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**SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY**

RESOLUTION OF THE DECEMBER 1969 IEC PLENUM ON THE SPLIT IN THE GERMAN SECTION

Motion: The December 1969 plenum of the International Executive Committee:

1. Notes that a split has taken place in the German section caused by differences in orientation, complicated by organizational irregularities on both sides.

2. As both sides operate as functioning groups, it would be wrong to conclude that the German section has disappeared. In reality, this section has split into two parts.

3. Notes that both sides visualize the possibility of reunification. The IEC is of the opinion that such a reunification is possible and advisable.

4. It is, however, damaging for the International and contrary to its statutory rules to have two groups appearing publicly as sections of the Fourth International. The IEC therefore gives the IMG, as it comprises the majority of the members of the section, the right to appear in public as the German section of the Fourth International until the reunification process is successfully achieved.

5. The IEC is of the opinion that the IKD should be granted, under the ex-

ceptional circumstances existing, the right to express its opinions on German questions in the magazine Die Internationale.

6. The comrades of the IMG and the IKD remain members of the International, and retain all rights as members of the International. The IEC recognizes the IKD as a minority tendency of the German section.

7. The above stipulations remain in force only as long as both groups apply the line of the International in public and carry out all obligations to the International.

8. The IEC recommends that both groups abstain from public attacks against each other.

9. The IEC notes that immediately after the Whitsun 1969 conference the political bureau of the IMG and Comrade Richard, member of the United Secretariat, gave incomplete information to the United Secretariat on what occurred at the end of that conference of the German section.

10. This is an internal statement. An appropriate public statement for the information of the German vanguard will be drafted by the United Secretariat.

LETTER FROM THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE GIM TO THE LEADERSHIP OF THE IKD

Dear Comrades,

At its first meeting after the IEC plenum, the central committee of the GIM decided to address itself to you immediately. The GIM recognizes unconditionally the ten-point resolution of the IEC plenum regarding the split in the German section. We start with the assumption that the IKD also recognizes the obligation to comply with this resolution and accepts the responsibilities which flow from it. We refer to your responsibility, as a recognized minority tendency of the section, to pay one-sixth of your income from dues to the International, and we request that you notify us whether and how this is being done.

Proceeding from the assumption that you recognize the IEC resolution as binding, we submit to you the following suggestions:

1. The IEC resolution gives you the right to publish articles dealing with German questions in Die Internationale. For this reason we suggest that you designate a representative to the editorial board of Die Internationale. Since the editorial board holds its meetings in Frankfurt, we would appreciate it if you would choose a Frankfurt (or Darmstadt) comrade so that the editorial board can carry on its work without great loss of time.

Of course, under these conditions the IKD must share proportionately in the costs and distribution of the journal. Also, we ask whether you would participate in the distribution of two special issues of Die Internationale containing the Ninth World Congress documents.

2. Since both organizations are parts of the German section, we suggest an exchange of all external and internal political materials between the IKD and

GIM, with the exception of minutes of meetings. We would arrange with you the number of copies of the materials to be exchanged.

3. As far as possible, the respective secretaries should contact the leaders of the local organizations of the IKD and GIM, in order to discuss the possibilities for political discussions and for working together on a local level.

The recognition and application of the IEC resolution would constitute the indispensable minimum for proper relations between the two parts of the German section.

For this reason the central committee of the GIM protests against the behavior of the IKD at the seminar of the GIM in Solingen. Three representatives of the IKD turned up uninvited at this seminar, directly confronted the young people gathered there (who had only gradually been won to Trotskyism), with the internal disputes among the German Trotskyists, (which were incomprehensible to them), and in a putchist manner tried to snatch up contacts whom they had no part in developing; in short, they did everything they could to endanger the results of the work of the Köln GIM group, to the detriment of the growth of the Trotskyist movement in Germany.

This behavior, which has been continued in further actions of the Köln IKD group and the Dortmund IKD representatives, is inconsistent with the IEC resolution and destroys every possibility of a positive development of relations between the GIM and the IKD.

Central Committee of the GIM

DECLARATION OF THE INTERNATIONALIST COMMUNISTS OF GERMANY -- SECTION  
OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL -- REGARDING THE RESOLUTION OF THE DE-  
CEMBER 1969 IEC ON THE SPLIT IN THE GERMAN SECTION--JANUARY 23, 1969

After the United Secretariat had to annul its earlier decision on the split in the German section because they could no longer ignore the true facts, the IEC has now passed a ten-point resolution whose main claim seems to be to facilitate the reunification of the two groups, GIM and IKD, which came out of the split in the former German section. Before we consider in detail the degree to which the resolution does justice to this claim, we would like to recall once again what we have repeatedly said would be a prerequisite for such a reunification: namely, that the reunification can only be the result of a fundamental principled discussion of the strategy and tactics of Trotskyists in West Germany. However, such a discussion presupposes that both sides have the same opportunities to develop their positions, to defend them in public, and to test them in practice.

As our spokesman explained at the fact-finding commission as well as at the IEC plenum, our attitude toward the decisions of the IEC will depend upon the degree to which these possibilities for political discussion are granted to us. At both opportunities we have already expressed the suspicion that the United Secretariat would have an interest in confronting us with decisions which would politically bind the hands of our organization, morally grind us down, and limit us to a long, incessant faction fight. We must now conclude that this suspicion has been fully confirmed by the IEC resolution.

I.

"To face reality squarely; not to seek the line of least resistance; to call things by their right names; to speak the truth to the masses no matter how bitter it may be; not to fear obstacles; to be true in little things as in big ones; to base one's program on the logic of the class struggle; to be bold when the hour for action arrives -- these are the rules of the Fourth International." (Transitional Program)

At our national conference in December 1969 Comrade Walter explained that the IEC had found itself facing an extremely complex situation. On the one hand the statutes of the Fourth International had to be taken into account -- that it would go against our tradition that a faction should simply be expelled, or that a "minority" should get the right to appear as such publicly. On the other hand, the section

as a whole should not disappear again from open work; this title [the German section] must therefore be maintained. But given all this, one must take into account the real circumstances.

What are the real circumstances? Points two and three of the resolution are correct concerning the split in the section and also concerning the possibility of a reunification. But the conclusions drawn in point four stand in glaring contradiction to the preceding two points! Through concealment, the continuous crisis of the German section and the reasons for the ultimate split would be hidden from the revolutionary public in West Germany and in this way the political discussion would be avoided. That is, in public the GIM would be the section, while we would be some vague International Communists of Germany, whose historical and political origins must remain unclear. For point eight, through a long explanation, means nothing else than that we cannot publicly explain our political differences with the GIM and the origins of the split. We could of course say that we also belonged to the Fourth International, but it would be almost impossible for us to explain why we are nonetheless not a part of the GIM.

On the other hand the GIM -- as "the section" -- would have no need to explain why the IKD did not belong to the GIM.

The logical conclusion from points two and three would be that both products of the split should have a status with equal rights, for example as "groups within the section." In this way the real situation would be expressed, that no common democratic centralist discipline exists for the two parts of the section. On the contrary, the IKD is designated in point six as a "minority tendency of the section" (and this on the basis of a momentary numerical relationship of forces, which would be completely reversed as soon as we would accept the methods of recruitment or the completely unbolshevik membership criteria that are now used by the GIM.) This, and the fact that the GIM is designated "the section" must logically lead to the conclusion that the IKD would be subordinated to the central committee of the GIM by democratic centralism. In Walter's words, this is not the intent of the resolution, but according to the wording of point ten it is also not explicitly excluded.

Therefore the possibility remains open that such conclusions may be drawn, through later, more far-reaching decisions, if we are not well-behaved and do not obediently keep our mouths shut -- just as is indirectly implied in point seven; for the interpretation of what is "the line of the International" is largely in the hands of the same United Secretariat to which also belongs the secretary of the GIM. Thus the power is held in reserve to turn the screws harder on us at any time and so to put our organization under guardianship through purely formal methods no longer justified politically.

Point five shows most clearly how the authors of the resolution conceive this concretely. The IKD would not be able to have its own organ, and could only write for the journal Die Internationale. The editorial board, however, remains completely in the hands of the GIM, which therefore has many opportunities to censure what will be published by us and what should not be published. Finally, we are only allowed to write on "German questions" -- as if perhaps it were possible to deal with the radical petty-bourgeois youth movement or the growing ultra-left Stalinist currents (Maoist) from a narrow-minded national perspective. So we are allowed to take positions on these "German questions" but not, however, on the role which, in our opinion, the German Trotskyists have to play, for how could such statements be made without a political critique of the GIM -- which we are forbidden to do, according to point eight?!

In this context it would be in order for the authors of the resolution to explain to us at their convenience what they mean by our "rights" as a "minority" under these concrete conditions.

Conclusion: All possibilities are left open for the GIM to develop as an organization; scarcely any are left open for us. What can it mean then, that the authors consider a reunification "possible and advisable?" They know very well that with such unequally divided opportunities, a reunification could only take the form of a political liquidation of the IKD into the GIM; however, we can readily believe that this is "advisable" in the interests of the United Secretariat. So this whole complicated resolution fundamentally means only the recognition of the GIM as the section and a friendly invitation to us to please commit political suicide.

The authors of the resolution are well aware of the fact that if we were ready to enter into the impassable maze

of their confusing, contradictory statutory acrobatics, we would have to stumble at every stage of our political development over the traps of their "discipline," always with the sword of Damocles dangling over our heads.

They also know that if we agree to the first step today, then we would give up once and for all the possibility of raising the discussion to a principled political level at some time in the future. This "compromise" is the kind that is only offered because one knows that it will be rejected anyway.

And in fact they are not mistaken:

We will not embark on this precipitous course -- we do not accept these conditions!

## II.

The hopeless contradictions in these "ten points," however, only prove that one cannot find the solution to so political a problem as a split in a section through statutory formalism. Political problems -- what a new idea! -- require political solutions. And on this point, it astonishes us that in the poor prose of the IEC resolution they don't let slip a single word about the political background of the split in the German section. The probably not even incorrect suspicion is forced upon us that the authors are letting themselves be led by exclusively formalistic, and hence bureaucratic, ways of thinking, and not by a desire to give an adequate political answer to a political problem.

However, we could only be surprised at this if we were as naive as the authors of the resolution would like us to be. At least by the time of the last World Congress it must have certainly struck even the less intelligent heads amongst us that this method is by no means the exception, but on the contrary is the rule everywhere that the United Secretariat feels itself compelled to have a "discussion" with a political opposition. Already, at the World Congress the "minorities" of three other sections had the opportunity to be convinced of the seriousness of the United Secretariat in solving political problems. In these cases also they, high and mighty, threw all political arguments to the wind and wantonly indulged in their preference for pure formalities in recognizing or expelling one or the other product of a split. We don't want to go into detail about Great Britain, or about Argentina, where they recognized a group with an unmistakable Maoist tendency as the

section, without any political foundation.

However we want to say something about Ceylon. Although the "Ceylon Commission" of the Congress had confirmed Edmund's political charges against Bala Tampoe almost without exception, and had therefore stated that the latter's politics had at least objectively aided the class enemy, still this political judgments found not the slightest echo in the decision-making of the congress. Instead Pierre Frank succeeded, with a purely formalistic procedural trick -- his only talents are in this field -- in also getting Bala Tampoe's group recognized from now on as the section, without any political discussion.

This was in no way an accident. It was precisely Edmund who, in his document "Strategy and Tactics of Our Movement in the Backward Countries," so sharply denounced the heavy co-responsibility of the United Secretariat for the virtual liquidation of the Ceylonese section, and he was also the only speaker at the World Congress who demonstrated clearly the basic liquidationist line of the majority at the Congress. It is certainly not surprising that the United Secretariat could have no interest in keeping this sharp critic in the ranks of the International any longer. So it is all the more understandable that the Secretariat could in no case say anything political about the split in Ceylon. For any political analysis would have shown with painful clarity the responsibility of this same Secretariat for the debacle of Trotskyism in this former stronghold. And, like all centrists, they shy away from any examination of their past, especially from any self-criticism, like the Devil shies away from holy water.

Under these conditions who could think that the United Secretariat would adopt other methods in the "solution" of the German problem? There is probably no other section of the whole International for which the United Secretariat bears more responsibility than the German section; not only Eduard, but almost equally as much Walter, have incessantly intervened in the political life of the German section. So how can they now close their eyes to the fact that behind the German split, in a direct causal relationship, stands the type of "entrism" which they not only tolerated but even actively supported in West Germany for one and a half decades? How could they keep silent before the fact that it was this "entrism" policy of theirs that has so completely undermined democratic centralism and the cadre principle in the section? How could they have hidden that they themselves bear a considerable part of the political responsibility for the German split -- especially since they have just now acknowledged this responsibility through admitting the pompous ass Lothar Boepple into their circle?!

It is therefore very clear: they could have dealt politically with the split in the German section only at the price of devastating self-criticism. But since there is honor amongst thieves, they have, smiling like augurs, covered this ugly chapter in their most recent history with a thick web of breath-taking statutory tricks.

It should certainly not surprise them now that the German Bolshevik-Leninists from now on flatly deny any authority assumed by them in German matters and in several other matters.

LETTER FROM THE UNITED SECRETARIAT OF THE FOURTH  
INTERNATIONAL TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE IKD - FEBRUARY 1, 1970

Comrades!

"For a Marxist, a discussion is an important but functional instrument in the class struggle. For sectarians it is an end in itself. But the more he discusses, the more he is confronted by the real problems. He is like a man who quenches his thirst with salt water; the more he drinks the more he is thirsty. Hence the constant state of irritation of the sectarian. And who sprinkled the salt in his water? Naturally the "capitulationists" of the International Secretariat! The sectarian sees an enemy in anyone who tries to explain to him that active participation in the workers movement requires a persistent study of the objective conditions and not arrogant proclamations from a sectarian speaker's podium. In place of analysis of reality the sectarian produces intrigues, gossip, hysterics...Is it really possible, after the twelve-year struggle of the Bolshevik-Leninists, to have such a limited trust in one's own organization that one cannot maintain discipline in action even in the case of tactical differences of opinion?" - Leon Trotsky: "Centrism, Sectarianism and the Fourth International"

The declaration of the IKD dated January 23 concerning the "Resolution of the December IEC on the Split in the German Section" represents, in our opinion, a further and graver step on the part of a section of the leadership of your organization to manipulate you in an irresponsible way into a totally unprincipled split with the Fourth International. Therefore we feel ourselves obliged to address this letter to you to indicate to you the seriousness of the situation and to call upon you at this last moment to avoid the fatal step of splitting from the world Trotskyist movement.

I.

The principle of democratic centralism entails subordination of the minority to majority decisions and at the same time the right to free and open discussion within the organization. This principle is based on two theoretical axioms:

a) That all revolutionaries who

adhere to common principles and who stand on a common programmatic foundation can only fight effectively for the realization of this program if they submit to a common discipline.

b) That tactical differences, over which the discussion ends in a majority-minority relationship, can only be clarified in the course of common, practical experiences in struggle, and that the chances for a minority to convince the majority of its errors can only improve in the light of these common experiences in struggle.

A refusal to submit to the rules of democratic centralism is only justified under the following conditions:

a) If it is a question of principled programmatic differences of such a nature that make it justified to conclude that the majority of an organization has betrayed the fundamental tasks of the working class struggle and of the world revolution. (Such as August 1914 for the Second International or the seizure of power by Hitler for the Third International.)

b) Or if, through the replacement of democratic centralism by bureaucratic centralism, a minority is denied the right to fight for its political ideas within the organization. (Such as the decision of the 14th party congress of the CPSU that the opposition must renounce its political platform.)

Obviously neither of these two conditions exist in the Fourth International today.

Furthermore, on all basic programmatic questions the Fourth International stands on the basis of the revolutionary class struggle and of the world socialist revolution. Despite their great efforts, the leadership of the IKD has until now been unable to discover even one principled difference with the line of the Fourth International on the following questions:

1) The evaluation of the historical situation characterized by the general crisis of decaying capitalism which began in 1914, and the ripeness of the objective preconditions for socialist revolution, the development of which leads towards the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.

2) The acceptance of the theory of permanent revolution. That is, the

recognition that the world revolution is a process, in which the chain of imperialism first breaks at its weakest link, which can be underdeveloped or semi-colonial countries. The revolution in these countries, however, must not only grow over into a socialist revolution on a national scale in order to fulfill its historic tasks, but must also extend itself internationally.

3) Agreement that the Russian October Revolution was socialist in character and that the state issuing from this revolution was a workers' state which, as a result of the isolation of the revolution in a backward country, went through a process of bureaucratic degeneration which can only be reversed by a political revolution, but which still retains the fundamental social and economic achievements of the October Revolution.

4) Acceptance of the dialectical relationship between the three sectors of the world revolution (proletarian revolution in the imperialist countries, politically degenerated workers' states, and the colonial revolution which grows over into a socialist revolution in the colonial and semi-colonial countries), with the different major tasks, delineated in the Transitional Program, which require the construction of a world revolutionary party for their accomplishment.

5) Agreement that the crisis of proletarian leadership is the main reason for the survival of capitalism during the last fifty years, which leads to the conclusion that the construction of a new revolutionary proletarian leadership is the central strategic task of our epoch, which can only be accomplished through struggle for the Transitional Program -- a bridge between the insufficient consciousness of the proletarian masses and the objective needs of the proletarian revolution -- and through efforts to transform class struggles into objectively revolutionary struggles for transitional demands.

6) Acceptance of the fact that, after a twenty-year decline since 1943, a new period of rise in the world revolution has opened up, which is reflected in, among other things, the victory of new socialist revolutions in Yugoslavia, China, North Vietnam, and Cuba, and in the creation of new workers' states in a revolutionary way (the first three bureaucratically deformed), while at the same time new bureaucratically deformed workers' states were achieved in Eastern Europe through military-bureaucratic action of the Soviet bureaucracy. This wave was interrupted in the years 1947-48, mainly through the betrayals

of Stalinism and reformism in Western Europe, but it has risen again since May 1968 in France.

7) Acceptance of the fact that the victory of these four new socialist revolutions without revolutionary Marxist leadership can only be explained through special, unique conditions (which were foreseen by Trotsky in the Transitional Program), and that they are therefore exceptions and not the rule. That as a rule -- and especially in the industrially advanced countries -- a revolutionary Marxist party is absolutely necessary to bring about further victories of the socialist revolution and the victory of the world socialist revolution in every country.

8) Acceptance of the fact that any hope for self-reform of the bureaucracy in the USSR and in the other bureaucratically deformed or degenerated workers' state is an illusion and is misleading to the masses. That only political revolution by the masses, led by a revolutionary party, can overthrow the rule of the bureaucracy -- a parasitic, privileged caste, not a new class. The main program of this political revolution is the restoration of soviet power with the right to form several workers' parties -- soviet power which is democratically centralized; that is, planned self-management of production and the systematic destruction of the material privileges of the bureaucracy.

9) The acceptance of the necessary class standpoint in national and international conflicts. This means, among other things, that despite the sharpest struggles against social democracy and Stalinism, we must not abandon either the defense of mass trade unions they lead, against the capitalist employers and the bourgeois state, or the defense of the USSR and the other bureaucratically deformed or degenerated workers' states against imperialism.

10) The acceptance of the historically progressive role played by national liberation movements of the underdeveloped colonial peoples. This means the duty of the international proletariat to support every actual step towards struggle against ruling imperialism, even when these steps are taken by bourgeois and petty-bourgeois political forces. At the same time we must maintain the independent organization and independent goals of struggle of the proletariat, ruthlessly criticizing the inadequacies, limitations, and half-heartedness of these forces, who are incapable of leading a struggle through to the end for the historical goals of the bourgeois-democratic revolution.



Today there is agreement between the International and IKD at least concerning these ten basic programmatic points and many others -- for example, as they were expressed in the programmatic document of the Reunification Congress of the Fourth International.

Under these conditions, any split would be unprincipled. Splits provoked by organizational or tactical differences are not justifiable in principle. Such splits mean in reality that the general programmatic foundation is considered less important than temporary tactical differences. The organizational sectarianism which is expressed in such splits corresponds with a fundamental political opportunism. For what characterizes opportunism is precisely the fact that program and principle are in practice subordinated to tactical considerations.

The refusal to carry out the decision of the December 1969 IEC means a split with the Fourth International because the International is built on the basis of democratic centralism. Decisions of the IEC are binding on all sections. Refusal to accept these decisions -- that is, refusal to accept majority rule and discipline -- means that those who make this break with democratic centralism no longer have any right to demand internal party democracy for themselves.

Some members of the IKD, who have systematically prepared such a split for some time, have tried to fabricate a "principled" bridge to such a split by defending the opinion that the existing Fourth International is not yet the Fourth International whose construction Trotsky called for. This is obviously sophistry.

Certainly the Fourth International is today still far from being a mass revolutionary international. It constitutes only the nucleus of the future world party of socialist revolution, which is still in the process of construction. But in the same way the IKD is far from being the class party of the German proletariat. It is not even the nucleus of this future party but at most one of several pre-nuclei which will at some time lead to this party.

But the IKD claims absolutely strict adherence to democratic centralism for its own members. Recently is even expelled one of its leading founding members for a "breach of discipline," without informing the whole membership of this "undisciplined act" and without first giving this comrade

the opportunity to defend himself before the whole membership.

It is therefore clear that the IKD is well aware that the principle of democratic centralism is applicable not only to revolutionary mass parties but also to relatively small party nuclei. However, if this is the case on a national level, it must also be applied on an international level, if one does not wish to degenerate into a "national communist" organization or into "verbal internationalism" which denies internationalism in action.

The split prepared for by a section of the IKD leadership is an open break with the principle of democratic centralism, a break even with the concept of the International as an international party whose decisions take precedence over all national decisions, as has been emphasized again and again by Lenin, Rosa Luxemburg, Trotsky and all internationalists since 1914. This fact only underlines the profoundly unprincipled nature of this split.

## II.

In order to present the prepared split from the Fourth International as "unavoidable" to the members of the IKD, the IKD leadership has interpreted the decision of the December 1969 IEC plenum on the split in the German section in a manner so dishonest that it borders on lying.

We therefore want to establish clearly that:

1) This decision in no way calls for the submission of the IKD to the central committee of the GIM in a democratic centralist manner.

2) This decision in no way forbids the IKD to publish its own organ or organs.

3) The right which is granted to the IKD to present its positions on controversial German questions in the journal Die Internationale is only an additional right, without any pre-censorship or any political conditions (here of course the comrades of the GIM correctly raise the question of participation in the material costs and in the distribution of the journal corresponding to the IKD's participation in the editorial side of the journal).

The only limitation that the IEC imposes on your publications is that they should be in the name of the IKD, and not in the name of "the IKD, minority of the German section of the Fourth International" or even worse

"the IKD, section of the Fourth International." The reason for this restriction is connected with a general organizational principle. Namely that the publication of minority tendency organs in public should not be legalized through a precedent. As compensation for this restriction the additional right is granted to you to express your political views in the organ Die Internationale, which appears as the organ of the German section and which at the present time is the only organ appearing as such. How this resembles "political suicide" can certainly only be explained through a post-Hegelian, post-Marxist, post-Leninist "logic."

The IEC has recommended that public polemics should not take place -- above all in the unpolitical form of hostilities, personal defamation and disputes, not over what the other side really thinks and writes but rather what is maliciously imputed to them. We don't deny that the way in which the GIM and IKD relate to each other publicly and the way in which the political discussion is carried out will have a bearing in the assessment by the International leadership of the political maturity and organizational seriousness of both groups. At least these factors will be taken into account in the report of the IEC to the next world congress on the German question.

But in no way has the IEC taken a decision which would forbid you from carrying out such polemics. How you will relate to this recommendation of the IEC depends on your sense of responsibility. The only binding restriction on you is that you must refrain from publicly designating yourselves as "section of the Fourth International" after the name IKD.

The really grotesque and unprincipled attitude expressed by your leadership in the declaration of January 23, 1970 is revealed by the following fact: that they are ready to break organizationally with the Fourth International simply in order to have the opportunity to write the words "section of the Fourth International" after your name for a year or half a year. We say "for a year or half a year" because even you, at least on paper, accept the possibility and desirability of a reunification with the GIM -- just as does the IEC and the GIM.

Isn't it obvious that manipulation was involved here, and that the real situation is being deliberately hidden from the membership of the IKD?

Why wasn't your decision taken at your national conference in December instead of waiting until January 23?

Why was so important a question as a split from the Fourth International for such insignificant reasons decided by a small group of people behind the backs of the membership?

It is your complete right to disagree with the decision of the IEC. You have the right to try to reverse it. There are definite procedures in the International for doing this. You can appeal to the United Secretariat. You can appeal this decision at the next plenum of the IEC, which will meet in about six months. You can request the opening of an internal discussion in the whole International (through internal bulletins) on these questions. These are your democratic rights, which have until now never been denied to any tendency in the International. The fact that the IEC decision explicitly recognizes you as a minority tendency in the International shows the readiness of the leadership of the International to actually grant you all these rights. The United Secretariat is hereby expressly confirming the same readiness.

But the exercise of this right to appeal is based on one condition: acceptance of, and carrying out of, the majority decision. Only those who accept the duties involved in democratic centralism can claim the rights involved in it. Refusal to carry out these duties, refusal to recognize decisions of leading bodies of the International, and refusal to carry out majority decisions means a break with the organization. If you refuse to carry out the IEC decisions, you thereby place yourselves outside of the Fourth International.

### III.

The declaration of the leadership of the IKD concerning the resolution of the December 1969 IEC on the split in the German section not only tries to present the split with the Fourth International as "unavoidable," but even to make this split seem palatable. That is the meaning of the last paragraphs of the "declaration," in which they pompously assert that "the German Bolshevik-Leninists" flatly deny the United Secretariat "any authority on German questions and several other questions from now on," and in which they throw in phrases like "the fundamental liquidationist line of the majority of the Ninth World Congress" and other similar gems carelessly strewn around.

Everyone has the right to dispute the "political authority" of a member of the International -- and therefore also of the United Secretariat. However,

when one represents barely .5% of the membership of the International, and when one has until now contributed as little to the building of the International as has the leadership of the IKD, it looks a little ridiculous. Especially when one charges "liquidationism" in regard to an International leadership which has in recent years achieved more success in spreading Trotskyist ideas, in recruiting revolutionaries, and in day-to-day revolutionary intervention in the mass movements and class struggles in the world than in the entire previous history of the Trotskyist movement.

The IKD does not have the right, however, to speak, in this connection, of an "assumed" political authority. There is nothing "assumed" about the authority of the United Secretariat. It is a matter of a democratic election by a duly-constituted IEC and a duly-constituted world congress which elects its leadership after long and democratic discussions.

What lies behind these seemingly wild and irresponsible formulas is again a cool, deliberate manipulation of the IKD membership, who are being maneuvered into a split with the International without knowing it, by means of a jumble of defamations of the International.

For what would the duty of the IKD leadership be if there really were a "liquidationist tendency" in the International? In this case it would be their elementary duty to take up the political fight against this tendency. They had ample opportunity to do this at the World Congress and since the World Congress. They could have presented political documents in the preparatory discussion before the World Congress and then at the World Congress. At the European conference they could have presented political documents criticizing the political analysis and policies of the European sections. They did none of these things.

In place of a political discussion or critique, we saw the "Bofra" delegation leave the World Congress for flimsy formal reasons without making any political contribution. Instead of a political discussion the IKD didn't appear at all at the European conference, with or without political documents. Furthermore, in the nine months since the World Congress we have not seen the Bofra-IKD make one single contribution to the International discussion, which was continued on many questions (China, European strategy, and now Latin America, not to speak of questions of the Arab revolution, the political revolution in the USSR, etc.) And in place of a serious

political critique of the International, the membership of the IKD is still today confronted with gossip and slanderous insinuations.

This attitude of the IKD leadership on the political line of the International can be explained in only two ways: Either these comrades don't take seriously the charge of a "fundamental liquidationist line" and "assumed political authority," in which case the use of these slanderous phrases reveals a fundamentally unprincipled and irresponsible attitude toward this discussion. Or on the other hand, these comrades have already given up any hope of convincing the majority of the International of the correctness of their views, even before their views have been expressed within the International on any occasion. And in this case their unprincipled course toward a split with the International does not derive from lack of confidence in the "political authority" of the International leadership but from lack of confidence in their own ability to influence the thousands of revolutionary Marxists who have come together in the Fourth International as a result of a long and complex process of selection. Opting for a "more pleasant" existence as a sect, untroubled by "claimed political authority" of the Fourth International and concentrated on Berlin, navel of the world, and a few dozen ex-Trotskyists: Is this the choice the majority of the IKD comrades have made?

In order to carry out a political discussion against the alleged "fundamental liquidationist line" of the majority of the Fourth International inside the organization, the discipline of this organization must be accepted, as Trotsky did between 1923 and 1928 in the Communist International and as the "Lefts" did in the Second International between 1907 and 1914. Refusal to accept this discipline means to give up the fight to rearm the organization. The leadership of the IKD bristles when the IEC reminds all members of the German section, and therefore also the IKD, that it is their fundamental duty to carry out the political line of the International. This attitude only confirms that actually it is not the "unfavorable" conditions set by the IEC at which the IKD takes offense, but rather that the discipline of the Fourth International has already become unbearable for them.

There is a very significant paragraph in the "declaration" of the IKD leadership which emphasizes the "common aspects" of the way the International leadership handled the German, Argentine, and Ceylonese questions at the World Congress. According to this declaration,

the International leadership "wantonly indulged in their preference for pure formalities."

Of course this is another slander. Everyone who reads the documents published by the International in the past years -- but these seem to be less "accessible" to the leadership of the IKD than serious Marxist literature produced by split-offs from Trotskyism such as Healy, Lambert, Lutte Ouvrière and Edmund Samarakoddy in Ceylon -- will clearly realize that the basic political questions of strategy in Latin America, in Ceylon and in Western Europe were certainly not passed over lightly. It is true that the International does not consider its function to be one of imposing decisions on national sections in tactical questions which are not agreed to by the majority of the membership of the section. As long as no fundamental principle of communism is violated -- as, for example, was done by the reformist majority of the LSSP -- the International is of the opinion that such reserve in the area of tactical questions contributes more in the long run to the development of revolutionary cadres and of a capable revolutionary leadership in each country. This view is confirmed by a careful study of the history of the Third as well as the Fourth International.

But what the IKD leadership terms "preference for pure formalities" is in reality the defense of an organizational principle, which is just as much a part of fundamental Marxist principles as the theory of the permanent revolution or the Leninist theory of the state (this is also explicitly stated in the Transitional Program). This principle is the principle of democratic centralism.

What was common to the situations in Argentina and Ceylon was that in both cases a minority, despite the advice and warning of the International, had refused to recognize majority decisions taken at regular congresses of the sections, and the sections had split in an irresponsible manner (because the splits were exclusively over tactical questions). We did not approve of this, nor will we ever approve of it.

For us, holding to this organizational principle is in principle more important than the question of who is right and who is wrong on tactical questions. Whoever will not recognize democratic centralism in practice, whoever tries to bring about unprincipled splits every time he is in a minority will never build a strong and serious revolutionary organization. This demands countless tactical turns. A group can be correct on a tactical question today

and wrong tomorrow. If, however, the common organizational framework is destroyed, then not only is the possibility destroyed to test in practice who was tactically right or wrong, but then all possibilities are destroyed for the "primitive accumulation of revolutionary cadres," without which even if one is tactically correct one is only correct on paper and can have no influence whatsoever on the day-to-day class struggles.

You violate the same organizational principle today if you split from the International for secondary reasons. This organizational principle is one of the basic pillars of Marxism. People who openly and cynically trample this principle underfoot and dismiss it as "pure formalism" have neither the right to call themselves Bolsheviks nor to claim to have anything in common with Leninism.

#### IV.

The January 23, 1970 "declaration" from the IKD leadership confirms the impression which comrade Walter had already received from your conference in December 1969. That is, that there are people within this leadership, if not in your rank-and-file, who have consciously been preparing a split with the International for a long time, and that to this end they had already established political and organizational ties with groups standing outside the Fourth International.

To understand the profoundly unprincipled character of this maneuver, you should examine the alleged "political differences" of the IKD with the Fourth International as compared with the deep-going programmatic differences that separate you from Lutte Ouvrière and the Healy-Lambert groups. But the "Bolsheviks" in your leadership have launched this maneuver without making clear to you the fundamental distinction between the differences between you and the International, on the one hand, and between you and the above-mentioned sects, on the other hand.

At your national conference of December 1969 a comrade of the IKD explained that a "yellow thread" ran through the history of the Fourth International: its attitude toward Tito, Ben Bella, Mao, Castro and Guevara. The example of this "yellow thread" in fact enables us to recognize the unprincipled character of the split, which was consciously prepared by the Ebmeier group.

Comrade Walter asked this comrade two questions:

1) Was it in principle wrong to give critical support to Tito against the Soviet bureaucracy, Ben Bella against French imperialism (and later against the bourgeois right wing of the FLN), Castro against American imperialism and the Cuban bourgeoisie (and later also against the Kremlin bureaucracy and their Cuban accomplices), Mao against Khrushchev, and Guevara against the revisionist, reformist Communist parties of Latin America? The answer of the IKD comrade was: no, it was in principle correct to do these things.

2) Did the International give uncritical support, or did it make criticisms of all these currents, combined with its support? The IKD comrade answered: Certainly, criticisms were made. (Which can easily be documented.)

The difference between the IKD and the International is thus at worst a tactical difference over the degree of criticism. At worst, the IKD comrades could be of the opinion that too little criticism was made too late, and too much support was given. This must be studied case by case, and not on the basis of gossip but on the basis of the abundant publications of the International. We eagerly await such an analysis. When we are convinced that we have made mistakes (as perhaps in some aspects of the critical support to Ben Bella), we are always ready to admit this openly (see the resolution of the IEC plenum on the Algerian revolution). But we must first be convinced of it through a serious analysis of each specific situation, which the IKD has not begun to do, not even for the purpose of clarifying their ideas for themselves.

But let us now consider the positions of the above-mentioned sects on these five very significant questions of revolutionary strategy and tactics in the last twenty years.

According to the Lutte Ouvrière group, there has scarcely been a beginning of a socialist revolution in any of the four countries in question. According to them, Yugoslavia, Cuba and China have capitalist social systems and a bourgeois state. According to them, in the Algerian revolution there was not the slightest "growing over" of the revolution from a national liberation struggle into a socialist revolution. According to them the class character of Mao Tse-Tung, and Chiang Kai-shek, of Castro and Batista, of Tito and King Peter were one and the same. For these reasons, and with fine "logic" (albeit the logic of insanity), these "Trotskyists" come to the conclusion that in the case of an armed conflict between Moscow and Belgrade or Moscow and Peking (that is, of an armed intervention by the Soviet bureaucracy

against the Yugoslavian or Chinese revolution), it would be their duty to defend the Soviet workers' state against "capitalist" Yugoslavia and "capitalist" China.

The Healy group recognizes Yugoslavia and China as workers' states because a Stalinist party is in power there, but for them Cuba is not a workers' state and Castro is "fundamentally" the same as Batista. Therefore these "Trotskyists" come to the logical conclusion that if, in the power struggle between Castro, who in spite of his weaknesses led a socialist revolution, and the Stalinist Escalante-Blas Roca clique, who tried by all methods to impede the revolution, if the latter had won (or perhaps if it were to win in the future), then Cuba could perhaps be recognized as a "degenerated workers' state." But as long as the "capitalist politician" Castro is in power "the bourgeoisie rules there."

Concerning the Lambert group, it really hit the bulls-eye of "orthodox Trotskyism" in the Algerian question. Not only did they refuse to support the liberation struggle of the FLN against French imperialism (which would have been worthy of support even if one considered the FLN as a purely bourgeois movement, which was of course false), but they established close ties with a rival organization, the MNA, which at first started an armed adventure with "occasional" collaboration with the imperialists against the FLN (the so-called case of Bellounis) in Algeria, and afterwards openly went over to the camp of DeGaulle.

These groups can only justify their continued existence as sects outside the Fourth International, which organizes the vast majority of comrades who consider themselves Trotskyists, through fabricating continual "proofs" of "revisionism" and not shrinking in the least from using Stalinist methods. They use slander, outright falsification of documents (see E. Germain: Marxism versus Ultraleftism, p. 2-7), and even physical violence (as in the so-called Tate case in Great Britain and the aggressive behavior of the Lambertists in France).

All this culminated a few weeks ago in the response of the Lambertists to the campaign for the liberation of our comrades who were thrown into prison and tortured by imperialism in Bolivia. In typical Stalinist fashion, the Lambertists charged the secretary of the POR with being an "agent of the government." The secretary of the POR is Hugo Gonzales Moscoso, who has been part of the Trotskyist movement for

thirty years, who once was the Trotskyist candidate for president, and who is known throughout Latin America as an outstanding revolutionary. (The "proof" for this charge is the imprisonment of his co-fighters by the same regime!) They didn't say a single word demanding the release of the imprisoned comrades. Only the French Communist Party today can outdo this example of factional, sectarian falsification within the workers' movement, this complete denial of all principles of class solidarity and workers' democracy.

And some leaders of your organization want to make a bloc with such sects against the Fourth International, despite the wide principled differences between you. Such is the "Bolshevik" politics of the Ebmeier group.

In principle we are for the unity of all Trotskyists in a single International. We believe that tactical differences can be solved through the rules of democratic centralism. We believe that patient discussions can also sometimes resolve principled differences. But an organization calling itself revolutionary will be judged, above all, by its attitude toward real revolutions. The partly sectarian, partly opportunistic attitude of the Lutte Ouvrière and Healy-Lambert groups toward living revolutions can't help but profoundly discredit them in the eyes of the international vanguard. Trotskyism would certainly be destroyed if the line of the International had to conform to the line of these people. By successfully defending the program and traditions of revolutionary Marxism against them, we have not only assured the existence and future of the Fourth International, but we have also made a decisive contribution to building the International. For, as Lenin so often explained: without ties to the actual revolutionary mass struggle, without merging in practice with this struggle, any attempt at "building" a "revolutionary" organization is pure capriciousness and sectarian games.

It is from fishing in the trash cans of these sects that the leadership of your organization has suddenly discovered "scandals" in the history of the International -- like, for instance, the lies that the French section allied itself with the imperialist bourgeoisie in the second world war and "betrayed" proletarian internationalism; or that entrism was explained and justified through the perspective of an expected revolutionary seizure of power by the Western European CP -- which Ebmeier came out with at your national conference. It is from the same source of Stalinist-type slanders that you expose a newly-discovered

"double scandal" in your "declaration" of January 23, 1970. The United Secretariat supposedly bears the responsibility for the "debacle of Trotskyism" in Ceylon, "its former stronghold," and "like all centrists, they shy away from any examination of of their past...like the Devil shies away from holy water."

It is a blatant lie to say that the United Secretariat has shied away from an "examination of its past" on the Ceylonese question, and that therefore it got rid of Comrade Edmund, an "unwelcome critic." The United Secretariat has devoted three long studies to the roots of the "Ceylonese debacle": Pierre Frank, "L'effondrement d'une équipe révolutionnaire à Ceylon" (Quatrième Internationale, No. 22, July 1964); Ernest Germain, "De l'irrésolution à la capitulation" (Quatrième Internationale, No. 23, November 1964); Ernest Germain, "Marxism vs. Ultraleftism" pages 2-5, 18-26 (December 1966). These documents comprise thirty tightly packed pages full of political analysis. They prove, among other things, that the leadership of the International was the first to sharply criticize the opportunistic politics of the LSSP leadership, even before a left minority developed within this party, and while Healy was still running after the LSSP to win it for his "International Committee." One can have differences of opinion with this long political analysis. We are waiting for a corresponding analysis from the leadership of the IKD, which would clarify for us exactly "how one could have acted otherwise and thus prevented the 'debacle.'" But this leadership has no right to hide from their membership the fact that this analysis exists, and instead to shamelessly assert that the International leadership has "shrunk away from" an illumination of the relationships between the LSSP and the Fourth International in the past.

One word about the attitude of Comrade Edmund: he committed a serious mistake in lowering the dispute with the majority of the section around Comrade Bala to the level of defamations and of slandering Bala with acting as an "agent of the bourgeoisie if not also of imperialism." The IKD leadership, who also drags this kind of slander into their "declaration" of January 23, (Comrade Bala had "at least objectively aided the class enemy") should be aware that these slanders are not only "objectively" of a Stalinist nature, but that these slanders actually originate with the Ceylonese Stalinists, and are spread by them and by the reformist LSSP in a desperate attempt to combat the growing mass influence of



Comrade Bala.

It is quite clear today what these slanders amount to. For more than six months Comrade Bala has been leading a continual strike battle against the reactionary government and the bosses. This strike has brought about the sharpest confrontations with capitalism in five years and a significant defeat for the class enemy. The reformists of the LSSP, from whom Edmund has borrowed the charge that Bala is "friendly with the government," either came out as open strike breakers on the side of the government or, like the CP, were forced to meekly join the united front with the "imperialist agent" Bala. As for Edmund, he "supported" the strike from the outside, without having the slightest influence on its course, and without having the elementary honesty to admit Bala's leading role in the strike, much less to revise his slanderous charge that Bala's role was "objectively favorable to the class enemy." This should really end this discussion for the IKD, at least at the level that Edmund and Ebmeier want to conduct it.

#### V.

The need for an international revolutionary organization, not only as a model for the future or an ideal, but as a practical reality -- is rooted in the nature of imperialism, its society, its economy, and its superstructure, and also in the nature of Marxist thought itself. The single test of theory, in the end, is through practice. Thus the famous rule "without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary practice" must also be dialectically reversed: "without revolutionary practice there can be no revolutionary theory." Both sayings are equally correct; that is, they are only correct when taken together. In the epoch of imperialism, this means concretely: Without international revolutionary practice there is no international revolutionary theory, i.e., no correct revolutionary theory whatsoever.

Outside of an international revolutionary organization, not only is it impossible to successfully lead a "national" revolutionary struggle, but it is also impossible to grasp theoretically the objective development of the class struggle. In this epoch of world economy and world politics, any political activity which is limited by national boundaries is an incomplete, fragmented activity, and can therefore lead to an incomplete and fragmented consciousness. Such a fragmented consciousness inevitably becomes a "wrong consciousness." The brief activity of the Bofra, or IKD, has already furnished a striking example of this.

Proceeding from the discussions in the West Berlin and West German student movement and from the problems involved in Trotskyist intervention into this movement, the "Bofra" comrades had worked out a strategic conception which correctly recognized the decisive importance of the youth -- especially young workers -- in building revolutionary parties. They therefore concentrated on the problem of building a revolutionary youth organization. At the same time, however, they have schematically and dogmatically raised some conjunctural peculiarities of the West German working class into the "theoretical foundation" for a strategy. They advance the theory that in the present stage of neo-capitalism, the working class is not even capable of attaining a trade union consciousness, because it lacks a class party (and a revolutionary leadership in the trade unions). Therefore in the immediate future it is out of the question to introduce agitation and activity around transitional slogans (especially the slogan of workers' control) in the working class. Thus all perspectives for intervention into workers' struggles are lost. According to the IKD, the fight for workers' democracy is not an immediate task because the workers cannot comprehend, much less conduct such a fight. Consistent revolutionary work can only be done among the apprentices (sic).

This theory had scarcely been advanced when the actual development of the class struggle in all of Western Europe demonstrated how false this "theory" was and how expressive of petty-bourgeois arrogance toward the West-European proletariat. Massive wildcat strikes broke out in one country after another -- in France, Great Britain, Italy, West Germany, Sweden, Belgium and Denmark. Not only did the working class spontaneously apply some of the best traditions of the past -- such as building independent strike committee -- not only did they openly take up the struggle against the trade union bureaucracy and for trade union democracy, but they were quite obviously ready to integrate transitional demands into their movement wherever revolutionary forces were present and made the slightest efforts in this direction.

The International has made a detailed analysis of this phenomenon of the present rise of workers' struggles in Western Europe. (Lead article in Quatrième Internationale, No. 40, November 1969) (German translation in Was Tun, No. 10) As indicated by the extremely interesting discussion at the European conference of December 1969, European Trotskyists in about a dozen countries not only have already had rich experiences in the theoretical understanding of this phenomenon, but their actual

participation in these struggles enables them to clarify many disputed questions on a higher theoretical level. By voluntarily abstaining from these discussions, the IKD leadership is consciously hiding from its membership the growing proletarian character of the European Trotskyist movement, the winning of hundreds of worker comrades and the building of countless connections in the most important industrial enterprises in Western Europe during the past year. Moreover, they have, from the beginning, made their organization incapable either of drawing the necessary conclusions from these common international experiences for building the German section, or of adjusting their strategical conception to the changed subjective conditions.

This should be a lesson to all comrades of the IKD. A split with the International can only lead to the organizational and political degeneration of the IKD: firstly, because a correct revolutionary line cannot be obtained outside of collective international activity and outside of the International; and secondly, because any split-off group succumbs to the inexorable pressure of reification, and therefore tends to manufacture continual differences with the International and with revolutionary Marxism in order to justify its independent existence as a sect before its members and its small periphery. The unprincipled split which your leadership is preparing today can only lead to unprincipled politics. This is the lesson of all splits in the history of the Fourth International.

The choice is still open to you, but it is five minutes before midnight!

The IEC and the United Secretariat are convinced that the split in the German section can be overcome after a political discussion, a discussion of organizational structure, and a period

of practical collaboration during these discussions. But this can only be done on the basis of the International, its program, and its organization. A reunification is possible only if you accept this basis, if you accept a democratic centralist International, and therefore if you recognize and carry out the decisions of the December 1969 plenum of the IEC (of course, with the right to criticize these decisions within the organization and to fight to change them). Any step outside this framework makes a split with the International unavoidable and therefore finalizes the split in the German section.

Consider carefully the contents of the IEC decisions and the slight concessions they demand of you. Consider whether they justify a split without any previous discussion inside the International, and even without the previous elaboration of any political differences whatsoever.

Consider carefully whether you have consciously thought through and approve the step toward an unprincipled bloc with the Lutte Ouvrière group, if not also with the Healy-Lambert group, which would be a half-way house along the road to vegetating as "Trotskyism in one country," if not "in one (divided) city," in other words, to a break with Trotskyism.

The decision is now yours!

Back to Trotskyism! Back to the Fourth International!

The alternative is open to you to remain within the International, without having to give up any of your political convictions. If you don't choose this alternative, the only alternative left is that of a sect.