the Soviet bureaucracy which usurped Lenin's party and the whole Communist International.

We know with what sinister inflexibility the bureaucratic machine in Moscow tries to nip in the bud every aspiration of independence or even a sign of a critical attitude toward itself. This Soviet bureaucracy has nothing in common with the Bolshevism of Lenin and the genuine defense of what still remains of the October conquests in the Soviet Union. The struggle—which has, since 1927, destroyed in Russia the entire Old Guard of the Bolshevik Party of the days of the October Revolution—was led by the Thermidorians of the Russian Revolution, who were able temporarily to triumph over the proletarian revolutionary wing of Russian Bolshevism.

Now you are in a position to understand, in the light of the infamous campaign of which you are the victims, the real meaning of the Moscow Trials and of the whole Stalinist struggle against Trotskyism.

You hold in your hands a mighty power if only you summon enough strength to persevere on the road of the socialist revolution and its program. This road is also the road of independence from the bureaucratic apparatus of Moscow. Looking for a way out are tremendous forces in the entire world labor movement—now caught in a vise between imperialism led from Washington on the one side, and on the other, the Soviet bureaucracy in the Kremlin, interested solely in keeping its own privileged caste interests in Russia.

Keep up your fight! Deepen the significance of your struggle with Moscow and its international machine! Do not yield to imperialist pressures! Establish a regime of genuine workers' democracy in your party and in your country! Thereby you will contribute immensely to the rebirth of the international workers' movement.

The International Secretariat of the Fourth International, the organization which unites around its program of Bolshevism and Leninism 35 sections on the five continents, wants to address itself in this our first message to you not concerning those things about which we must be critical of you with regards to your past and more recent course. We wish rather to take note of the promise in your resistance—the promise of victorious resistance by a revolutionary workers' party against the most monstrous bureaucratic machine that has ever existed in the labor movement, the Kremlin machine.

We shall presently address to you and to your Congress and to all Yugoslav Communists an open letter in which we shall treat in detail our point of view on the historic meaning of your conflict with Moscow and its Cominform.

Long Live the Yugoslav Socialist Revolution!  
Long Live the Proletarian World Revolution!

International Secretariat of  
the Fourth International

# An Open Letter

## To the Congress, Central Committee and Members of the Yugoslav Communist Party

*This text of the 13 July 1948 Open Letter from the International Secretariat to the Yugoslav Communist Party corresponds to the English version published in the American Socialist Workers Party's Fourth International, August 1948. In addition to minor spelling revisions, the first of the two slogans which conclude the letter has been retranslated from the French original.<sup>206</sup> (The Fourth International version read: "Yugoslav Communists Unite for a New Leninist International!")*

Comrades,

At its last session the Cominform passed a resolution excommunicating your party and its leadership. This has deeply stirred the members of Communist parties and revolutionary workers throughout the world. How, indeed, could they fail to be stupefied by such an abrupt about-face by the Cominform leaders who suddenly compel them to disparage a country which only yesterday was proclaimed the best model of "People's Democracy." Only three months ago, *l'Humanité*, central organ of the French Communist Party, sang praises to the "land of Tito." Today, *l'Humanité* cannot find a slander too vile with which to besmirch your party.

Only recently, Enver Hoxha, premier of Albania, declared at the fourth session of the Albanian People's Assembly:

Our people could neither enjoy the fruits of their war victories nor be assured of reconstructing their country and progress toward a better life, if it were not for the powerful, fraternal assistance accorded us in all spheres of life by the new Yugoslavia.

Today, the same Enver Hoxha cynically says:

The Central Committee of the Yugoslav Communist Party and its chieftain Tito have disrupted all the economic and political relations with our country....They aim to transform it into a colony of Yugoslavia....They have tried to suppress its independence....

The servility with which most of the leadership of the Communist parties have carried out the orders handed down from above is surpassed only by their evident dishonesty. Your party is accused of "lack of democracy." At the same time your accusers set up a hue and cry in which your party is condemned without the Communist Party members having been informed objectively about the existing differences, without affording you an opportunity to defend yourselves, without letting the members of various Communist parties become acquainted with

the text of your reply to the Cominform resolution.

The double-dealing of these "leaders" is shown even more clearly by their refusal to accept your invitation to attend your Congress. This refusal means nothing else but that the leaders of the Communist parties refuse to acquaint their members with the real situation in Yugoslavia. They prefer to despicably deceive the Communist workers throughout the world rather than "disobey" an order sent by Russia.

These facts, coupled with the treatment you are receiving, illustrate the methods of "persuasion" used by the leaders of the Russian Communist Party. They intervene in the life of other Communist parties by means of brutal and ultimatic ukases; they arbitrarily impose their rule on all parties, without the least consideration for the traditions, experiences or sentiments of the respective party members. At the same time, the leaders of the Russian Communist Party jealously guard their own privileges, regarding as treachery the slightest criticism of their own policies, and arrogating to themselves the right to excommunicate anyone who balks at following slavishly the countless zigzags of their tortuous party line.

The evil you have suddenly discovered, however, has existed for a long time. It existed during the final decade of the Communist International as well as during the five years since its dissolution. The grave sickness of the Communist parties and the main cause of the innumerable setbacks and bloody defeats they have suffered are to be found in the absolute control arrogated to themselves by the leaders of the Russian Communist Party. This control has led to a constant subordination of the interests of the socialist revolution, in one country after another, to the episodic needs confronting Russia.

Today the Kremlin is determined to force you to abandon your industrialization policy, just as in

January 1945 it forced Thorez to disarm the French partisans for the benefit of de Gaulle. During the Spanish Civil War, when the workers seized the factories, the Kremlin forced the Spanish Communists to declare that this was "treason." It instructed the German Communist Party to follow the suicidal course from 1930 to 1933 which permitted Hitler to seize power.

But events each time proved that far from rendering the Soviet Union stronger in the face of the imperialist forces, the weakening of the international proletariat isolated the Soviet Union still more and permitted the imperialists to deal terrible blows, such as that of 1941.

Once again today, in order to maintain their absolute sway over the Cominform, the leaders of the Russian Communist Party do not hesitate to employ against your party, policies which play into the hands of American imperialism and which can be utilized by all the enemies of the working class against the Soviet Union itself.

Comrades, you yourselves have already raised the question of the reason for this non-communist conduct of the Russian leadership toward the Communist parties of other countries. In this connection you might indeed have used the term "degeneration" in your reasoning. One should not fear this word, nor its real meaning and content. The outstanding trait of a Bolshevik is his courage in approaching reality and seeing it as it actually is, no matter how bitter the truth, no matter how painful the examination of this reality may be. It is a crime for a communist to deceive the workers or his own comrades — and this happens to be the real crime that the Communist Party leaders of many countries have just committed once again. But it is an even bigger crime to deceive oneself through fear of the sad reality which one does not wish to accept.

It would be the grossest self-deception to assume even for a moment that a country, governed by a party whose conduct toward its sister parties is so utterly non-communist, can nevertheless play the role of the vanguard of socialism. It would be self-deception to assume that policies which led to crises in so many Communist parties can still remain Leninist policies.

Yes, *the Soviet Union and the leadership of the Russian Communist Party have degenerated.* Yes, they have ceased to represent the vanguard of the world communist forces since the time they subordinated the interests of the world revolution to their own interests. We repeat: They act in their own interests and not those of the Russian proletariat. The inter-

ests of the workers and the oppressed of all countries are one and the same, and the interests of communism are indivisible the world over. That is why the abandonment by the Russian leaders of the cause of communism beyond the Soviet frontiers proves beyond doubt that they have abandoned this same cause inside the Soviet Union itself; that is to say, their degeneration is profound.

### **Causes of the Degeneration of the Soviet Union**

However painful it may seem to you, it is now necessary to put your finger on the *social origin* of this degeneration. In Lenin's time, and even after, Communist functionaries in both the party and the government strictly adhered to the rule that their salaries could not be higher than the average wage of a skilled worker. Non-Communist specialists and technicians, whom the young Soviet Republic sorely needed, were of necessity paid higher salaries, but they were placed under the *strict control of the workers* lest they should abuse those advantages which the state had been compelled to grant them. The workers remained the masters in the factories, in the soviets, in the party. Communist discipline was voluntary, arising from the enthusiasm for the class struggle and the victorious revolution. The party's internal life, along with that of the Communist International at the time, was regulated by discussion, as impassioned as it was free. The most important decisions were reached on the basis of genuine conviction, that is to say, in accord with the experience and level of consciousness of the party members. The party was intimately tied to its class and through these ties brought the entire proletariat into participation in the running of the state and the economy.

Today all this is changed in the Soviet Union. The soviets are dissolved. The workers do not exercise the slightest control in the factories; instead they are completely at the mercy of the factory manager's every whim. The discrepancies in basic earnings are even greater than in capitalist countries. Communist functionaries collect salaries as high as those of petty-bourgeois *spetztes* (specialists). An abyss separates the living conditions of the working masses from those of the bureaucracy which runs the economy and the state. This bureaucracy has completely wiped out inner-party democracy; it has eliminated and murdered the Old Guard Bolsheviks; it has converted the party into a vehicle for *protecting its own privileges*; it has destroyed

the party as the instrument of international communism.

This bureaucracy has today become a *closed caste* which guards its positions as jealously against the workers at home as it is doing against you.

One of your most remarkable accomplishments in Yugoslavia, just as in the October Revolution in Russia, is the extension of free high school and college education to all children of workers and poor peasants. You must be aware of the fact that as far back as eight years ago the Russian government abolished this enormously progressive development and reintroduced the system of paying for high school and college education, thereby in practice restricting such education to the children of functionaries and well-to-do petty bourgeois, and sentencing the overwhelming majority of children to semi-ignorance. Is this not the best proof that the leaders of the Russian state and party have stopped the forward march toward socialism, and in fact have gone into reverse gear toward an ever increasing *social inequality*?

The existence of these bureaucratic privileges in Russia, far from being combatted by the leaders of the Communist Party of the USSR, is systematically protected; this also explains at the same time the *ideological form* assumed by the degeneration of this leadership. In Lenin's time, the leadership of the Bolshevik Party and of the Communist International, even when directly engaged in negotiations with imperialist powers, openly declared to the world proletariat that capitalism and socialism are two incompatible regimes. Not for one minute did it suspend calling upon the workers of all the capitalist countries to overthrow the rule of their own exploiters, and actively preparing them for it. It always fitted the domestic and foreign policy of the USSR into the framework of the strategy of *world socialist revolution*, and considered its prime task to be that of giving maximum assistance to the Communist parties of other countries so that they could take advantage of every revolutionary situation which opened up before them for the overthrow of capitalism.

Of course Lenin and the leadership of the Bolshevik Party and the Communist International at that time, could not exclude the possibility, even the necessity, of temporary compromises with imperialism. Every sane revolutionist understands that every war, and certainly the social war of the working class against the capitalist class, is necessarily interrupted by periods of calm, of truces and of armistices. But as Lenin so lucidly explained in "*Left-*

*Wing*" Communism: *An Infantile Disorder*, such compromises in the class struggle are allowed solely on condition "of knowing how to apply these tactics in such a way as to *raise* and not *lower* the general level of proletarian class consciousness, revolutionary spirit, ability to fight and to conquer."

This conception of Lenin flowed logically from the doctrine of the Bolshevik Party and of the Communist International, according to which the socialist revolution can be only the work of the conscious and sovereign working masses.

### Results of Degeneration

The social degeneration of the USSR has brought it to a complete revision of these fundamental principles of Leninism. Today it proclaims and makes all the leaders of the parties which follow it also proclaim that capitalism and socialism are two systems which can live side by side in complete peace and harmony. It categorically forbids the leaders of the Communist parties in bourgeois countries to speak of "revolution" or of the overthrow of capitalism in their countries. On the contrary it orders them to restrict their propaganda to the "defense of the national independence" of their own capitalist countries! These same leaders who today accuse you of "misunderstanding the Marxist-Leninist conception of class and of the state" have themselves kept the communist workers of the capitalist countries in the darkest ignorance on these questions. They were not content only to enter the capitalist governments of France, Italy, Belgium, etc. from 1945 to 1947 and to forget everything that Lenin wrote against the reformist Social-Democracy on the impossibility of "conquering" the bourgeois state apparatus from within and on the necessity of destroying it and replacing it with a new workers' Soviet state apparatus. They have gone so far during this period as to forbid the workers to make use of strikes for improving their miserable living conditions, and this in countries which are the bastions of European capitalism!

All these maneuvers have not in the least deceived the imperialist bourgeoisie, as the emissaries and foreign agents of the leaders of the Russian Communist Party would have us believe. The bourgeoisie has not for a moment given up its view that the Soviet Union is a mortal enemy. But they have confused, disoriented and deceived the workers of the capitalist countries. Only yesterday the workers saw the leaders of the Communist parties opposing their class movements, whereas today such movements are abruptly and bureaucratically launched.

Thus the workers have the impression of being the dupes of a policy which is foreign to their own interests and of being utilized solely as a "maneuverable mass" by their leaders.

This policy broke the revolutionary fervor of the masses which, in France, Italy and elsewhere in 1944, equaled the fervor you experienced in your country. This is explained precisely by the fundamental revision of the very conception of socialism wrought by the leaders of the Russian Communist Party. Whereas Lenin and the Communist International in its initial period considered socialist revolution in the capitalist world the product of mass action, the present leadership of the Russian Communist Party is preoccupied exclusively with the military, economic and territorial expansion of the USSR. Whereas Lenin and the Communist International in its initial period considered it their most important task to assist the Communist parties of other countries onto the road of revolutionary mobilization of the masses in their own countries, the present leadership of the Russian Communist Party, contemptuous of foreign Communist parties and workers—as you know well from your own sad experience!—does not in the least hesitate to bar the revolutionary and socialist road to its fellow parties when this is required by its own sordid considerations. This break with the Leninist conception of world revolution is the most conclusive ideological proof of the profound degeneration of the present leadership of the Russian Communist Party and of its complete rupture with the interests of the world proletariat.

Under these conditions, it seems particularly cynical for the present leaders of the Russian Communist Party and of the Cominform to accuse you of misunderstanding "proletarian internationalism" and of following a nationalist policy. This is said by those same Russian leaders whose chauvinistic propaganda during the war, in which they refused to draw a distinction between the German workers and their Nazi butchers, was chiefly responsible for the absence of a revolution in Germany, whereas in Yugoslavia the partisan movement was able to attract into its ranks thousands of worker-soldiers from the occupation armies. This is said by a Togliatti who did not hesitate to launch, along with the genuine fascists of the MSI (Movimento Sociale dell'Italia), a chauvinist campaign for the return of former colonies to his capitalist country. This is said by a Thorez whose nationalist hysteria on the question of reparations for imperialist France gives untold satisfaction to bourgeois politicians in the

Poincaré tradition. Really, these people are certainly in a very poor position to give lessons on internationalism to anybody.

It is no less true, comrades, that the nationalism introduced into the Communist parties corresponds precisely with this same kind of degeneration which you now discern in Russia. No progress can be made toward socialism unless every trace of nationalism is extirpated from the thinking of communist militants. To fight for the right of self-determination of each nation, to struggle against national oppression, continually introduced and extended under imperialism in its decadent phase, is a primary task for the communist movement. And genuine communists are distinguished from petty-bourgeois nationalists precisely by the fact that they conduct this struggle in an internationalist spirit, always drawing a line between the bourgeoisie and proletariat of the imperialist country, carrying on the struggle within the framework of the revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of capitalism in their own country. It is particularly necessary to eliminate from propaganda all appeals to a national tradition which can injure the workers of other countries, all attacks against nations as such, all territorial demands based on chauvinist arguments. The Austrian and Italian bourgeoisies are today hoping that the Communist parties of their countries, under the directives from the Cominform, will line up in the capitalist camp to "solve" the problem of Carinthia and Trieste in the interests of imperialism. You must understand that there is only one way to foil the infamous maneuvers of the bourgeoisie and of the leaders of the Cominform against your party: that is to appeal boldly to the international solidarity of the workers, to proclaim aloud the right of peoples to self-determination, and to propose solutions of outstanding problems along this line.

You have settled the national question in your country with some degree of success. A truly communist and internationalist attitude toward international problems would not fail to strengthen immeasurably your position in the consciousness and feeling of millions of workers throughout the entire world.

### **What Road Will You Follow?**

Comrades, your Congress which is about to meet, the delegates which will compose it, and the thousands of communist members whom they will represent, find themselves, on this day following the Cominform resolution against your party, confronting decisions of truly historical import. Three roads

are open to you and you must choose one of them. Your choice will decide for years, if not for decades, the fate of your country and of its proletariat, and will exercise a profound influence on the evolution and future of the entire world communist movement.

The first road open to you would be to consider that despite the serious injuries dealt you by the leaders of the Russian Communist Party, it is above all necessary today, in the present world situation, to maintain a complete monolithic unity with the policies and ideology of the Russian Communist Party. There are certainly members in your midst who will propose such a course and will even suggest that it is preferable, under these conditions, to make a public apology and a declaration accepting the "criticism" of the Cominform, even to change your leadership, and wait for a "better occasion" to defend your particular conceptions within the "big communist family."

Such a decision would be in our opinion an irreparable and tragic error and would do the greatest damage not only to your own party and your own working class but to the international proletariat and communist movement, above all to the workers in the USSR. You must by now know the methods and ideas of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party sufficiently well to understand that that body will never be satisfied by public declarations and political decisions. It will demand that all power in the party and the country should pass into the hands of its own "civil and military agents" and of those among you whom it believes it can manipulate like puppets. It will completely eliminate, along with your present leaders, all cadres which think independently, all members who dare raise their voices in protest. It will completely subordinate the interests of the workers and poor peasants of Yugoslavia to the needs of its own diplomatic maneuvers with imperialism. It will smash your party as an independent force and will deal a terrible blow to the socialist consciousness of the workers of your country. It will wind up by physically liquidating all those who dared resist for a moment. The tragic example of so many old Bolshevik leaders in Russia shows that it never pardons even a passing opposition, even when such pardon has been "bought" a thousand times by self-criticism and breast-beating of the most humiliating kind.

Such a decision would deal an even greater blow to the international communist movement. In all countries, the most courageous and independent Communist members, who are today stirred by your

action, would be reduced to silence. The most servile elements would triumph everywhere. The pernicious principle that "whoever criticizes the Soviet government is an agent of imperialism," which has already cost the international Communist movement so dearly, would be more firmly entrenched than ever. Thousands of sincere revolutionary workers, who have with good cause been revolted by the anti-Leninist policies pursued by the Cominform leaders, would fall back again into passivity and skepticism, thereby increasing the isolation everywhere of the communist forces and thereby strengthening the forces of reaction and imperialism. The road would be cleared for new defeats for the international proletariat.

A second road will certainly be suggested, consisting essentially of retiring into Yugoslavia, repelling the attacks and the eventual violence and provocations of the Cominform and its agents, and attempting to "build socialism" in your own country, while concluding trade relations with the powers of Eastern Europe as well as with those of the imperialist West. We will not conceal from you, comrades, that we consider this second road just as pernicious as the first.

It is completely utopian to think it possible to "maneuver" during a whole period between the USSR and the USA without being subject during this same period to a growing pressure from these two giants. The success of "maneuvers" depends in the final analysis on the relationship of forces, and, on the plane of economic, political and military power, the relationship of forces is obviously not in your favor. American imperialism will gladly make some advances to you for that would increase the weight of its arguments in its conversations with Moscow. But what it is looking for basically is not to support you against the USSR but to conclude a compromise with Russia, if necessary at your expense. Not only would the present leaders of the Russian Communist Party have no hesitation about accepting such a compromise, but they would even work furiously to create the greatest economic difficulties for you so as to force you to capitulate or to surrender completely to Yankee imperialism, in order thereby to "demonstrate" to world working-class opinion that every rupture with Moscow signifies going over to the "American camp."

On the other hand, you must be aware that imperialism will rapidly become increasingly demanding toward you, especially if it is encouraged along this road by Moscow, as is to be feared. Its pressure will first be concentrated on your trade relations. Its

first objective will be to include you in the Marshall Plan zone. In the course of putting this into effect, it will aim subsequently to destroy all the social reforms brought about in Yugoslavia in the past three years. To the extent that Russia will isolate you and that your economic difficulties will increase and imperialist pressure sharpen, reaction within your own country will lift its head. The kulak would attempt to make contact with the international market. American capital would penetrate through all the crevices in your mixed economy in order to help them achieve this. Your days would be numbered.

Every policy set up on the basis of ignoring the international contradictions, which are the all-embracing framework in which all problems of Yugoslav policy are posed; every policy which would pose questions of industrialization independently of the problem of securing equipment by means of international trade, and consequently, independently of the pressure of the capitalist world market; every policy of this kind must be rejected forthright. Otherwise the work undertaken by your party can only meet with complete ruin. In view of the slanderous accusations of the leaders of the Cominform, it is imperative to be sharply conscious of the lurking danger of imperialist pressure, so that you will take no step without carefully considering the consequences on that score. Therein lies the main guarantee of genuine revolutionary and socialist progress on your part.

Finally, there remains the third road, the most difficult, bristling with the most obstacles, the genuine communist road for the Yugoslav party and proletariat. This road is the road of return to the Leninist conception of socialist revolution, of return to a world strategy of *class struggle*. It must start, in our opinion, with a clear understanding of the fact that the Yugoslav revolutionary forces can only become stronger and consolidate their positions thanks to the conscious support of the working masses of their own country and of the entire world. It means above all to understand that the decisive force on the world arena is neither imperialism with its resources and arms, nor the Russian state with its formidable apparatus. The decisive force is the immense army of workers, of poor peasants and of colonial peoples, whose revolt against their exploiters is steadily rising, and who need only a conscious leadership, a suitable program of action and an effective organization in order to bring the enormous task of world socialist revolution to a successful conclusion.

We do not presume to offer you a blueprint. We

understand the tremendous difficulties which you must contend with in a poorly equipped country which has been devastated by war. We desire only to point out to you what are, in our opinion, the main lines through which to concretize this international revolutionary policy—the only policy which will enable you to hold out while waiting for new struggles of the masses, to stimulate them and to conquer with them.

To commit oneself to this road means, especially in Yugoslavia itself, to base oneself openly and completely on the revolutionary dynamics of the masses. The Front committees must be organs which are genuinely *elected* by the workers of city and country, arising from a tightly knit system of [committees of] workers and of poor farmers.

They must become genuine state organs and must take the place of the present hybrid organs which are relics of the bourgeois state apparatus. They must be the organs of *Soviet democracy*, in which all workers will have the right to express their opinions and their criticisms without reservation and without fear of reprisal. The right of workers to organize other workers' parties must be laid down as a principle, subject only to the condition that they take their place within the framework of Soviet legality. The present hybrid constitution must be revised and a new one, taking its inspiration from the Leninist constitution of 1921, must be set up by an assembly of delegates from the workers' and poor peasants' committees.

These decisive political changes must be conceived as the end result of a real *mass mobilization*, to be brought about by your party through carrying these Leninist ideas into the most distant villages of your country, explaining the differences between the Soviet state and other state forms, and the superiority of the former type. That is the way Lenin did it in 1917, with the greatest simplicity. A vast campaign of re-education must be started, together with a period of discussion and of unhampered expression of opinion by the workers. The latter will express their criticisms of the present state of affairs in their assemblies. The party will finally know, directly, what the real aspirations of the masses are, and will obtain the constructive suggestions of the working-class masses, whose vast creative energy is the surest guarantee of socialism. Your party has nothing to fear from such a development. The confidence of the masses in it will grow enormously and it will become the effective collective expression of the interests and desires of the proletariat of its country.

It will not be enough, however, to re-establish the complete sovereignty of the committees, to change the standing army into a genuine workers' and peasants' militia, to replace appointed judges with those elected by the masses, to re-establish and firmly maintain the principle of payment of functionaries on the basis of the average wages of a skilled worker. The problem of the revolutionary transformation of your country is essentially an *economic* one, in which the question of the *peasantry* takes first place.

There is but one Leninist way to approach this problem: to seek support from the poor and exploited layers of the country and to be careful not to violate the laws whereby your economy functions, but on the contrary to utilize them in the interests of socialism. The land must be nationalized and a struggle waged against the concentration of income and property in the hands of the kulaks. But these measures cannot be made solely by administrative means, neither by decrees nor by force. What is necessary is that the immense majority of the peasants must view it as *in their own interests*. For this, a review of the Five Year Plan and the relations between agriculture and industry is necessary. The plan for industrialization must be able, above all things, to guarantee a growing quantity of consumer goods for the peasants. By means of stabilizing the *dinar* and a strict system of dividing industrial consumer goods, the state can offer more to the small and middle peasant than the kulak will be able to give him. It is necessary at the same time to give the utmost support to the freely formed cooperatives of the small peasants, to reserve all modern working equipment for them, grant them cheap credit, and to establish such conditions for them that they will live better and earn more than the middle peasants who continue to work their lands as individuals. This will prove to be the surest method of isolating the kulak in the village and of developing and accelerating voluntary cooperation locally.

Progress of this kind will be realizable only by changing the method of drawing up and verifying plans. No group of *spetzes* can ascertain mathematically the real equilibrium between the needs of the workers, those of the peasants, and the capital needs of the economy, upon which equilibrium depends the harmonious planning and development of the country. It is essential that the masses be induced to participate as actively as possible in the work of planning, that the greatest heed be paid to their complaints, and that the needs expressed by them be the primary factor in planning.

Complete sovereignty of the *factory committees* must be established in the plants, and genuine *workers' control of production* must be instituted. The trade unions must be granted their real function, which is to defend the interests of the workers, even against the Soviet state if necessary, as Lenin repeatedly asserted. In a word it is necessary to give the workers and poor peasants the clear feeling that they are the *masters in the country*, and that the state and the progress of the economy are in direct correspondence with their own interests.

We do not at all conceal that such a policy will encounter very great obstacles in your country and even in your own ranks. A complete re-education of your cadres in the spirit of genuine Leninism would be necessary. Still less do we conceal that world imperialism and the present leadership of the Russian state would furiously attack your policy, for it would appear to them a mortal threat to their acquired positions. But if you will apply the same Leninist principles in your foreign policy, you can be sure of powerful support from the workers and the oppressed of the entire world, and your cause cannot lose.

You would have to make a sharp break with all the practices of traditional secret diplomacy and return to the revolutionary diplomacy practiced in the time of Lenin; you would have to become the champion and active supporter of all colonial peoples revolting against their imperialist masters; you would have to proclaim to the world the conditions for a just peace, without annexations or reparations; you would have to demand the immediate withdrawal of the occupation troops of all the great powers from all occupied countries, and strict application of the right of self-determination of peoples in all disputed questions. With one blow you will gain the sympathy of the Austrian and German masses who today feel themselves deceived and betrayed by all parties. You would have to develop and sharpen your propaganda in favor of the Danubian Federation by giving it its classical communist form and by launching the slogan for the *Balkan Federation of Soviet Socialist Republics* among the workers and poor peasants of neighboring countries, who would take it up with enthusiasm. And finally it would be necessary to incorporate this propaganda within the concrete framework of propaganda for the *Socialist Soviet United States of Europe*; to convoke a conference at Belgrade of the trade-union and workers' representatives from all the countries of Europe, including Germany and Austria; to draw up with them a plan for the economic reconstruc-

tion of the continent on a socialist basis, in opposition to the Marshall Plan, and to make this socialist plan the central axis for revolutionary propaganda in Europe and in the world.

Your possibilities for action along the road of genuine Leninism disclose themselves to be enormous. But your historical responsibility far surpasses everything which has been outlined above. Millions of workers throughout the world are today profoundly disgusted with the policies and methods used by the present leaders of the Cominform. Unwilling to pass over into the imperialist camp in any guise whatever, they vainly seek a new pole of attraction, a new political leadership. Only the vanguard of this mass has at this time found the road toward our organization, the *Fourth International*. You can become the mobilization point for this mass of revolutionary workers and thus, with a single blow, completely change the present condition of paralysis within the world working-class movement, the stranglehold of the agents of Washington and of the degenerated Russian bureaucracy. The social struggles which are developing and will develop within all countries will thereby be given the opportunity for a successful revolutionary conclusion. The Third World War, which threatens to throw the USSR and all of Europe into an abyss, can be prevented. The socialist future will unfold in all its glory before humanity.

Comrades, we address this letter to you because we are conscious of the terrible dilemma in which you find yourselves; because we understand exactly the tremendous responsibility weighing upon you, and because we consider it our communist duty to assist you in resolving the present crisis in communism along proletarian and Leninist lines.

We have many and important differences with your past and recent policies. We are in complete disagreement with the theory and practice of "People's Democracy" for we do not believe in any other road from capitalism to socialism than the dictatorship of the proletariat. We believe that the use and propagation of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ways of living (servants, livery, titles, officers' stripes, decorations) can only serve to demoralize real communists. But we are conscious of the enormous difficulties involved in a discussion between us, in view of the separation in activities which has existed between us for so many years. For this reason we consider it our duty to convey our ideas to you in a long and fruitful discussion, in the course of which we can each advise the other of our experiences in the revolutionary struggle and

can clarify our differences in a spirit of genuine proletarian and communist fraternity.

Our organization, the Fourth International, originated in the Left Opposition of the Bolshevik Party, which 25 years ago already saw the germs of the degeneration of the Russian Communist Party which you are discovering today. Hunted, persecuted, expelled, the Left Opposition fought nevertheless for ten years for reintegration into the official Communist movement. Only when the present leadership of the Russian Communist Party surrendered the German proletariat to the executioner Hitler without a struggle, and thereby opened a period of bloody defeats for the world working class, did our movement come to the conclusion that a new revolutionary International had to be built. Since then, the bureaucrats who now lead the Russian state have poured a ceaseless stream of vile slander over our International and no crime has been too sordid for them in their attempts to destroy us. Just as today they call you "agents of imperialism," so they have labeled us "fascist spies," when in reality hundreds of our best cadres and leaders gave their lives in the struggle against fascism. Just as today they are organizing the assassination of your leadership, so did they manage to assassinate Leon Trotsky, organizer of the October victory, creator of the Red Army, the greatest leader of the Communist movement since the death of Lenin—Trotsky, who just a few days before his death, expressed his unshakable devotion to communism and to the real Soviet Union of the workers and peasants in his moving "Letter to the Soldiers of the Red Army."

But all these crimes did not succeed in smashing the *Fourth International* because nothing can smash genuine Leninism! Today it has sections in 35 different countries on all continents, consisting of battle-tested and experienced revolutionary communist members who stand for what is best in their class. Although weak in material resources, its Second World Congress, held last April in Paris, demonstrated that it was strong in political cohesion, in program, and in its clear understanding of present-day reality. Today it is launching in all countries a vast campaign protesting against the bureaucratic measures which the Cominform has taken against you. It appeals to communist workers of all countries to send their delegations to Yugoslavia, in order to make a spot check of the real policy followed by your party. Tomorrow it will make your documents known in 20 different languages—for workers' democracy is not just an idle phrase to the Fourth International, and a communist cannot per-

mit a member to be judged without a hearing. It asks that you allow a delegation from our leadership to attend your Congress, in order to establish contact with the Yugoslav communist movement and to set up fraternal ties which can serve only the interests of the world communist revolution.

Comrades, the cause of communism, of the revolutionary emancipation of the proletariat is invincible. No force in the world can prevent the genuine communists from ridding themselves of slanderers

and would-be assassins so that they can go forward boldly toward their revolutionary goal. The quicker this task is done, the faster will the world revolution triumph.

**Yugoslav Communists, Let Us Unite Our Efforts for a New Leninist International! For the World Victory of Communism!**

The International Secretariat  
of the Fourth International  
July 13, 1948

# PCI Resolution

## On the Yugoslavia Crisis

*The following resolution, submitted by Jacques Privas (Jacques Grimblatt) and Marcel Marin (Marcel Gibelin), was adopted by the Fifth Congress of the French Parti Communiste Internationaliste, held in July 1948. The French text appeared in the PCI's internal bulletin, La vie du parti No. 1, August 1948. The translation is by the Prometheus Research Library.*

The crisis which has broken out in the Cominform between Tito and the Kremlin should be considered from the standpoint:

- 1) of the underlying causes of this crisis;
- 2) of the prospects for development of this crisis;
- 3) of our intervention into these events.

A precise analysis is necessary exactly because of the importance of the repercussions this event is having and will have among the ranks of the Stalinist workers.

### 1) The Causes of the Crisis

The Stalinist policy has as its underlying line the exploitation of the workers movement for the needs and the defense of the interests exclusively of the privileged bureaucrats of the USSR.

In the countries of the buffer zone this policy takes the concrete form of exploiting these countries: economically, diplomatically and strategically (preferential treaties, privileged treatment of the ruble, exploitation of the economy to benefit the Red Army or the Soviet state).

This policy which preserves capitalist relations in the economy out of fear of the masses, which blocks the development of the buffer zone countries, necessarily creates a profound crisis in these countries. This crisis is expressed in the pressure of the bourgeois elements to re-establish ties with imperialism, and even in halfhearted notions of finding a solution on the part of indigenous Stalinist leaders (Dimitrov proposing a Balkan federation). Against these pressures and notions, in order to contain the crisis while maintaining its exploitation, the Kremlin is obliged increasingly to utilize methods of terror:

- a) against the bourgeois politicians;
- b) against the revolutionary elements;
- c) and even to replace the indigenous Stalinists with direct emissaries of the Kremlin (five "Russian" members on the seven-member Bulgarian PB).

This general situation, the necessary result of the application of the Stalinists' policy, is governed by

military and police measures, but this does not resolve the crisis. If in Yugoslavia the Stalinist CP has been led to resist this Russification, it is because, having assumed full responsibility for the state, it must respond to the needs of Yugoslav society and of each of its components: to assure a minimum of economic stability and to satisfy to a certain degree the needs of the different social classes. Complete control by the Kremlin absolutely prevents the fulfillment of this task.

If this situation—which is fundamentally that of all the countries of the buffer zone—has provoked active resistance first in Yugoslavia, this is due to its particular situation originating in the struggle of the Yugoslav masses during the occupation, which gave the Yugoslav CP a mass base and much more independence.

Stalin could not permit such independence in a party—especially of the buffer zone—without risking the breakup, not only of the system of exploitation of the buffer zone, but also of the whole hierarchical police state system of world Stalinism.

### 2) Prospects for the Crisis

One thing is certain: if it is impossible in general for the countries of the buffer zone to remain for a long period in a chronic transitional situation, it is even more impossible for an isolated country.

The importance of the situation that has been created in Yugoslavia is that it objectively poses to the Yugoslav masses—not in general terms, but one could say immediately—the need to choose between socialism and capitalism.

The choice, even if it is still muddled, will necessarily lead to discussion and struggles between currents and classes in Yugoslavia.

The Yugoslav CP can only capitulate to the Kremlin, to the U.S., or embark on the path of revolution—although of course it is not possible to predict today which path will be taken or what the pace of development will be.

In any case, it is almost certain that without an

intervention by the proletariat of the buffer zone and of the world, the path taken by the Yugoslav proletariat will not be that of revolution. Capitulation to the Kremlin or to the U.S. would be inevitable.

### 3) The Thrust of Our Intervention

The first major crack in the Stalinist apparatus is necessarily leading immense masses of Stalinist workers to fundamentally reconsider Stalinist politics. Obviously, we cannot remain indifferent to an event of this importance; rather we must intervene aggressively to help the proletariat as a whole to understand the Stalinist betrayal, and the Yugoslav proletarians to find the path of revolution.

In the Western countries, we must give an overall explanation of the causes of the Yugoslav crisis, demonstrating in particular the Stalinist conception of the defense of the USSR, the counterrevolutionary nature of the ties imposed by Moscow and of the theory and practice of "people's democracy."

To the Yugoslav proletarians we will demonstrate that the rupture with Moscow is the indispensable step for the struggle for socialism, and we will indicate the concrete and programmatic paths that make it possible (soviets, proletarian democracy, appeal to proletarians of other countries).

We do not at all reproach the I.S. for appealing to the Yugoslav CP and its CC. This step is appropriate given the relations between the masses and the CP. But we do object to these letters for idealizing Tito and the Yugoslav CP (revolutionary workers party—"continue your struggle for socialism").\*

On the other hand, the issue of *La Vérité* dedicated to Yugoslavia, which defends the point of view of the I.S., provides no useful explanation when it gives the apparatus' own laws as the cause of the crisis of the apparatus.

If this resolution is adopted, it does not mean that the PCI exempts itself from the discipline of the international leadership.

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\*This objection does not in any way signify a disagreement with the I.S. on the nature of the USSR, the buffer zone, and Stalinism.

# Letter on Yugoslavia

## Sent to the IEC by the RCP (Britain)

*The following letter to the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International by British Revolutionary Communist Party leader Jock Haston is undated, but apparently written in the summer of 1948, and was never published in the internal bulletins of the American Socialist Workers Party. The text is taken from a photocopy in the collection of the Prometheus Research Library. Excerpts from the Open Letters by the International Secretariat of the Fourth International cited in the text are from a different translation than the English versions reprinted in this bulletin.*

To the IEC

Dear Comrades,

The Yugoslav-Cominform dispute offers the Fourth International great opportunities to expose to rank and file Stalinist militants the bureaucratic methods of Stalinism. It is possible to underline the way in which the Stalinist leaderships suppress any genuine discussion on the conflict by distorting the facts and withholding the replies of the YCP leadership from their rank and file. By stressing such aspects of the Yugoslav expulsion, we can have a profound effect on militants in the Communist parties.

However, our approach to this major event must be a principled one. We cannot lend credence, by silence on aspects of YCP policy and regime, to any impression that Tito or the leaders of the YCP are Trotskyist, and that great obstacles do not separate them from Trotskyism. Our exposure of the bureaucratic manner of the expulsion of the YCP must not mean that we become lawyers for the YCP leadership, or create even the least illusion that they do not still *remain*, despite the break with Stalin, *Stalinists in method and training*.

In our opinion, the Open Letters of the I.S. to the YCP Congress failed to fulfil these absolutely essential conditions. They failed to pose directly and clearly what is wrong, not only with the CPSU, but with the YCP. The whole approach and the general tone of the letters are such as to create the illusion that the YCP leadership are communists, mistaken in the past, and discovering for the first time the evils of the bureaucratic methods of Moscow, instead of leaders who have actively participated in aiding the bureaucracy and acting as its agents in the past.

The letters appear to be based on the perspective that the leaders of the YCP can be won over to the Fourth International. Under the stress of events, strange transformations of individuals have taken

place, but it is exceedingly unlikely, to say the least, that Tito and other leaders of the YCP can again become Bolshevik-Leninists. Tremendous obstacles stand in the way of that eventuality: past traditions and training in Stalinism, and the fact that they themselves rest on a Stalinist bureaucratic regime in Yugoslavia. The letters failed to point out the nature of these obstacles, fail to underline that for the leadership of the YCP to become communists, it is necessary for them not only to break with Stalinism, but to repudiate *their own past*, their present Stalinist methods, and to openly recognise that they themselves bear a responsibility for the building of the machine now being used to crush them. Here it is not a question of communists facing "a terrible dilemma," with an "enormous responsibility" weighing on them, to whom we offer modest advice: it is a question of Stalinist bureaucrats *becoming* communists.

The aim of such Open Letters can only be limited. By placing on record a correct and principled analysis of the role of the Stalinist bureaucracy and that of the YCP leadership, by offering aid to the YCP in a clearly defined communist struggle, the Open Letters could be useful propaganda, aiding the approach to the rank and file seeking a communist lead.

As they stand, however, by their silence on fundamental aspects of the regime in Yugoslavia and YCP policy, the letters strike an opportunist note.

It is not our experience that the most courageous and most independent communist militants "are today stimulated by your (the YCP) action." The Cominform crisis has rather sown confusion in the CP ranks and disorientated its supporters. That is to our advantage. But although it is a relatively easy task to expose the Cominform manoeuvres, there is sufficient truth in some of their accusations against Tito—particularly with regard to the internal re-

gime, the National Front—to cause among Stalinist rank and files an uneasiness with regard to the leaders of the YCP. That gives us an opportunity to win these militants not to the cause of Tito, but to Trotskyism.

Tito is attempting, and will attempt, to follow an independent course between Moscow and Washington, *without altering the bureaucratic machine or turning to proletarian internationalism*. A bureaucratic regime, resting as it does mainly on the peasantry, can have no independent perspective between the Soviet Union and American imperialism. The *main* emphasis of the letters should have been to show the necessity for a radical break with the present policy of the YCP, the introduction of soviet democracy within the party and the country, coupled with a policy of proletarian internationalism. The position must be posed to Yugoslav militants, not as a choice between three alternatives—the Russian bureaucracy, American imperialism, proletarian internationalism—but, first and foremost, as a choice between proletarian democracy within the regime and party, proletarian internationalism, and the present bureaucratic setup which must inevitably succumb before the Russian bureaucracy or American imperialism.

The I.S. letters analyse the dispute solely on the plane of the “interference” of the CPSU leaders, as if it were here solely a question of that leadership seeking to impose its will without consideration for the “traditions, the experience and the feelings” of militants. But the dispute is not simply one of a struggle of a Communist Party for independence from the decrees of Moscow. It is a struggle of a *section of the bureaucratic apparatus* for such independence. The stand of Tito represents, it is true, on the one hand the pressure of the masses against the exactions of the Russian bureaucracy, against the “organic unity” demanded by Moscow, discontent at the standards of the Russian specialists, pressure of the peasantry against too rapid collectivisation. But on the other hand, there is the desire of the Yugoslav leaders to maintain an independent bureaucratic position and further aspirations of their own.

It is not sufficient to lay the crimes of international Stalinism at the door of the leadership of the CPSU. Not only in respect to Yugoslavia, but also in respect to other countries, the Open Letter gives the entirely false impression that it is the Russian leadership which is *solely* responsible. To pose the relations in the international Stalinist movement in the manner of the I.S. letter—that the leadership of

the CPSU “*forced* Thorez to disarm the French partisans,” “*forced* the Spanish communists to declare...that the seizure of the factories...was a treason,” “*completely prohibits* the leaderships of the Communist Parties in the capitalist countries from speaking of revolution”—can create illusions that the leaders of the national Stalinist parties could be good revolutionists, if only Moscow would let them. It is true that the degeneration of the CPs flowed basically from the degeneration in the Soviet Union. But the sickness of the Stalinist movement is also accountable by the utter corruption of the national leaderships who are bound up in the bureaucratic machine. These leaders actively participate in the preparation of the crimes. So also for Tito, it was not a matter of having been “forced” to carry out the wishes of Moscow in the past.

It is impermissible to slur over the nature of the YCP, its identity on fundamental points with other Stalinist parties. Such a slurring over can only disorientate Stalinist workers. Yet every attempt is made by the I.S. *to narrow the gulf* that separates the policy of the YCP from Bolshevik-Leninism. What other conclusion can we draw from statements such as the following:

...the Cominform accuse you of misunderstanding “proletarian internationalism” and of following a nationalist policy. This is said by that same Russian leadership whose chauvinist propaganda during the war...is largely responsible for the absence of a revolution in Germany, *whereas* (our emphasis) in Yugoslavia the partisan movement was able to draw to its ranks thousands of proletarian soldiers from the armies of occupation. This is said by Togliatti who has not hesitated to throw himself alongside the real fascists of the Movimento Sociale dell’Italia, in their chauvinistic campaign for the return to the capitalist fatherland of its former colonies. This is said by Thorez, whose nationalist hysteria on the question of reparations for imperialist France delights the souls of the bourgeois heirs of Poincaré.

It is true that the Yugoslav Stalinists settled, with some success, the national problem inside their own country. It was their programme with regard to this question that enabled them to win over members of the quisling armies. But the comrades must be aware that the propaganda of the YCP towards Germany was of the same chauvinistic character as that of the Russian and other Stalinist parties. The I.S. letter deals with the necessity for proletarian internationalism *in the abstract*, without taking up the concrete question of YCP policy today and in the past. It was surely necessary to point out concretely what this proletarian internationalism means, by dealing with the past and present policy of the YCP,

which has been no whit less chauvinistic than that of other Stalinist parties. The I.S. mentions Togliatti's chauvinism, and Thorez' nationalist hysteria, and leaves the impression of a *favourable comparison* between the policy of other Stalinist parties and that of the YCP. We cannot be silent on the YCP's chauvinistic campaign around Trieste, their attitude towards reparations, their *uncritical support* for the Russian bureaucracy's demand for reparations from the German people. It is necessary to take up these questions so that it shall be clear precisely what the gulf is between a nationalist and an internationalist policy, and precisely what it is that Yugoslav militants must struggle against.

But there is another aspect of the I.S. letters which cannot pass by without the IEC adopting an attitude and expressing an opinion.

The World Congress majority adopted a position that the buffer countries, including Yugoslavia, were *capitalist* countries. It rejected the resolution of the RCP that these economies were being brought into line with that of the Soviet Union and could not be characterised as capitalist. The amendment of the British party to the section "The USSR and Stalinism" was defeated. But it is evident from these letters that the I.S. has been forced by events to proceed from the standpoint of the British party, *that the productive and political relations in Yugoslavia are basically identical with those of the Soviet Union.*

If indeed there exists in Yugoslavia a capitalist state, then the I.S. letters can only be characterised as outright opportunist. For the I.S. does not pose the tasks in Yugoslavia which would follow if bourgeois relations existed there as the dominant form. The letters are based on conclusions which can only flow from the premise that the basic overturn of capitalism and landlordism has taken place.

The second Open Letter *gives several conditions necessary if Yugoslavia is to go forward with true revolutionary and communist progress. Yet nowhere does it call for the destruction of bourgeois relations in the economy and the overturn in the bourgeois system and regime.* The tasks laid down in the letter are:

That the Committees of the Front...must be organs of Soviet democracy

To revise the present Constitution (based on that of the Soviet Union)

To admit in principle the right of the workers to organise other working class parties, on condition that these latter place themselves in the framework of Soviet legality

To procure the broadest participation of the masses in the sphere of planning

To establish the full sovereignty of the factory committees...to set up a real workers' control of production.

And so on. Nowhere did the I.S. deem it necessary to call on the Yugoslav workers to overthrow capitalism. Had the I.S. been able to base itself on the World Congress document, that would have been their foremost, principled demand. The comrades will remember that the Congress document gives as its first reason why "the capitalist nature of the buffer zone is apparent" that "*Nowhere has the bourgeoisie as such been destroyed or expropriated.*" Why no mention of this in the Open Letters? Of all the seven conditions given in the Congress document as making "apparent" the *capitalist* nature of Yugoslavia and other buffer countries, the I.S. letter mentions *only one*—the nationalisation of the land. But even here, the question of the failure to nationalise the land is raised not from the point of view of proving the capitalist nature of Yugoslavia. It is raised to point out, correctly, that the nationalisation of the land is necessary in order to combat the concentration of income and of land in the hands of the kulaks. The question is raised in the general context of the letter, as an aid to the socialist development of agriculture in a country where capitalism and landlordism have been overthrown, but the danger of a *new* exploitation is still present in the countryside.

Not only are the main tasks posed in the Open Letter identical to those to be carried out to cleanse a state similar in productive and political relations to the Soviet Union, but we must add that the impression given is that these relations are a great deal healthier than in Russia.

The articles appearing in our international press revealed one thing: *the thesis adopted by the World Congress failed to provide a clear guide to the problems that arose from the Cominform-Yugoslav split and the tasks of the revolutionaries in connection with the regime and its economic base.*

We appeal to the IEC to reject the orientation in the Open Letter, and to correct and repair the damage which has been done, by re-opening the discussion on the buffer zone and bringing our position into correspondence with the real economic and political developments of these countries.

With fraternal greetings,  
Yours  
J. Haston  
on behalf of the  
Central Committee, RCP

# Notes

1. Leon Trotsky, *The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International* (the Transitional Program), reprinted in *The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution*, 3rd ed. (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1977), 112.
2. *Ibid.*, 113.
3. "Genesis of Pabloism" was originally published in *Spartacist* (English edition) No. 21, Fall 1972. It is reprinted in this bulletin on pages 37-47.
4. Gerry Healy, *Problems of the Fourth International* (1966), 274.
5. Workers Power, *The Death Agony of the Fourth International and the Tasks of Trotskyists Today* (London: Workers Power and Irish Workers Group, 1983) (hereafter referred to as *Death Agony*), 36.
6. "Genesis of Pabloism," page 37 of this bulletin.
7. "Genesis of Pabloism," pages 41-42 of this bulletin. At the time we wrote "Genesis of Pabloism," our documentation consisted largely of the internal bulletins of the American Socialist Workers Party. The present article draws as well on materials from the holdings of the Prometheus Research Library (New York), and from CERMTRI, the Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches sur les Mouvements Trotskyste et Révolutionnaires Internationaux (Paris).
8. "The USSR and Stalinism," *Fourth International*, June 1948, 118-19. The theses are also available in French as "L'URSS et le stalinisme (thèses)," in R. Prager, ed., *Les congrès de la IV<sup>e</sup> Internationale* (hereafter referred to as *LCQI*), Vol. 3, *Bouversements et crises de l'après-guerre (1946-1950)* (Montreuil: Editions La Brèche-PEC, 1988), 155-201.
9. *The Soviet-Yugoslav Dispute* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1948), 62.
10. "Resolution on the Yugoslav Revolution and the Fourth International," *SWP International Information Bulletin*, January 1951, 16-18. This resolution is also available in French as "Résolution sur la révolution yougoslave et la IV<sup>e</sup> Internationale," *LCQI*, Vol. 4, *Menace de la troisième guerre mondiale et tournant politique (1950-1952)* (Montreuil: Editions La Brèche-PEC, 1989), 249-60.
11. Leon Trotsky, *The Third International After Lenin* (New York: Pioneer Publishers, 1936), 72.
12. Leon Trotsky, "A Fresh Lesson," *Writings of Leon Trotsky (1938-39)*, 2nd ed. (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1974), 71.
13. "An Open Letter to the Communist Party of Yugoslavia" (1 July 1948), *Militant*, 26 July 1948, reprinted on page 51 of this bulletin.
14. "An Open Letter to the Congress, Central Committee and Members of the Yugoslav Communist Party" (13 July 1948), *Fourth International*, August 1948, reprinted in this bulletin on pages 52-60. This letter is also available in French as "Lettre ouverte au congrès, au comité central et aux membres du Parti communiste yougoslave," *LCQI*, Vol. 3, 394. The English translation significantly distorted the last quote to read, "Yugoslav Communists Unite for a New Leninist International!"
15. This circular exists in the archives of Natalia Sedova Trotsky at the Leon Trotsky Museum in Coyoacán, Mexico; a photocopy is in the holdings of the Prometheus Research Library. The circular is reprinted in this bulletin on pages 48-50.
16. Josip Broz Tito, *Rapport politique du Comité Central présenté au Cinquième Congrès du Parti Communiste de Yougoslavie* (Le Livre Yougoslave, 1948), 156.
17. Cited in Tony Cliff, "On the Class Nature of the 'People's Democracies'," *The Origins of the International Socialists* (London: Pluto Press, 1971), 44.
18. This third open letter, dated September 1948, was published in the *Militant*, 20 September 1948.
19. "Résolution sur la Yougoslavie et la crise du stalinisme," *LCQI*, Vol. 3, 421-22.
20. "Evolution of the Buffer Countries," *SWP International Information Bulletin*, June 1949, reprinted in *SWP Education for Socialists*, "Class, Party and State and the Eastern European Revolution" (November 1969) (hereafter referred to as *CPSEER*). The material quoted appears on pages 13-14 of *CPSEER*.
21. Max Shachtman, "The Problem of the Labor Party," *New Internationalist*, March 1935, 37.
22. "Evolution of the Buffer Countries," *op. cit.*, 15.
23. "Déclaration du camarade Jérôme [Pablo]" on "Résolution sur l'évolution des pays du 'glacis'," *LCQI*, Vol. 3, 439.
24. Quoted in Michel Pablo, "Evolution of Yugoslav Centrism," *Fourth International*, November 1949, 296.
25. "Resolution on the Crisis of Stalinism and the Developments of the Yugoslav Revolution," *SWP International Information Bulletin*, September 1950, 5.
26. "Resolutions on the Class Nature of Yugoslavia," *SWP International Information Bulletin*, September 1950, 8.
27. "Resolution on the Crisis of Stalinism and the Developments of the Yugoslav Revolution," *op. cit.*, 5.
28. "Resolutions on the Class Nature of Yugoslavia," *op. cit.*, 8.
29. "Resolution on the Crisis of Stalinism and the Developments of the Yugoslav Revolution," *op. cit.*, 5-6.
30. *Ibid.*, 6-7.
31. I.F. Stone, *The Hidden History of the Korean War* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1988 [1952]).
32. *Militant*, 13 November 1950.
33. "Assiégée par le Kremlin, la Yougoslavie est sous le chantage de l'impérialisme," *La Vérité* No. 261, second half of November 1950.
34. All these circulars were quoted in "Circulaire du S.I.: à toutes les sections de la IV<sup>e</sup> Internationale," 15 November

- 1950, Supplement No. 158 to *La Vérité* No. 260, second half of November 1950.
35. "Resolution on the Yugoslav Revolution and the Fourth International," op. cit., 13-14, 16.
36. Leon Trotsky, *The Permanent Revolution* (1929), reprinted in *The Permanent Revolution and Results and Prospects*, 3rd ed. (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1969), 277.
37. Workers Power, *Death Agony*, 35.
38. "The Yugoslav Revolution," *Fourth International*, November-December 1951, reprinted in *CPSEER*, 59-60.
39. "La lutte contre la guerre impérialiste et pour la victoire de la révolution socialiste mondiale (résolution sur la situation et les tâches)," *LCQI*, Vol. 4, 183.
40. Harold Livingstone (George Clarke), "Report to the Congress—Yugoslavia: Review and Outlook," *Fourth International*, November-December 1951, 177-83.
41. "Les transformations sociales en Europe orientale," *La Vérité* No. 283, 25 October-7 November 1951.
42. "Tito Regime Adjusts Its Policies to Suit Aims of U.S. Imperialism," *Militant*, 12 November 1951.
43. Gérard Bloch, "Contre-réforme agraire en Yougoslavie," *La Vérité* No. 316, 12-15 June 1953.
44. Joseph Hansen, "What the New York Discussion Has Revealed," *SWP Discussion Bulletin*, Vol. XV, No. 4, February 1953, reprinted in *SWP Education for Socialists*, "International Committee Documents, 1951-1954" (March 1974) (hereafter referred to as *IC Documents*), Vol. 1, 38.
45. "Against Pabloist Revisionism," *Fourth International*, September-October 1953, reprinted in *IC Documents*, Vol. 3, 147.
46. "The Third Chinese Revolution and Its Aftermath" (resolution adopted by the 1955 SWP convention), *SWP Discussion Bulletin* A-31, October 1955, reprinted in *SWP Education for Socialists*, "The Chinese Revolution and Its Development" (November 1969), 3-10.
47. "The Soviet Union Today," *SWP Discussion Bulletin* A-33, December 1955, reprinted in *SWP Education for Socialists*, "De-Stalinization, the Hungarian Revolution and World Trotskyism" (February 1978) (hereafter referred to as *De-Stalinization*), 21.
48. "The Hungarian Revolution and the Crisis of Stalinism" (January 1957), reprinted in *De-Stalinization*, 38.
49. Workers Power, *Death Agony*, 28-29.
50. Hal Draper, "'Comrade' Tito and the 4th International: Left-Wing Stalinism—A Senile Disorder," *New International*, September 1948, 208, 212.
51. Fracción Revolucionaria de la Sección Mexicana de la IV Internacional, "Crítica a la 'Carta Abierta' del Secretariado Internacional al PC Yugoslavo," *Boletín Interno*, September 1948, 17-18.
52. "Text of Letter to SWP from Natalia Trotsky," *Militant*, 4 June 1951.
53. Max Shachtman, "Tito Versus Stalin," *New International*, August 1948, 178.
54. Hal Draper, "The Economic Drive Behind Tito," *New International*, October 1948, 230-31.
55. "Meaning of the Yugoslav Crisis," *Militant*, 5 July 1948.
56. John G. Wright, "Public Break with Tito Highlights Kremlin Crisis," *Militant*, 5 July 1948.
57. Joseph Hansen, "Tito-Stalin Conflict," *Militant*, 6 September 1948.
58. SWP Political Committee, "Yugoslav Events and the World Crisis of Stalinism," *Fourth International*, August 1948, 175.
59. Joseph Hansen, "Tito Flounders with Stalin's 'Theory' of Building 'Socialism' in One Country," *Militant*, 29 November 1948.
60. "Yugoslavia and the Kremlin," *Militant*, 15 August 1949.
61. "The Tito-Stalin Conflict," *Fourth International*, October 1949, 262-63.
62. "Yugoslav May Day Manifesto Hailed by SWP Leader," *Militant*, 8 May 1950.
63. "Yugoslavs Issue Appeal for Return to Leninist Principles," *Militant*, 8 May 1950.
64. "Tito's June 27 Speech," *Militant*, 10 July 1950.
65. John G. Wright, "Yugoslavia's Foreign Policy," *Militant*, 5 March 1951.
66. John G. Wright, "Stalin's 'Socialism in One Country,'" *Militant*, 26 March 1951.
67. Jacques Privas and Marcel Marin, "Résolution Privas-Marin sur la crise yougoslave," *La vie du parti* No. 1 (PCI internal bulletin), August 1948. See pages 61-62 of this bulletin.
68. Partial minutes of this Central Committee meeting were published in *La vie du parti* No. 5 (supplement to *La Vérité* No. 229), February 1949. Pablo's article, written in August 1948 and published in *Fourth International*, December 1948, described the YCP as leading a mass movement with "distinct revolutionary tendencies."
69. "Le rapport sur la défense de la Yougoslavie," *La Vérité* No. 246, second half of January 1950.
70. "Bas les pattes devant la révolution yougoslave, résolution du VI<sup>e</sup> congrès du PCI," *La Vérité* No. 247, first half of February 1950.
71. "La magnifique campagne électorale du PCY," *La Vérité* No. 251, first half of April 1950.
72. Pierre Lambert, "1<sup>er</sup> Mai à Belgrade," *La Vérité* No. 254, second half of May 1950.
73. "Ceux qui ont vu la vérité en Yougoslavie la disent: OUI c'est un état où se construit le socialisme, c'est la dictature du prolétariat," *La Vérité* No. 258, first half of October 1950.
74. "La Yougoslavie sur la voie glissante," *La Vérité* No. 263, second half of December 1950.
75. Michel Lequenne, "A propos de la crise et de la scission de la section française (1951-1952)," *LCQI*, Vol. 4, 487, reports of *L'Unité* that "its material existence largely depended on Yugoslav financial support."
76. "Genesis of Pabloism," page 41 of this bulletin.
77. "RCP Amendments to the Thesis on Russia and Eastern Europe," Spring 1948. A photocopy of this document, from the archives of Sam Bornstein, is in the collection of the

Prometheus Research Library. The French version was published as "Amendements soumis par le RCP de Grande-Bretagne," *LCQI*, Vol. 3, 204-5. These amendments were not printed in the SWP internal bulletins.

78. Ibid.

79. Ted Grant and Jock Haston, "Yugoslavs Too Independent: Campaign Commences to Liquidate Tito," *Socialist Appeal*, July 1948, reprinted in *Behind the Stalin-Tito Clash: Trotskyist Analysis* (Revolutionary Communist Party, 1948), 5-11.

80. Jock Haston (on behalf of the Central Committee, RCP), "Letter on Yugoslavia Sent to the IEC by the RCP (Britain)" (n.d., late summer 1948), reprinted in this bulletin on pages 63-65. The material quoted appears on pages 64-65. This letter was not printed in the SWP internal bulletins; it was published in a 1991 special supplement of *Workers News*, "The Fourth International and Yugoslavia (1948-50)," by the British Workers International League.

81. Ibid., page 65 of this bulletin.

82. "Contre-résolution présentée par les 2 cam. représentants du RCP (anglais)," *La vie du parti*, special issue (supplement to *La Vérité* No. 236), second half of June 1949, 15-16. Again, this counter-motion was not published in the SWP internal bulletins, although other dissident motions at the Seventh Plenum were.

83. Cited in Sam Bornstein and Al Richardson, *The War and the International: A History of the Trotskyist Movement in Britain 1937-1949* (1986), 219.

84. "Dynamics of World Revolution Today" (June 1963), *International Socialist Review*, Fall 1963, 129.

85. Michel Pablo, "The Yugoslav Affair," *Fourth International*, December 1948, 241.

86. Michel Pablo, "On the Class Nature of Yugoslavia," *SWP International Information Bulletin*, December 1949, 2.

87. Ibid., 3.

88. Ibid., 3

89. Ibid., 27.

90. Michel Pablo, "Yugoslavia and the Rest of the Buffer Zone," *SWP International Information Bulletin*, May 1950.

91. Ernest Germain (Mandel), "The Yugoslav Question, the Question of the Soviet Buffer Zone, and Their Implications for Marxist Theory" (October 1949), *SWP International Information Bulletin*, January 1950.

92. Ibid., 32.

93. Ibid., 42.

94. Morris Stein, "The Class Nature of the Buffer Countries in Eastern Europe," *SWP Discussion Bulletin* No. 3, June 1950, 8.

95. John G. Wright, "The Importance of Method in the Discussion on the Kremlin-Dominated Buffer Zone," *SWP Discussion Bulletin* No. 2, April 1950, 5.

96. Ernest Germain (Mandel), "Draft Resolution on the Development of the Yugoslav Revolution," *SWP International Information Bulletin*, September 1950, 12.

97. Murry Weiss, "Report on Yugoslavia and Related Questions," *SWP Discussion Bulletin* No. 6, January 1951, 2.

98. Leon Trotsky, *Transitional Program*, 135.

99. Joseph Hansen, "The Problem of Eastern Europe," *SWP Internal Bulletin* Vol. XII, No. 2, February 1950, reprinted in *CPSEER*, 33.

100. Leon Trotsky, *In Defense of Marxism* (New York: Pioneer Publishers, 1942).

101. Bill Hunter, "The I.S. and Eastern Europe." A photocopy of an original from the archives of Sam Bornstein is in the holdings of the Prometheus Research Library.

102. International Secretariat, Introduction (October 1949), *SWP International Information Bulletin*, December 1949.

103. "Remarks by M. Stein Opening Political Committee Discussion on IEC Resolution on Eastern Europe" (12 July 1949), *SWP Internal Bulletin*, Vol. XI, No. 5, October 1949, reprinted in *CPSEER*, 17.

104. Michel Pablo, "Where Are We Going?," *SWP International Information Bulletin*, March 1951, reprinted in *SWP Education for Socialists*, "International Secretariat Documents 1951-1954" (March 1974) (hereafter referred to as *I.S. Documents*), Vol. 1, 10.

105. Ibid., 8.

106. Ibid., 4-6.

107. Ibid., 6-7 (emphasis in original).

108. Michel Pablo, "The Building of the Revolutionary Party" (excerpts of report to IEC Tenth Plenum), *SWP International Information Bulletin*, June 1952, reprinted in *I.S. Documents*, Vol. 1, 34.

109. Quoted in Favre-Bleibtreu (Marcel Bleibtreu), "Where Is Comrade Pablo Going?," *IC Documents*, Vol. 1, 18.

110. Michel Pablo, "World Trotskyism Rearms," *Fourth International*, November-December 1951, 168-76.

111. The Third World Congress resolution, "Theses on Perspectives and Orientation," is available in English in *I.S. Documents*, Vol. 1, 25-30, and in French in *LCQI*, Vol. 4, 147-60. Germain/Mandel's report, "Trois années de cours nouveau du trotskysme," appears in *LCQI*, Vol. 4, 303-26.

112. Cited by James P. Cannon in a speech to the Los Angeles SWP branch, 5 December 1953, *SWP Discussion Bulletin* A-13 (January 1954), reprinted in *IC Documents*, Vol. 3, 159.

113. Michel Pablo, "World Trotskyism Rearms," op. cit., 172.

114. Michel Pablo, "The Building of the Revolutionary Party," op. cit., 35.

115. Ibid., 37-39.

116. Michel Pablo, "Rapport sur les applications tactiques de la ligne du III<sup>e</sup> Congrès mondial," *LCQI*, Vol. 4, 355-56. These quoted passages were not included in the SWP's "excerpted" version of Pablo's report cited above, note 108. This appears to have been a political "edit" job in order to excise the most opportunist aspects, since almost the entire rest of his report is printed. At the time the SWP leadership was still backing Pablo against the French PCI majority.

117. Ernest Mandel, "Trois années de cours nouveau du trotskysme," op. cit., 305.

118. Unsigned (Ted Grant), "Statement to the BSFI [British Section of the Fourth International]" (n.d., ca. summer

1950). A photocopy of this document is in the collection of the Prometheus Research Library.

119. Cited in Sam Bornstein and Al Richardson, op. cit., 225-26.

120. "On the 1966 Split," *Spartacist* (English edition) No. 36-37, Winter 1985-86 (a special issue titled "Healyism Implodes").

121. Pablo's draft "Theses on Perspectives and Orientation" were adopted by the Ninth Plenum and published as "Thèse sur les perspectives internationales et l'orientation de la IV<sup>e</sup> Internationale," *Quatrième Internationale*, January 1951. They were also published in English in *SWP International Information Bulletin*, January 1951. They were subsequently adopted with minor amendments by the Third World Congress. See note 111 for publication information on the theses adopted by the congress.

122. "The Struggle of the French Trotskyists Against Pabloite Liquidationism," *SWP Discussion Bulletin A-17* (May 1954), reprinted in *IC Documents*, Vol. 1, 25-29.

123. Ernest Germain (Mandel), "What Should Be Modified and What Should Be Maintained in the Theses of the Second World Congress of the Fourth International on the Question of Stalinism? (Ten Theses)," *SWP International Information Bulletin*, April 1951, reprinted in *I.S. Documents*, Vol. 1, 16-24. According to the *SWP IIB*, the "Ten Theses" first appeared in the March 1951 Bulletin of the International Secretariat. "Genesis of Pabloism" contains a discussion of Germain's theses; see pages 42-43 of this bulletin.

124. "Résolution sur le PCI français," *LCQI*, Vol. 4, 331.

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