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THE ICFI DEFENDS TROTSKYISM

1982-1986

Documents of the Struggle against the WRP Renegades

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Editorial

In this issue of *Fourth International,* we reprint the major documents of the struggle within the International Committee which culminated in February 1986 with the desertion of the Workers Revolutionary Party. These documents were originally published in the internal bulletins of those sections representing the majority of the International Committee, and were thoroughly discussed among the entire membership.

In our previous issue, we published the International Committee's exhaustive analysis of the degeneration of the Healy-Banda-Slaughter leadership of the Workers Revolutionary Party. This statement, "How the WRP Betrayed Trotskyism: 1973-1985," established that the collapse of the Workers Revolutionary Party in the autumn of last year was the product of opportunism. Based on a meticulous analysis of the political line of the WRP over more than a decade, the International Committee *proved* that Healy, Banda and Slaughter had, from the early 1970s, abandoned the struggle against Pabloite revisionism, rejected proletarian internationalism, and repudiated the theory of Permanent Revolution. On this basis, the statement established, the WRP had systematically betrayed the working class internationally and in Britain, and worked consciously to destroy the International Committee.

It has come as no surprise to the International Committee that this document has been greeted by all factions of the renegades with a stony silence. Neither the two competing factions of the WRP led by Healy and Slaughter, nor the so-called Communist Forum of Michael Banda, have acknowledged its existence. Their mutual silence is just one expression of their own inability to provide any Marxist analysis of the fate of the organization over which they presided jointly for so many years. Even more damning, neither Healy, Slaughter nor Banda have yet produced a coherent explanation of their supposed differences on questions of program and perspectives. This is one case where sound and fury have, indeed, signified nothing. For all the organizational bloodletting, none of them have explained, from the standpoint of the strategy and tactics of the world socialist revolution, why they split. The reason for this is that their essential differences are not with each other, but with the International Committee.

When the old clique leadership was confronted with a massive organizational crisis inside the WRP which could no longer be controlled, Banda and Slaughter broke with Healy on an utterly unprincipled basis — cynically using the middle-class slogan of "revolutionary morality" (initially introduced by Bill Hunter) to avoid any analysis of the real source of the political crisis. Prior to September 1985, Banda and Slaughter collaborated with Healy to impose a right-wing opportunist line upon the International Committee and to bureaucratically suppress and destroy all those who sought to defend Trotskyism. From the moment Banda and Slaughter realized that a decisive majority on the International Committee would not accept a phony bureaucratic settlement of the crisis inside the WRP and was determined to restore the program and principles of Trotskyism within the British section, they worked feverishly to split the WRP from the ICFI.

The documents reprinted in this issue comprise a comprehensive record of the struggle waged by the International Committee and its sympathizing section in the United States, the Workers League, against the political betrayals of the WRP. It demonstrates irrefutably that this struggle has been based on a defense of Trotskyist principles and program. On the other hand, the position of the WRP, before and after 1985, has been characterized by a virulent hostility to these same principles. Despite what appears at first glance to be a massive upheaval in the WRP, its political trajectory today is not substantially different from what it was prior to the split. For years the WRP leadership sought to conceal its abandonment of Trotskyism by bolstering the prestige of Healy, which had been originally based on his identification with the revolutionary principles he had defended against the Pabloite-SWP reunification of 1963. On the eve of the explosion inside the WRP, there existed no fundamental difference between its line and that of the Pabloites. The collapse of the Healy regime broke up the old ruling clique of Healy, Banda and Slaughter; but it did not produce a change in the revisionist orientation of any of its constituent elements.

Among the most outrageous lies circulated by Banda and Slaughter to justify their decision to split from the International Committee was that the ICFI did not really want to fight Healy and was only reluctantly drawn into the battle after it had been initiated by a group of conspirators from within Healy's apparatus. This myth became the basis for the Banda-Slaughter line that the ICFI sections and the Workers League did not want to break from their own "Healyism." These slanders are refuted by the historical record represented by the documents in this volume.

The editors believe that the documentary record speaks for itself, but we offer this brief introductory outline to assist the reader. Between 1982 and 1984, an extensive critique of the opportunist line of the WRP and the subjective idealist distortion of materialist dialectics upon which it was based

was presented by David North, the national secretary of the Workers League. The fact that there exists no written reply on the part of the WRP to these criticisms proves that North withdrew them only because the leadership of the British section, which still dominated the International Committee, threatened to immediately sever all organizational relations with the Workers League. After first informing North in October 1982 that they agreed with his critique of Healy's writings on dialectics, Banda and Slaughter almost immediately came to an agreement with Healy to suppress further discussion of the differences on philosophy and their clear political implications.

From then on, Slaughter attempted to mount an offensive against the Workers League based on spurious allegations that it failed to appreciate the significance of Hegel in the development of dialectical materialism. As soon became clear, his alliance with Healy and his factional activities were based on political positions that were essentially Pabloite. His letter to North in December 1983 attacked the "very heavy emphasis" placed by the Workers League on the struggle for the political independence of the American working class during the US invasion of Grenada, and claimed that such emphasis *"will become a weapon in the hands of all those who retain the mark of pragmatism."* [See p.27] In a reply dated December 27, 1983, North warned that the position advanced by Slaughter "would lead, if accepted by the Workers League, straight toward outright opportunism." He added:

"I must admit that I am disturbed by the very suggestion that an emphasis on the 'political independence of the working class' could be characterized as 'very heavy' within the International Committee — especially in relation to the report from a sympathizing section in a country in which the working class has not yet broken politically from the liberals. All the organizational, political and theoretical tasks of a Marxist party — above all, in the United States — are directed precisely toward the achievement of this political independence.

"...The whole fight against the SWP since 1961 — not to mention the entire history of the struggle of Bolshevism — has hinged on this very issue. Far from embracing the concept of the political independence of the working class, it is under relentless attack by Stalinists and revisionists all over the world today. The neo-Stalinism of the SWP does not originate in the head of Mr. Barnes, but is a very definite response of US imperialism to the new stage of the capitalist crisis and the revolutionary upsurge of the world proletariat. In this way Pabloism serves as a medium for the transmission of imperialist pressures into the workers' movement. As I have heard you insist so many times in the past, it is at precisely such a point that the International Committee must be on the alert for any trace of the revisionist outlook within its own ranks and at the same time intensify its political and theoretical assault against Pabloism. As you will certainly agree, this fight against Pabloism is by no means behind us." [See pp.32-33]

There was no reply to this letter nor to that written by North to Mike Banda, the WRP's general secretary, one month later. North reported that the Workers League was *"deeply troubled by the growing signs of a political drift toward positions quite similar — both in conclusions and methodology — to those which we have historically associated with Pabloism."* [See p. 35] He called for *"a renewal of our struggle against Pabloite revisionism — above all, against the manifestations of its outlook within our own sections"* and declared that *"The time has certainly come for the International Committee to issue its reply to the attacks of the SWP neo-Stalinists on the theory of Permanent Revolution and to demonstrate that it remains the indispensable scientific foundation for the building of the World Party of Socialist Revolution."* [See p.38]

On February 11, 1984, at a meeting of the International Committee (from which a number of sections had been arbitrarily excluded by the WRP), North explicitly warned the WRP that its political evolution mirrored the repudiation of Trotskyism by revisionist groups, spear-headed by the SWP, all over the world. He listed the most glaring examples of the WRP's descent into the crassest opportunism.

There was no reasoned response to the criticisms of the Workers League; only the threat of an immediate split. However, insofar as the WRP had any defense to make of its abandonment of a Trotskyist program, it was made by Cliff Slaughter. In the resolution he prepared for the 10th Congress of the International Committee, Slaughter asserted that *"in today's historic conditions the lines drawn between a revolutionary party based on dialectical materialist training on the one hand, and groups formally adhering to Trotskyist program on the other, are lines between preparation for revolution and preparation to serve counterrevolution."*

This insidious formulation, aimed at blackguarding the Workers League and anyone else who defended a Trotskyist program as budding counterrevolutionaries, exposes the crucial role played by Slaughter as the high priest of the Healy cult — devising the theoretical line which justified all manner of revisionism by the WRP. Slaughter, who insisted in private correspondence with Healy on the need for a "no holds barred" struggle against the Workers League [See p.93], defended the old charlatan's travesty of dialectics because it provided a smokescreen for the WRP's relentless attack on Trotskyism and the International Committee.

The record of the conflict between the WRP and the Workers League from 1982 to 1984, despite its bureaucratic suppression by Healy, Banda and Slaughter, disclosed the fundamental political and theoretical differences within the International Committee and is essential for an evaluation of the development of the struggle in 1985-86.

The dirty scandal which erupted inside the WRP leadership on July 1, 1985 — when Healy's depraved sexual abuse of female cadre, some of them underage, was exposed with the arrival of a letter written by his long-time personal secretary — merely brought to the surface the extent of the political rot inside the highest bodies of the organization. For a period, Healy, Banda and Slaughter contrived to suppress the crisis by trying to head off efforts by party members — principally WRP Central Committee member Dave Hyland — to convene an investigation by the Control Commission. As late as August 17, 1985, the WRP leadership called a meeting of the International Committee to raise vast sums of money to overcome a financial crisis in the British organization — without saying a word about the scandal in the leadership.

But in September and October, as news of the scandal became known to more and more members of the WRP, the sections of the International Committee gradually learned about the real state of affairs inside the British organization. With the entire clique leadership totally discredited, the International Committee alone possessed authority in the eyes-

of the WRP rank and file — especially as it learned for the first time of the suppressed political and theoretical criticisms which had been made by the Workers League over the previous three years. Lacking any platform of their own, Banda and Slaughter played for time by declaring their unconditional solidarity with the International Committee. In a written statement to all sections of the International Committee dated October 5, 1985, Slaughter declared that North had his *"complete support and confidence, and that this support and confidence are shared by Comrade M. Banda."* [See p.48]

Claiming absolute loyalty to the International Committee and full agreement with the positions of North, Slaughter wrote: *"We hope that you will subject what Comrade North has to say to a thorough and objective analysis, and then join us in summoning up every ounce of revolutionary energy and resource to face up to, and go beyond the stage the IC has reached.*

"We have complete confidence that this will prove the most decisive and positive step in the history of the IC, and that together we can arm all our sections for a decisive turn to the working class and real gains in the building of the International Committee." [See p.48]

At that time, a contrite Cliff Slaughter had not yet hit upon the idea that the whole IC was a degenerate Healyite organization. He readily acknowledged that the WRP had betrayed the ICFI and sought to subordinate it to the national interests of the British organization. He even offered, in the best parliamentary traditions, to resign from the secretaryship of the International Committee. When he returned to Britain, he delivered a report to the WRP Central Committee on October 12 which consisted largely of material which he plagiarized from the documents written by North between 1982 and 1984. He also told the Central Committee that "However bizarre and idiosyncratic the inner mechanics" of Healy's degeneration, "the process itself has a definite and political character — Pabloite revisionism and the destruction of the cadres of the International Committee."

The work of the International Committee in October 1985 — the period when Healy was charged and expelled from the Workers Revolutionary Party — is described in detail in the letter of the Workers League Political Committee, dated December 11, 1985, to the WRP Central Committee [See pp.77-100]. This statement — whose factual accuracy was never challenged by the WRP — records the efforts of the ICFI to create the conditions for a discussion within the WRP between the contending factions and its opposition to precipitous organizational solutions. It shows the stark difference between the precision with which the ICFI assessed the crisis inside the WRP and the utter prostration of Banda and Slaughter — neither of whom were able to present any explanation for the collapse of their organization. It was during this period, when Slaughter and Banda realized that the ICFI would not accept a factional solution to the inner-party crisis that buried the essential political issues, that they made their first moves to split from the International Committee.

However, they were still too weak to move openly against the International Committee in front of the WRP membership. On October 25, after carefully reviewing irrefutable evidence of Healy's willful abuse of cadre in the WRP and international movement, the ICFI passed a resolution for expulsion. Banda and Slaughter, representing the majority on the WRP Central Committee, voted for another resolution which called for "The *re-registration of the membership of the WRP on the basis of an explicit recognition of the political authority of the ICFI and the subordination of the British section to its decisions."* [See p.50]

This meeting was boycotted by the Greek and Spanish sections of the ICFI which declared that there existed no authority within the ICFI except the personal dictates of Gerry Healy. One day later, the representatives of the pro-Healy minority split from the WRP and the ICFI.

The development of the struggle after October 25 is exhaustively documented in this volume and it need not be reviewed here in detail. The record shows that almost within hours of the split with Healy the WRP began moving to repudiate the Resolution of October 25 (which had been unanimously endorsed by the WRP Central Committee on October 26 and then passed with no votes against at the WRP Special Conference on October 27) and break with the International Committee. Just as Healy would not accept an International Committee not dominated and controlled by the British organization, neither would Banda and Slaughter. From the moment they realized that there could be no return to the status quo as it had existed before the explosion inside the WRP, that the International Committee would oppose the continuation of the opportunist line that had been pursued by the WRP before the split with Healy, that the IC would insist on a resumption of the struggle against Pabloite revisionism and the restoration of a Trotskyist program inside the WRP itself, and that the WRP would have to function as a disciplined organization within the International Committee on the basis of democratic centralism, Banda and Slaughter began working for a split.

It was Slaughter, with the assistance of Bill Hunter and a number of university lecturers (G. Pilling, T. Kemp, and C. Smith), who played the major role in carrying this through. Capitalizing on the disorientation of the WRP membership, which was almost totally uneducated on the foundations of Trotskyism and knew nothing about the International Committee, Slaughter and others in the WRP apparatus initiated a hate campaign against the ICFI, which was built around the lie that there had been equal degeneration throughout the International Committee. This was nothing other than a reactionary diversion cynically employed to organize the split with the ICFI and begin regroupment with Pabloite, centrist and even Stalinist organizations in Britain and all over the world.

Without any prior discussion on the ICFI, Slaughter chose a public meeting in London's Friends Hall on November 26, 1985, attended by hundreds of revisionists, to publicly attack the International Committee and call into question its *Security and the Fourth International* investigation into the penetration and takeover of the American SWP by the police agencies of US imperialism. The Friends Hall meeting showed clearly that the WRP was moving rapidly to regroup with all sorts of Pabloite, centrist and Stalinist forces. This was symbolized by Slaughter's public handshake with a leading Stalinist and specialist in anti-Trotskyism, Monty Johnstone.

Prior to the Friends Hall meeting, Slaughter had never indicated the slightest disagreement with *Security and the Fourth International* and its findings. Indeed, just six weeks earlier he had emphatically defended it in front of the Cen-

tral Committee of the Workers League. Slaughter had played a major role in the initiation of the investigation and was the featured speaker at the first public meeting held in the United States, in 1975, on this issue. He carefully followed the development of the investigation in all its stages. Slaughter was fully apprised of all the facts relating to Alan Gelfand's lawsuit against the United States government and its agents inside the SWP. On the eve of the trial in March 1983, in official papers on file with the District Court in Los Angeles, he was even designated, with his agreement, as an potential "expert witness" on Gelfand's behalf.

The attack on *Security and the Fourth International* was cynically utilized for two purposes: first, as a factional weapon against the Workers League under conditions in which a judicial decision on the Gelfand case was still pending; and second, to remove what few barriers remained between the WRP and revisionist organizations all over the world. For Slaughter, the burning historical and political questions arising from the assassination of Leon Trotsky in 1940 — about which he himself had written at length — were an obstacle to his immediate political goals.

A witness to Slaughter's performance at Friends Hall, Peter Schwarz of the German section of the ICFI, the Bund Sozialistischer Arbeiter (BSA), warned the WRP Central Committee:

"Having closely watched Comrade Slaughter's actions during the last six weeks I am more and more convinced that he follows his own political course, which he does not intend to discuss with anybody, thereby using the political confusion prevailing in the WRP after the expulsion of the Healy group to break it up.

"It is a course of liquidating the WRP into a 'broad left,' which would become indispensable for the bourgeoisie to control the working class, should a Labour or Labour coalition government come to power. In this way the conditions for a popular front type formation emerge.

"This is not a repudiation of the political degeneration that took place under Healy's leadership, but a continuation in another form." [See p.74]

In December the interim report that had been prepared by an International Control Commission established that the WRP had entered, behind the back of the International Committee, into mercenary relations with reactionary and non-proletarian forces and was responsible for direct betrayals of the working class. Because these actions were based on an anti-Trotskyist line for which the entire leadership of the WRP was responsible, the International Committee voted, on December 16, 1985, to suspend the British section. In doing so, it made clear that the WRP's membership would be restored if its leadership worked to "reassert the basic principles of internationalism within the WRP."

The ICFI thus called on the British delegation — which consisted of Slaughter, Simon Pirani, Tom Kemp and Dave Hyland — to support a resolution reaffirming the WRP's support for the programmatic foundations of Trotskyism, which the ICFI defined as *"the decisions of the First Four Congresses of the Communist International (1919-1922); the Platform of the Left Opposition (1927); the Transitional Program (1938); the "Open Letter" (1953); and the documents of the struggle against the bogus SWP-Pabloite reunification (1961-63)."* [See p. 102]

With the exception of Hyland, the leader of a minority tendency inside the WRP which supported the International Committee, the British delegates opposed this resolution. Slaughter, Pirani and Kemp flatly refused to give any explanation for their vote on this resolution, which, presumably, merely reaffirmed principles with which the WRP claimed to agree. But the political meaning of their action was clear: in repudiating the programmatic foundations of Trotskyism, they were declaring their solidarity with the whole Pabloite opportunist line that had been the content of the WRP's policies prior to the split with Healy. The vote proved irrefutably that the Slaughter-Banda faction was continuing the same opportunist anti-Trotskyist course that had characterized the line of the WRP during the previous decade. That is why the split between the International Committee and the Workers Revolutionary Party became unavoidable.

The manner in which the split was carried out in January-February 1986 — with the Slaughter-Banda faction repudiating the resolution of October 25, violating the constitutional rights of an official minority, and calling the police to bar the supporters of the International Committee from the scheduled Eighth Congress of the WRP — exposed the real class content of Slaughter's and Hunter's "revolutionary morality" and expressed the completeness of the WRP's programmatic break with Trotskyism and its desertion to the camp of revisionism.

The political platform upon which the split was carried out was supplied by Michael Banda, whose document "27 Reasons Why the International Committee Should Be Buried and the Fourth International Built" represented the most vicious denunciation of Trotskyism ever written by an individual associated with the Fourth International. Even as he was writing this document, Banda was in Sri Lanka renewing political relations with the arch-opportunist Colvin De Silva, one of the architects of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party's 1963 entry into a bourgeois coalition government. Banda's diatribe was followed by publication of a resolution, "Dissolve the IC," which characterized the International Committee as an "anticommunist" organization.

Subsequently, Banda split from the WRP to form a neo-Stalinist discussion group called the "Communist Forum." Not a single public statement explaining the split has ever been issued by the Workers Revolutionary Party.

Slaughter, Pirani and Hunter would later try to distance themselves from the smell left behind by Banda by claiming that his "27 Reasons" as well as a front-page denunciation of the International Committee and David North was printed in the February 7, 1986 edition of their *Workers Press* without the authorization of the WRP Central Committee. In any Marxist organization, such a breach of discipline would be immediate grounds for expulsion. But it was not Banda and his supporters who were expelled. Rather, Slaughter, Hunter and Pirani collaborated with Banda to bar a legitimate minority from the WRP Eighth Congress and then expel them from the party.

The role of Hunter deserves special mention, inasmuch as his lame critique of Banda's diatribe has recently made him something of a literary lion in revisionist circles. His "Michael Banda and the Bad Man Theory of History" is agreeable to the Pabloites because his disagreement with Banda is confined only to events which occurred before 1953; that is, he makes no defense whatsoever of the International Committee and its struggle against revisionism. This was, of course, no oversight. As we have pointed out,

he was one of the prime movers of the "revolutionary morality" campaign — and attempted, in a particularly banal manner, to claim that it constituted the "axis" of the *Transitional Program: "Every comrade who was incensed at Healy's activity and participated in his expulsion was answering the question: What sort of leader does the working class and its revolutionary vanguard need?"* This is the language of a petty-bourgeois democrat, not a revolutionary Marxist.

Writing rhapsodically about the development of the WRP between October 1985 and February 1986 — as it was completing its break from Trotskyism — Hunter wrote: *"A great development in thinking is taking place in our Party as a result of the reality of struggle. It is the split which has brought every comrade to thinking on basic problems."*

It is now possible to evaluate the outcome of this "great development" of thought.

Since the split with the International Committee, the WRP has transformed its *Workers Press* into a public bulletin board in which every revisionist and Stalinist group is welcome to post their anti-Trotskyist notices. No attack on Trotskyism is too grotesque to be rejected. Every week carries a new denunciation. In the July 26 issue, there is a letter from one Geoff Barr, who, in the course of a wild misrepresentation of the well-known difference between Lenin and Trotsky on the trade union question in the Soviet Union, claims: *"The position of the WRP under Healy was closer to Trotsky's in the 1920-21 trades unions debate than to Lenin's."*

In its August 2 issue, the pages of the *Workers Press* were thrown open to a Stalinist group, members of the British Communist Party, who publish a rag called *The Leninist.* These reactionaries took the opportunity to denounce Trotskyism for its "manifest irrelevancy" — a product of its refusal to recognize that the Stalinist parties all over the world are the revolutionary vanguard of the working class. Denouncing Trotsky's break with the Comintern in 1933, *The Leninist* declared:

"The new orientation toward the construction of a 'Fourth International' was in fact a defeatist desertion of the advanced section of the proletariat, organized then, as now, mainly within the communist parties."

The letter went on to leave unanswered the question "Whether the killing of Trotskyists is justifiable or not..."

On the opposite page of the same issue, there was a letter from one Tom Cowen, who wrote:

"It is the illusory concept that Trotskyism is a Revolutionary Marxist tendency that has decapitated the revolutionary working class leadership and turned potential class leaders into tail-ending the agents of capital and abettors of the leadership crisis."

In the issue of August 23, Cyril Smith — one of Healy's long-time academic toadies and another born-again "revolutionary moralist" — openly attacked Trotsky's conception of the political revolution. In an article commemorating the thirtieth anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution, Smith had this to say about the position taken by the International Committee in 1956:

think we were limited by our resources, both theoretical and material, to defending the positions of Trotsky of two decades earlier.

"We struggled to force the new world of the 1950s into the theoretical framework of the 1930s...

"We were always too easily satisfied with having the theory that was 'correct' in Trotsky's day, instead of doing what he himself had done, fighting at every stage to take this theory forward."

The August 30 issue of *Workers Press* welcomed another letter from Tom Cowen, who, with unsurpassed ignorance, declared that Trotsky *"mistook the Russian bureaucracy with all its weaknesses as the true substance of the Soviet system.*

"Trotsky did not penetrate below this surface and recognize that the Soviet people, the human embodiment of the Socialist system being developed, constituted the true substance of the system."

Advocating capitulation to Stalinism, Cowen asserted:

"The great weakness flowing from the Trotskyist analysis of the counterrevolutionary nature of Stalinism, is that it deprives the movement of a world revolutionary perspective, in the struggle for revolution of a backward, isolated country such as Bolivia, Ceylon, etc. particularly during a period of revolutionary ebb on the world scene.

"Who can doubt that the revolutions in the Caribbean would have been defeated shortly after birth but for Soviet aid? One cannot mark time waiting for world revolution; one cannot always exist in isolation.

"This lack of perspective for close ties with the Soviets leads Trotskyism to hesitation, vacillation and finally to unity with dubious 'left' elements and world social democracy as an international base and protective cloak from world imperialism. The results we know only too well, as demonstrated in Ceylon and Bolivia."

These are not merely the views of the nonentity Tom Cowen. He is simply a convenient vehicle utilized by those in the leadership of the WRP who want pro-Stalinist propaganda published inside the *Workers Press.* This flows from the fact that the WRP leadership has rejected **in toto** the struggle against Pabloite revisionism. Healy's rejection in practice of the theory of Permanent Revolution has now been officially ratified by the WRP leadership. Blaming the corruption and betrayals of Healy on Trotskyism itself, Simon Pirani wrote in the July 12 issue of *Workers Press, "At the root of the problem was the movement's political degeneration: the theory of Permanent Revolution, formulated by Trotsky out of the experience of the Russian Revolution to show how struggles for democratic and national aims flow into the international socialist revolution, was referred to in articles and speeches but never developed to answer the problems of the post-second-world war era.*

"The developments in the class struggle — particularly the expansion of Stalinism in eastern Europe, the Chinese revolution and the various national liberation struggles — did not fit neatly in to the formulas worked out by Lenin and Trotsky."

Aside from the standard philistine reference to things not fitting "neatly" into the formulas of Lenin and Trotsky — neither of these great Marxists viewed their theoretical conceptions as "formulas" into which reality was to be "fit," neatly or otherwise — Pirani's definition of the theory of Permanent Revolution is patently false. It does not merely explain how "democratic and national aims flow into the international socialist revolution." Rather, it establishes that

within the backward country itself the democratic program of the bourgeois revolution cannot be completed except through the socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Pirani's misrepresentation of the theory of Permanent Revolution serves to justify a political line in relation to bourgeois nationalists which is, in all essentials, identical to that championed by Healy. Where Healy adapted to bourgeois nationalism in the Middle East, Pirani adapts to Irish Republicanism, using almost exactly the sophistical formulations previously utilized by Healy to cover his betrayals:

"I am not trying to speak for Sinn Fein or the IRA: they can do that themselves.

"Besides they have a different view of the national struggle and of socialism from ours; they are not Marxists and don't claim to be."

What Pirani does not say is whether the views of the IRA advance the interests of the working class or not; whether their views can lead the national struggle to victory or not.

The final triumph of the intellectual exertions of the WRP since the split with the International Committee was celebrated in the September 13 issue of *Workers Press*, which featured the following pronouncement by Cyril Smith:

"(i) I think that the term 'revisionist,' once a term with scientific significance for Marxists, has now become just a term of abuse.

"(ii) We should stop using the designation Pabloite' in talking about the organisations associated with the United Secretariat. It can only foul up the discussion.

"(iii) The characterization of Cuba as some kind of bourgeois state (we never realy explained just **what** *kind) is nonsense."*

The time has long since passed when Slaughter and his associates could claim with a straight face that the exposure of Healy's personal corruption — about which Slaughter, at any rate, was extremely well informed for years — provided anything more than the circumstantial setting for the explosion inside the WRP. The anti-Trotskyist opportunism that was nourished by Healy, Slaughter and Banda for more than a decade has now found its consummate expression in the unrestrained repudiation of every principle of revolutionary Marxism and the unabashed capitulation to revisionism.' People like Smith do not even feel the obligation to explain the development of their own thinking. For more than two decades they opposed the Pabloite designation of Cuba as a workers' state as a revision of Marxist teachings on the nature of the state. Now, Smith, an academic vagabond, dismisses all this as "nonsense." Full stop. A man who operates on this level is a definite social type: the corrupt middle-class intellectual whose services are for sale. Not least among Healy's crimes is that he allowed such people to remain in the WRP and even occupy influential positions. In return, they bolstered his prestige and defended him against criticism.

The personal role of Slaughter in these developments should be noted. Significantly, since the split with the International Committee, not a single article has appeared under Cliff Slaughter's by-line. He has offered no political explanation for how he has come to reject theoretical positions with which he had been identified for 25 years. As recently as 1981, Slaughter wrote (in a book co-authored with Albert Dragstedt, a member of the Workers League):

"This petty-bourgeois democracy, totally subservient to the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois state, is the class content of the Stalinist movement today, and it is on the same basis that 'Marxists' of the 'New Left' variety (including some who, like Ernest Mandel, still avow themselves adherents of Trotsky's Fourth International) are now to be found in the same camp as the Stalinists on the question of the state and bourgeois democracy. The petty-bourgeois democratic current now ideologically dominant in the Stalinist parties, epitomised by Johnstone [Yes, the same Monty Johnstone whose hand was taken by Slaughter at Friends Hall] *in the British Communist Party, has the closest relations with the followers of Mandel in the spurious 'United Secretariat of the Fourth International.' The 'theoretical' vehicle for this tendency in Britain is the* New Left Review *of Perry Anderson...*

"Anderson, Blackburn and their friends find in the New Left Review *a greater freedom' for their rejection of Marxism than is provided by the programmatic and policy statements of Mandel's 'United Secretariat of the Fourth International.' It is a division of labour. The political statements of the United Secretariat must, for reasons of tradition as well as sheer deception, pay lip-service to the classic positions of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky on the state and democracy. Anderson has no such restraints: his political allegiance to Mandel is kept out of sight and he is left to make the rejection of Marx and Lenin much more explicit and extreme than can at this stage be done by Mandel." (State, Power & Bureaucracy,* New Park Publications, pp. 14-15)

In another passage, Slaughter charged that Joseph Hansen had *"already anticipated the petty-bourgeois democratic distortion of Marxism now enshrined"* by the United Secretariat; and that *"Hansen gives aid and comfort to the Stalinists, with their myth of a road to socialism through parliamentary majorities." (Ibid.,* p. 19)

Will Slaughter now claim that these presumably mature judgments were forced upon him by Healy? Or perhaps Slaughter will declare that the exposure of Healy's personal corruption has forced him to reconsider, in a more favorable light, Mandel's attitude toward bourgeois democracy. If that is the case, Slaughter would not be the first to blame Marxism for the crimes of those who betrayed it and, on this fraudulent basis, desert openly to the camp of bourgeois democracy. Such a movement on Slaughter's part has already been foreshadowed in his efforts to focus attention not on the political and theoretical aspects of the WRP's degeneration but rather on the grotesque personal forms of Healy's political decay (as in his letter to North, dated November 26, 1985, where he claimed that "the bullying and brutality of Healy personally was the form through which this class political and theoretical content was most crudely and perfectly expressed.") [See pp.66]

As early as last December, the Workers League took issue with Slaughter's claim that Healy's supporters *"are close to every fascist position on the rights of human individuals, rights which for them are reduced to nothing by the requirements of the party."* In reply, the Workers League warned: *"If Comrade Slaughter re-reads this passage carefully, he will notice its strong similarities with the anti-communist rhetoric of bourgeois liberals. What does he*

mean by the 'rights of human individuals'? The confused non-class terminology demonstrates — and here we are being generous — that he has not thought his analysis through to the end and is working on the level of superficial comparisons and analogies." [See p. 90]

Needless to say, Slaughter never answered that political point nor any other raised by the International Committee. At any rate, we need not wait for Slaughter's formal and public resumption of relations with the official Pabloite organizations to prove our contention that his alliance with Healy against the ICFI was not based on fear of Healy's "bullying and brutality" but on agreement with his revisionist line. The proof is already provided in a study of the political line of the WRP before and after the split with Healy. In the meantime, Slaughter's WRP passed a resolution at the third session of its notorious Eighth Congress in June, which insisted that *"we should work out a definite attitude towards the revisionist United Secretariat of the FI..."*

It should be added that despite his public silence Slaughter has not been inactive. Quite the opposite: he has been travelling all over the world — most recently completing a trip to the United States — attempting to create an international association of centrist organizations with which to attack the International Committee. Among those with whom he is collaborating most closely — again, without producing a single public statement explaining the political basis upon which he has developed this alliance — is the extreme right-wing Pabloite tendency led by Nahuel Moreno, whose capitulation to Peronism played a major role in the betrayal of the Argentine working class in the period leading up to the establishment of the bloody military dictatorship. The American supporters of Moreno, with whom Slaughter has recently conducted political discussions, function openly as members of the petty-bourgeois Peace and Freedom Party. Their major activity is centered on organizing electoral blocs with Social Democrats and Stalinists within the precincts of this capitalist party. Slaughter's relations with what amounts to nothing less than the left wing of the Democratic Party show the real political content of his hatred of the Workers League and his long-standing objection to its "very heavy emphasis" on the political independence of the American working class.

After the Peruvian Liga Comunista repudiated the theory of Permanent Revolution, broke with the International Committee [See pp. 190-194], and dissolved its own organization, Slaughter rushed to Lima to organize an electoral alliance between the anti-ICFI renegades and the Morenoites on a purely petty-bourgeois democratic program.

All of these developments irrefutably prove that the political evolution of the Slaughter faction represents a continuation and qualitative deepening of the degeneration that sparked the collapse of the WRP between July and October 1985.

Of necessity, the bulk of the material in this volume deals with the struggle against the Slaughter-Banda tendency. We save, for a future volume, a more extensive analysis of the evolution of what remains of Healy's tendency. Such an analysis will confirm that the warnings made by the ICFI over the unprincipled desertion of the Greek Workers Internationalist League, led by Savas Michael [See p. 57] have already been confirmed. Since its theatrical transformation into the "Workers Revolutionary Party," the Greek Healyites have moved to the right at break-neck speed. The ICFI had warned that the political motivation underlying Michael's alliance with Healy and his refusal to fight for his positions loyally within the world party was a desire to establish his freedom to maneuver in Greece without having to answer to the international Trotskyist movement.

Since November 1985 Michael has exploited the Greek WRP's "national" independence in order to direct the organization toward popular-front style electoral coalitions with the Stalinists, centrists and petty-bourgeois radical organizations. A four-month campaign to form such a front in the port city of Piraeus, on a minimal nonsocialist program, collapsed when the Stalinists reached a private agreement with a group of ex-PASOK trade union bureaucrats and centrists whom the WRP had been ardently wooing. This escapade would be almost humorous if it did not involve the fate of the Greek working class.

This volume is a collection of all the principal documents of the struggle waged by the International Committee against the WRP's betrayal of Trotskyism. It places before all those who genuinely desire to build the Fourth International the real record of the struggle against the betrayal of Trotskyism by the Workers Revolutionary Party. This record testifies to the historical fact that there did exist within the ICFI, despite the cynicism and criminal treachery of Healy, Banda and Slaughter, a Trotskyist nucleus which these imposters could not destroy. The criticisms made by the Workers League in 1982-84 did not fall from the sky and the fact that a majority of the ICFI rallied in the autumn of 1985 to defend the historical conquests of Trotskyism was not an accident. That such a Trotskyist nucleus existed can be explained only by the fact that the founding of the International Committee in 1953 and the struggle led by the Socialist Labour League (forerunner of the WRP) between 1961-63 against the unprincipled reunification of the American SWP with the Pabloite International Secretariat did create a powerful theoretical and political foundation for the development of the World Party of Socialist Revolution. It is this heritage that the ICFI defends and builds upon.

A final editorial note: We have included the main documents of the WRP, with the exception of Banda's "27 Reasons" and the related piece by Hunter. This editorial decision is based on the fact that to include the 26 chapters of the reply ("The Heritage We Defend") which have been published in the press of the ICFI sections since last April would have doubled the size of the present volume. Moreover, that reply, whose size is in direct proportion to the number of lies it has to answer, is still not complete. The editors have no objection to reprinting the full text of Banda's and Hunter's articles. But when we are obliged to print the lies of anti-Trotskyist renegades, we believe that our readers should have the opportunity to study their refutation. This volume does reproduce the IC's reply of March 1986 to that portion of Banda's diatribe which was devoted to an attack on *Security and the Fourth International.* Inasmuch as what Banda had to say on this matter is fully and accurately quoted in North's article [See pp. 172-189], there can be no suggestion or accusation that Banda's views were misrepresented.

A Contribution to a Critique of G. Healy's "Studies in Dialectical Materialism"

October 7—November 7, 1982

by David North

I. Preliminary Analysis

October 7,1982

1. "Fifteen years earlier (1924) Trotsky was involved in a life and death struggle against the Stalinist bureaucracy. Stalin had raised the demagogic demand of the need to 'Bolshevize the party' at a time when he was going all-out to consolidate bureaucracy and prepare the physical destruction of Trotsky's Left Opposition. The demand for 'Bolshevization' was nothing but a cynical cover behind which Stalin was plotting not only to physically eliminate his opponents but to terminate the democratic rights won by the Soviet working class and impose his own personal dictatorshipover the Soviet masses."(Article I, p. 1)

This is an interpretation of the role of Stalin that contradicts the analysis made by Trotsky and to which the Fourth International has always adhered. Trotsky never held that Stalin, as early as 1924, was deliberately plotting the destruction of his opponents in order to establish a personal dictatorship.

As Trotsky wrote in his biography of Stalin: "If Stalin could have foreseen at the very beginning where his fight against Trotskyism would lead, he undoubtedly would have stopped short, in spite of the prospect of victory over all his opponents. But he did not foresee anything. The prophecies of his opponents that he would become the leader of the Thermidor, the grave digger of the Party of the Revolution, seemed to him empty imaginings (and phrase-mongering)." (p. 393)

2. "Now, with only months to go before his assassination, he was insisting once again on the necessity for a serious attitude towards the training of revolutionary cadres in the spirit of Hegel, Marx, Engels and Lenin." (I, 1)

This simple identification of Hegel with Marx, Engels and Lenin is unjustified and needlessly confuses the boundaries between materialism and idealism. Hegel was a great precursor of Marxism. But historically, politically and theoretically, it is wrong to state that Trotsky sought to train cadre in the spirit of Hegel. In fact, in the very writings to which the author refers, Trotsky writes: "Study Marx, Engels, Plekhanov, Lenin and Franz Mehring." *(In Defense of Marxism,* p. 98) In order to preserve the rational content of the Hegelian system, Marx had to fight against the spirit of Hegel, as it was manifested in the pupils who uncritically accepted his system, which was thoroughly idealistic. Nothing is added to the stature of Hegel, but such a formulation does invite theoretical confusion within our own ranks. Moreover, this is a formulation which never had been employed in our movement. Its introduction at this point would suggest an evaluation of the Hegelian system different from that made by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky. Moreover, if we wish to include Hegel among those in whose spirit the IC cadre is educated, why not Spinoza and the French materialists?

3. "When it came to the dialectical materialist method and reading 'Hegel materialistically' Trotsky was a staunch Leninist. He walked in the footsteps not only of Lenin but of Marx and Engels as well." (I,1)

This distorts the relationship between Trotsky and Lenin, unintentionally diminishing the former. Before Trotsky joined the party, during the long period where he was in sharp disagreement with Lenin, Trotsky was a dialectical materialist. To put the matter otherwise would be to suggest that Trotsky only became a Marxist once he became a Leninist, i.e., a member of the Bolshevik Party. Moreover, Trotsky was not at all comfortable with the term Leninism, as if it was a special brand of Marxism. It should be added that Trotsky did not really walk "in the footsteps" of Lenin. He was Lenin's contemporary and made his own independent contributions to the development of Marxism — above all, the theory of Permanent Revolution, which more exactly anticipated the character of the future revolution in Russia.

4. "Whilst this does not of course mean that every worker member of the Party will become a conscious dialectician, we do insist that the revolutionary Trotskyist leaderships in all countries must be trained in the dialectical materialist method." (I,1-2)

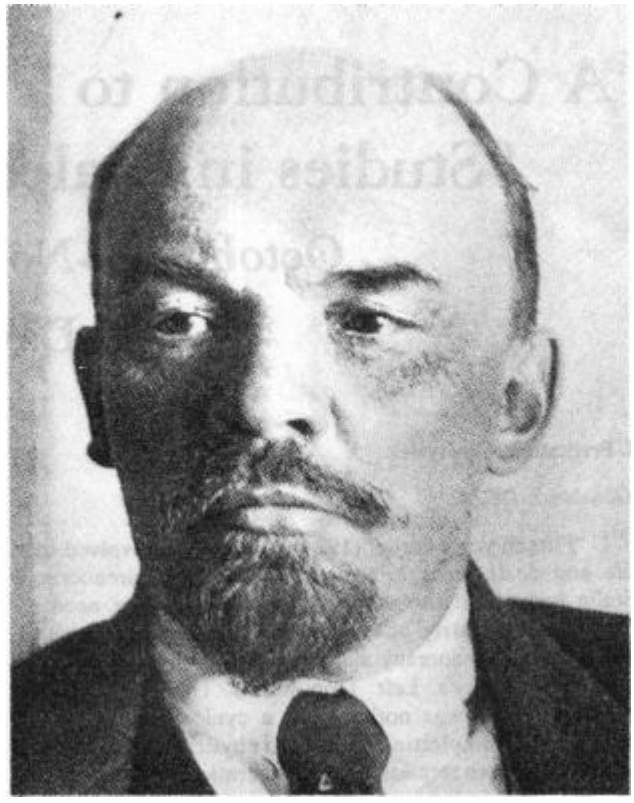
I recall that in 1972 criticism was made of Trotsky for conceding this very point to Burnham.

5. "These remarks by Lenin are very important for dialectical training. The development of consciousness in the past by Hegel and the founders of our movement must be understood as an infinite process." (I,2)

This remark seems to contradict the quote from Lenin's *What the Friends of the People Are,* in which Lenin speaks of the systems of relations ('relations of production') which (to use Marx's terminology) "is the **basis** of society which clothes itself in political and legal forms and in definite trends of social thought."

If we truly start from the system of production relations as the foundation upon which the ideological superstructure rises, we will not speak of the "development of consciousness by Hegel and the founders of our movement." Again, Hegel and the Marxists are more or less identified.

Leon Trotsky



V.I. Lenin

Furthermore, we should not comprehend the "development of consciousness" as simply an "infinite process." It is both finite and infinite. Hegel's contribution to the development of consciousness is necessarily finite, limited, in the sense that he lived and worked in a definite historical epoch. The development of human knowledge is infinite in the whole historical development of human culture. The infinite development of consciousness proceeds through the finite thought of individual men. Engels answered Duhring on precisely this question. (See IX, Morality and Law)

6. "The founders of our movement have bequeathed to us a scientifically-derived revolutionary **theory of knowledge** which is presently the core of our dialectical training. Not only is the development of consciousness an infinite process, but the cognition of the external world is an infinite process as well. The process of cognition today enables us to stand on their shoulders as it were, and complete the historical tasks they set out to accomplish." (I, 2)

Cognition is simply an infinite process only if there are no finite men to contaminate its purely infinite development. We are now clearly in the realm of the movement of pure consciousness.

The founders of our movement did not simply bequeath us a revolutionary theory of knowledge, but this, perhaps, can be accepted for the purpose of emphasis. However, the following cannot be accepted:

"The process of cognition today enables us to stand on their shoulders as it were ..."

It is the objective development of the world capitalist crisis and the revolutionary movement of the working class that enables us to stand on the shoulders of Trotsky and all the earlier generations of revolutionary workers and fighters. To credit our position in world history to the process of thought is to take an entirely idealist position.

II. Continuation of Preliminary Analysis

October 8, 1982

Comrade G proceeds from an elaboration of Hegel in an idealist manner. Thrashing through the eclectic formulations, the disjointed presentation, the arbitrary transitions (accomplished through use of words such as "therefore," in the Hegelian style), a clear theoretical line emerges:

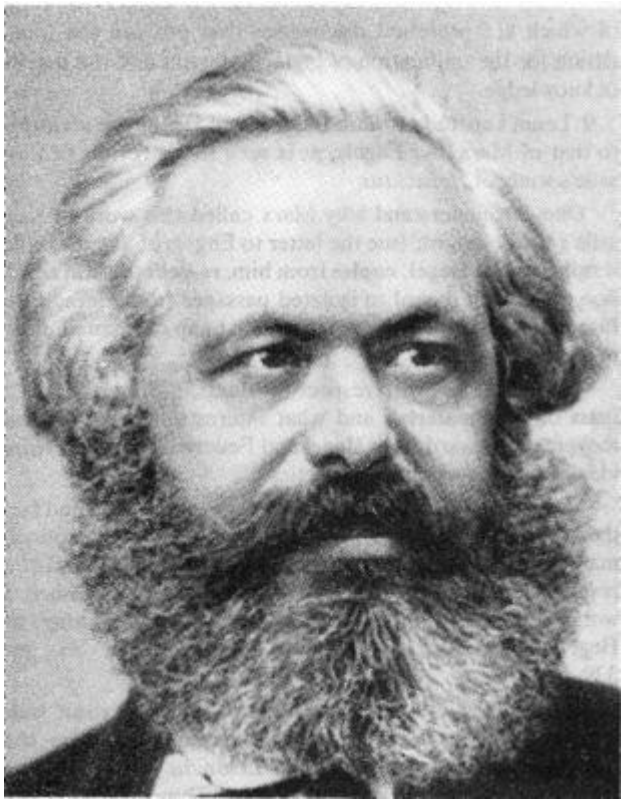
1. Hegel is put on the same historical line as Marx, Engels and Lenin — a founder of Marxism in whose spirit revolutionary cadres are trained. This essentially denies the revolution in philosophy accomplished by Marx through his break with Classical German Philosophy.

2. The study of "objective logic" is declared to be the highest task of humanity, altering Lenin's declaration that "The highest task of humanity is to comprehend this objective logic of economic evolution (the evolution of social life) in its general and fundamental features..." (Vol. 14, p. 325);

3. The history of man, we are told by G, is the history of "the growth of the creative element...", not the struggle of classes;

4. The principle of objectivity is proclaimed to be the "basic difference between materialism and abstract idealism," rather than the primacy of matter over thought;

5. The development of consciousness is declared to be an "infinite" process, ignoring its finite character in the actual thought of individual men;



Karl Marx

Frederick Engels

6. The process of cognition, not the processes of the world capitalist crisis, is proclaimed as the source of our transcendence of past generations of Marxists;

7. Subjective cognition (i.e., self-consciousness) "conditions itself as substance...", exactly as presented by Hegel;

8. The thinking body is substituted for social man;

9. "The theoretical Notion" is presented as "the external world itself."

10. The "speculative nature of cognition" (i.e., thought emerging out of its own self-movement) is "emphasize(d).";

11. Knowledge is gathered "dialectically and materialistically" from "empiricism";

12. The process of cognition is presented strictly in accordance with the logical schematism of Hegel, much the same way E. Duhring proceeded in the 1870s;

13. Knowledge of the logical categories replaces real knowledge of the concrete movement of phenomena; the essential connections are presented as logical categories. This method proceeds as follows: we discover the logical categories that are the essence of historical phenomena, and then reveal "its relations as a stage of knowledge in relation to other categories such as necessity, probability, possibility." In other words, the real content of all phenomena is its logical thought content.

14. Briefly summing up, what G presents is crude Hegelianism which is thinly disguised with occasional references to the material world. However, its primacy is seen as conditional: "Under these conditions, 'Being' is primary, consciousness is secondary." In other words, there may be conditions when consciousness is primary and Being is secondary. (I, 2)

15. All in all, a clear retreat from materialism via an uncritical regurgitation of Hegelian phrases; consciousness is presented as a form of logical phenomenology in each individual; of social consciousness — nil; historical materialism is ignored. All the errors of the Left Hegelians and the weak Proudhon (i.e., "Philosophy of Poverty") are repeated. The real significance of Marx standing Hegel "on his feet" is not grasped. In analyzing G's articles, the criticisms of Lassalle's work by Marx and Lenin are very appropriate.

(As a result of all this, we finally arrive at a presentation of the origins of Stalinism that contradicts the analysis made by Trotsky. This is a very disturbing sign, because the mystification of history was a characteristic of the Left Hegelians.)

III. Notes on G. Healy's "Studies"

October 9-11, 1982

1. Dialectical Materialism, the theory of knowledge which constitutes the theoretical foundation of Marxism as a world scientific outlook, was the outcome of the supreme intellectual achievement of the young Karl Marx, that is, the critique of the Hegelian dialectic and philosophy as a whole.

2. The supersession of Hegel by Marx, both a precondition for and inseparable from the elaboration of the materialist conception of history, was achieved between 1843 and 1847; and this supersession may be traced through a study of the following works: *A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law* (1843); *The*

Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844; The Holy Family (1844); *The German Ideology* (1845); and *The Poverty of Philosophy* (1847).

3. The significance of this achievement was explained by Engels:

"Marx was and is the only one who could undertake the work of extracting from the Hegelian logic the nucleus containing Hegel's real discoveries in this field, and of establishing the dialectical method, divested of its idealist wrappings, in the simple form in which it becomes the only correct mode of conceptual evolution. The working out of this method which underlies Marx's critique of political economy is, we think, a result hardly less significant than the basic materialist conception." *(A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,* Progress Publishers, p.218)

4. At the very time when Marx publicly declared himself "the pupil of that mighty thinker," he clearly explained:

"My dialectical method is not only different from the Hegelian, but is its direct opposite. To Hegel, the life-process of the human brain, i.e., the process of thinking, which, under the name of 'the Idea,' he even transforms into an independent subject, is the demiurgos of the real world, and the real world is only the external, phenomenal form of 'the Idea.' With me, on the contrary, the ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into forms of thought." *(Capital,* Vol. 1, "Afterword to the Second German Edition," Progress Publishers, p.29)

5. Marx and Engels treated with derision those epigones of Hegel, first the Right and Left Hegelians, later Proudhon, and still later F. Lassalle, who "assimilated only the most simple devices of the master's dialectics and applied them to everything and anything, often moreover with ridiculous incompetence." *(Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,* p. 222) Of Lassalle's uncritical use of the Hegelian system of Logical categories, Marx wrote: "He will learn to his cost that to bring a science by criticism to the point where it can be dialectically presented is an altogether different thing from applying an abstract ready-made system of logic to mere inklings of such a system." *(Marx-Engels Selected Correspondence,* Progress, p. 102)

6. That classic of Marxism, *Anti-Duhring,* was directed against that eclectic impostor who combined vulgar materialism with logical schematism based on uncritical recapitulation of Hegelian categories.

"... We find that Hegel's *Logic* starts from **being** — as with Herr Duhring; that being turns out to be **nothing,** just as with Herr Duhring; that from this being-nothing there is a transition to **becoming,** the result of which is determinate being **(Dasein),** i.e., a higher, fuller form of being (Sein) — just the same as with Herr Duhring. Determinate being leads on to **quality,** and quality on to **quantity** — just the same as with Herr Duhring." (p. 61)

7. In 1914, Lenin set out to read Hegel's *Logic* as a materialist, i.e., from the standpoint of Marxism, which means, of course, basing himself on the achievements of Marx in attempting to continue the task of "extracting from the Hegelian logic the nucleus containing Hegel's real discoveries in this field ..."

8. Lenin's *Philosophical Notebooks* advance beyond the critique of Hegel made by Marx 70 years before. His *Notebooks* are a critical reworking of the *Logic,* the results of which are profound discoveries that provide the foundation for the unification of logic, dialectics and the theory of knowledge.

9. Lenin's attitude toward the study of Hegel was identical to that of Marx and Engels, as is seen in his review of Lassalle's study of *Heraclitus:*

"One can understand why Marx called this work of Lassalle's 'schoolboyish' (see the letter to Engels of...); Lassalle simply **repeats** Hegel, **copies** from him, **re-echoing** him a million times with regard to isolated passages from Heraclitus, furnishing his opus with an incredible heap of learned ultra-pedantic ballast.

"The difference with respect to Marx: In Marx there is a mass of **new material,** and what interests him is only the movement forward **from Hegel** and Feuerbach **further, from** idealistic **to** materialistic dialectics ...

"Marx in 1844-47 went from Hegel to Feuerbach, and further beyond Feuerbach to historical and (dialectical) materialism. Lassalle in 1846 began (Preface, p. III), in 1855 resumed, and in August 1857 (Preface, p. XV) finished a work of sheer, empty, useless, 'learned' **rehashing** of Hegelianism!" (Lenin *Collected Works,* Vol. 38, pp. 339-40)

10. Cde. Healy's "Studies in Dialectical Materialism" suffer from one decisive defect: they essentially ignore the achievements of both Marx and Lenin in the materialist reworking of the Hegelian dialectic. Thus, Hegel is approached uncritically, essentially in the manner of the Left Hegelians against whom Marx struggled.

11. In approaching Hegel in this manner, the distinction between materialism and idealism is not only effaced; Comrade Healy explicitly passes over to idealism in expounding Hegel as a Left Hegelian. Thus we have "consciousness" as "an infinite process"; "**Subjective Cognition** [i.e., self-consciousness] conditions itself as substance similar in example to positive and negative electricity" (i.e., thought becomes matter, or, as Hegel wrote, "The alienation **of self-consciousness** itself establishes **thing hood** ...", see the *Phenomenology);* "Subjective cognition is a decisive impulse"; "the mental world"; "The Abstract Notion is obliged to unavoidably become a **'positive or theoretical Notion'** "; "The **theoretical** Notion is the external world itself; "The 'leap' is to practice under conditions in which 'consciousness creates it' "; "To further emphasize the highly-speculative nature of cognition ..."

12. Cde. Healy does not take into account the oft-repeated warnings of both Marx and Engels that the Hegelian dialectic was unusable in the form it was left behind. Thus, Cde. Healy seeks to explain the process of cognition directly from Hegelian Logic. This is a false approach. The process of thought cannot be explained from the *Logic* any more than the nature of the State could be explained from the *Logic.* Cde. Healy fails to take note of Marx's discovery that Hegel's idealist system affected the exposition of the movement of the Logical categories; that is, Marx does not take the categories of Hegel as given. They themselves must be reworked in the spirit of consistent materialism. I.e., Marx reworked the category of **contradiction,** which, as a result of Hegel's idealist mysticism, loses the content of real struggle in the *Logic.* Hegel's logical resolution of contradiction through the mediation of a third is accomplished through sophistry. Cde. Healy, however,

treats contradiction as a Hegelian: "Mediations now take place at all stages of cognition, and it is here that the method of 'dialectical logic' is used for analysis."

13. The chief defect of Cde. Healy's articles — ignoring the achievements of Marx and Lenin — is glaringly apparent in his virtual indifference toward historical materialism. Cognition is treated as a movement of thought concepts outside the law-governed, historically developing social practice of man.

a. The Spinozaist concept of a "thinking body" is introduced in the third article, without any explanation of its philosophical source. (It appears in a passage lifted, without citation, from Ilyenkov's *Dialectical Logic.* Only one change is made. Substance is referred to "as a dialectical category" which gives the uncited Spinoza a Hegelian slant.)

b. Cde. Healy writes that "The history of human beings is organized in society as the history of the growth of the creative element, man's initiative, both employers and working class. The higher the consciousness of people, the higher their cognition of the objective laws of nature and history." He goes on to write of "The activity of dialectics..." Here, history is explained from consciousness, not from the material production relations of which social thought can only be a reflection. The "creative element" is, of course, consciousness; and here Cde. Healy is only repeating the position of the Left Hegelians, the "Critical Critics" — who substituted their critical activity for the "uncritical" practical revolutionary activities of the masses.

c. "In the early stages of dialectical materialism as a scientific study," writes Cde. Healy, "we quickly arrive on the scene of a study of concepts." Who the "we" is, is unclear. But for Marx and Engels, dialectical materialism begins not with a study of concepts, but with a study of real man.

> "In direct contrast to German philosophy which descends from heaven to earth, here it is a matter of ascending from earth to heaven. That is to say, not of setting out from what men say, imagine, conceive, nor from men as narrated, thought of, imagined, conceived, in order to arrive at men in the flesh; but of setting out from real, active men, and on the basis of their real life-process demonstrating the development of the ideological reflexes and echoes of this life-process [i.e., concepts]." *(Marx-Engels Collected Works,* Vol. 5, p. 36)

d. The real starting point is not the concept of the material world, but the material world itself. Otherwise, the approach can only be that of a Hegelian — divining the movement of the real from the movement of concepts. But we do not reconstruct the movement of the real from the movement of thought. This is not possible, at any rate, for thought is by no means a "pure" reflection of the external world. Thought is always social thinking. Thus, we show concepts to be the reflection of the material world within the mind of socially-active man. Otherwise:

> "These concepts — leaving aside their real basis (which Stirner in any case leaves aside) — understood as concepts inside consciousness, as thoughts inside people's heads, transferred from their objectivity back into the subject, elevated from substance into self-consciousness, are — **whimsies** or **fixed ideas."** (Vol. 5, p. 160)

14. The essentially idealist distortion of dialectical materialism is shown clearly in Comrade Healy's treatment of the following passage from Lenin's *Materialism and Em¬pirio-Criticism.*

a. Comrade Healy quotes as follows:

> "Every individual producer in the world economic system realizes that he is introducing this or that change into the technique of production; every owner realizes that he exchanges certain products for others; but these producers and these owners do not realize that in doing so they are thereby changing **Social Being.**
>
> "The sum-total of these changes in all their ramifications in the capitalist world economy could not even be grasped by 70 Marxes. The most important thing is that the **laws** of these changes have been discovered, that the **objective** logic of these changes and their historical development has in its chief and basic features been disclosed." (Volume 14, p. 325)

Cde. Healy continues as follows:

> "This process is objective 'in the sense that social being is independent of the social consciousness of people.' 'The highest task,' wrote Lenin, 75 years ago, ' . . . is to comprehend this objective logic' (Volume 14, p. 325)"

Comrade Healy's manner of quoting has changed the content of Lenin's argument in a manner which adapts it to Hegelian idealism. Starting with the sentence which contains the words "been disclosed," we shall quote Lenin and place in brackets those passages not quoted by Cde. Healy:

> "The most important thing is that the **objective** logic of these changes and their historical development has in its chief and basic features been disclosed [— objective, not in the sense that a society of conscious beings, of people, could exist and develop independently of the existence of conscious beings (and it is only such trifles that Bogdanov stresses by his 'theory'), but] in the sense that social being is independent of **the social consciousness** of people. [The fact that you live and conduct your business, beget children, produce products and exchange them, gives rise to an objectively necessary chain of events, a chain of development, which is independent of your **social** consciousness, and is never grasped by the latter completely.] The highest task of humanity is to comprehend this objective logic [of economic evolution (the evolution of social life) in its general and fundamental features, so that it may be possible to adapt **to it** one's social consciousness and the consciousness of the advanced classes of all capitalist countries in as definite, clear and critical a fashion as possible."] (p. 325)

b. Thus, rather than the objective logic of economic evolution, we have **the objective logic.** Of what? This becomes clear in the very next passage written by Comrade Healy:

> "The principle of coincidence enables us to define the objective content of a **given** category by revealing its relations as a stage of knowledge in relation to other categories such as necessity, probability, possibility."

By "the principle of coincidence," Cde. Healy means,

as he stated immediately before the quote from *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism,* "the coincidence of dialectics, logic and the theory of knowledge."

It is clear from these passages and the selective quotation that Cde. Healy views the logical categories and their inter-relations, as the essential content into which historical movement is distilled. Once the logical thought content of each material event or fact has been discovered, we can then reveal their essence "as a stage of knowledge in relation to other categories such as necessity, probability, possibility."

Here we have the entire logical mysticism of Hegel uncritically reproduced, and this, in fact, is the essence of Cde. Healy's entire approach to dialectics in these most recent articles. Everything becomes a matter of following the sequence of the categories of Hegel's *Logic.* The material content is to be developed out of the Logic, rather than, as Marx insisted, the logic out of the content.

Comrade Healy has merely reproduced the very errors of Proudhon that were analyzed by Marx in *The Poverty of Philosophy:*

"... Thus the metaphysicians who, in making these abstractions, think they are making analyses, and who, the more they detach themselves from things, imagine themselves to be getting all the nearer to the point of penetrating their core [i.e., "as a stage of knowledge in relation to other categories..."] — these metaphysicians in turn are right in saying that things here below are embroideries of which the logical categories constitute the canvass...

"Just as by dint of abstraction we have transformed everything into a logical category, so one has only to make an abstraction of every characteristic distinctive of different movements to attain movement in its abstract condition — purely formal movement, the purely logical formula of movement. If one finds in logical categories the substance of all things, one imagines one has found in the logical formula of movement the **absolute method,** which not only explains all things, but also implies the movement of things.

"It is of this absolute method that Hegel speaks in these terms:

" 'Method is the absolute, unique, supreme, infinite force which no object can resist; it is the tendency of reason to find itself again, to recognize itself in every object.' *(Logic,* Vol. III)

"All things being reduced to a logical category, and every movement, every act of production, to method, it follows naturally that every aggregate of products and production, of objects and movement, can be reduced to applied metaphysics. What Hegel has done for religion, law, etc., M. Proudhon seeks to do for political economy." (pp. 99-100)

15. The phrase "standing Hegel on his feet" should not be used to diminish the profound scientific achievement embodied in this task. What was involved was nothing less than the establishment of the materialist world scientific outlook through which laws of nature, society and consciousness are cognized. The chief concern of philosophy was no longer the "matter of Logic" but the "logic of the matter."

Marx clearly revealed that the Hegelian logical schema, when utilized as given, leads inevitably to sophistry, via the manipulation of logical categories and the further manipulation of empirical facts to fit the pre-existing categories.

Especially in his *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law,* Marx demonstrated the necessity of a critical reworking of Hegelian concepts. With Hegel, the categories of identity, particularity, the general — have only an abstract, and therefore, untrue content. Hegel passes from an unreal antithesis to an imaginary identity. In this way, Hegel is able to unite in Identity the general state interest with the particular private aim. The ultimately reactionary uses to which Hegel's system was employed arise out its idealist structure. The Identity of the Universal and the Particular cannot be established in logical categories except as abstractions devoid of real content. In such a form, **any** general can be united with **any** particular, to provide, on demand, an abstract, and, therefore, unreal identity. Therefore, the connections between categories cannot be established in thought, as a form of Logical schematism. As forms of the reflection of the external world in thought, the real dialectical content of general, particular, antithesis, subsumption, etc., must be abstracted from nature (and history) itself through scientific analysis. Speculative idealism discovered the general abstract forms of the reflection of the world in man's social, historically-developing, consciousness, and the isolation of these forms provides us with the logical categories of the Hegelian dialectic. But these categories cannot be left suspended from mid-air. Their material content must be extracted from the study of nature and history.

16. Marx wrote that "comprehending does not consist, as Hegel imagines, in recognizing the features of the logical concept everywhere, but in grasping the specific logic of the specific subject." *(Marx-Engels Collected Works,* Vol 3. p. 91) This was Marx on the threshhold of his *Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy As A Whole.*

17. Comrade Healy's "Studies" are not a materialist reading of Hegel. Rather, there are lengthy reproductions of Hegel in which significant concessions are made to idealism.

a. "The principle of **OBJECTIVITY** in the approach to the external world constitutes the basic difference between materialism and abstract idealism." (Article I) This is not true. Hegel's standpoint was that of objectivity as well. The basic difference between materialism and idealism **(abstract** is superfluous) is the primacy of matter over consciousness.

b. " 'Being' is matter which exists independently of consciousness and is the source of all **sensation.** Under these conditions 'Being' is primary, consciousness is secondary." Can there be conditions in which "Being" is not primary? Hegel also recognized "Being" as the source of sensation, and this is in fact the starting point of the *Phenomenology.* Hegel could acknowledge the primacy of Being in that sense. But then it is consciousness which becomes primary.

c. "Not only is the development of consciousness an infinite process, but the cognition of the external world is an infinite process as well." Can the "development of consciousness" be anything else but "the cognition of the external world"? Why does Comrade Healy present us with **two** different infinite processes: the "development of consciousness" and "cognition of the external world"? Moreover "the development of consciousness" (in the

cognition of the external world) is **both** finite and infinite. It can only be simply infinite as the self-movement of thought independent of all the finite generations of finite men through whom thought has historically developed. Comrade Healy's "infinite" is the "development of consciousness" separate from "the cognition of the external world", i.e., the movement of the Absolute Idea.

d. Comrade Healy quotes Lenin's *Philosophical Notebooks:* "... the practical activity of man had to lead his consciousness to the repetition of the various logical figures thousands of millions of times **in order** that these figures could obtain the significance of axioms." (Vol. 38, p. 190)

Comrade Healy then comments: "Subjective **dialectical thought** becomes **submerged** in the **objective** situation thousands of millions of times so that the 'consciousness of man' can attain the 'significance of axioms'." This is an idealist interpretation of the passage by Lenin. The latter begins with the practical activity of man, from which consciousness then emerges. Comrade Healy begins with "Subjective dialectical thought," leaves out the practical activity of man, and then transforms consciousness into "an axiom." But this approach simply reproduces the illusion of idealism that arises in the historical development of man.

As Engels explained: "But, as in every department of thought, at a certain stage of development the laws which were abstracted from the real world, become divorced from the real world, and are set up against it as something independent, as laws coming from outside to which the world has to conform. That is how things happened in society and in the state, and in this way, and not otherwise, **pure,** mathematics was subsequently **applied** to the world, although it is borrowed from this same world and represents only one part of its forms of interconnection — and it is only **just because of this** that it can be applied at all. That consciousness "can attain the significance of axioms" was the conception of Duhring. (See *Anti-Duhring,* p. 54)

18. In Marx's *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law,* he explained the fundamental weakness of his idealist dialectics: in every area of concrete study to which Hegel turns his attention, we always have before us the Logic. Thus, the movement always proceeded from thought and therefore the connections are those of the abstract logic. As he explained in relation to Hegel's treatment of the State:

> "The transition is thus derived, not from the **particular** nature of the family, etc., and from the particular nature of the state, but from the general relationship of **necessity** and **freedom.** It is exactly the same transition as is effected in logic from the sphere of essence to the sphere of the concept. The same transition is made in the philosophy of nature from inorganic nature to life. It is always the same categories which provide the soul, now for this, now for that sphere. **It is only a matter of spotting for the separate concrete attributes the corresponding abstract attributes."** *(Marx-Engels,* Vol. 3, p. 10, emphasis added)

19. It is this very idealist procedure which Cde. Healy employs in effecting the transition from sensation to consciousness. **Being,** Not Being, Becoming, Cause, Effect, and **inner movement of negation in general** are employed to explain the transition from sensation to conscious thought (as well as the movement of the value form). After "Absolute essence (Negative Semblance) confronts our 'theory of knowledge' which becomes Positive Semblance as they face each other in antithesis," Cde. Healy declares: "we have ended the sensuous stage of the Cognitive process." All this has been accomplished simply through reference to categories of the Hegelian Logic; in other words, we have a mystical process presented as the real process. Cde. Healy, though he quotes a fragment from Lenin on page 283 in Volume 38, leaves out a very significant remark by Lenin which appears on page 281:

Hegel, the supporter of dialectics, could not understand the **dialectical** transition **from** matter **to** motion, **from** matter **to** consciousness — especially the second. Marx corrected the error (or weakness?) of the mystic.	NB	Not only is the transition from matter to consciousness dialectical, but also that from sensation to thought, etc.

20. Lenin develops this criticism further in a positive proposal for how the theory of knowledge should be developed. He includes both "psychology" and "physiology of the sense organs." It should be noted that the latter two are added to his proposals for histories of "the separate sciences, the mental development of the child, the mental development of animals, language NB:" and he states: "These are fields of knowledge from which the theory of knowledge and dialectics should be built, in short, the history of cognition in general, the whole field of knowledge." (p. 351)

21. That is how Lenin conceived of the development of dialectics; this was his proposal for a materialist deepening of the dialectics first elaborated by Hegel. The essential weakness of Comrade Healy's approach is that he has proceeded in the opposite direction: back to the mystical construction of Hegelian categories, which are then used as a master key. In other words, he preserves the mystical system. This approach cannot be correct.

IV. Further Notes on G. Healy's "Studies"

October 11-16, 1982

"Idealist thinking is always speculative because it excludes *Contradiction."* ??? (Pt. I, p. 12)

This is wrong in two respects: Idealist thinking is presented as excluding contradiction, and this is said to be its speculative nature.

1. It was idealism which first enunciated contradiction and made it the foundation of Logic; this was, in fact, the great achievement of speculative thought. The dialectical method is the outcome of idealist speculation.

2. Hegel clearly counterposed "ordinary" to "speculative" thought in that the former "abhors contradiction ..." *(Science of Logic,* p. 442)

3. It was mechanical materialism which excluded contradiction, and that was its chief defect.

4. **"... the process of Cognition interprets consciousness as** *not* **merely a passive reflection of 'Being'**..." (Pt. I, p. 10)

The PROCESS OF COGNITION is endowed with a

human personality; it is no longer a process, it has become a person, who interprets!

5. **"Every qualitatively distinct object has its own quantitative object. It has its own quantitative attributes, which are both immobile and immutable."** (Pt. 3, p. 6)

There is nothing in nature that is either immobile or immutable; for motion is the mode of existence of matter.

6. The passage is made even more obscure by what immediately follows:

"This very mutation, is of necessity bound by certain limits..."

We have gone from immobility and immutability to "This very mutation"!

7. **"The self-movement of matter is responsible solely for the movement of thought through Semblance, Appearance and Actuality, once the stage of the abstract Notion is reached,** *practice* **itself generates the self-movement of matter."**

The self-movement of matter is the mode of existence of the universe. Practice, human practice, is part of the movement of nature. Does the self-movement of matter have no responsibility for practice?

8. **"Without the capacity for the interaction of particles at all levels,** *matter* **as such could not exist."** (Pt. 3, p. 7)

From the standpoint of science, this is an absurd statement. As Engels wrote: "NB Matter as such is a pure creation of thought and an abstraction. We leave out of account the qualitative differences of things in lumping them together as corporeally existing things as the concept matter. Hence matter as such, as distinct from definite existing pieces of matter, is not anything sensuously existing." *(Dialectics of Nature,* p. 55)

"Matter as such" does not exist; and the very use of the term indicates the extent to which Comrade Healy has become wrapped up in the Hegelian mystical mode of expression — at the expense of abandoning dialectical materialism.

A dialectical materialist would have simply noted that natural science has established that the interaction of particles is a universal property of matter in motion.

9. **"If we are to avail ourselves of the deepest aspects of material gathered from empirical observation and examination under conditions in which the** *knowledge dialectically and materialistically gathered from empiricism* **yields ever richer and wider sources of knowledge, we must be prepared to 'grasp the nettle' where it stings the most."** (Pt. 3, p. 8) (emphasis added)

This goes beyond even Hansen's consistent empiricism = dialectical materialism. Now, we gather knowledge dialectically and materialistically in empiricism. The two opposing methods are united by using **dialectically** and **materialistically** as adverbs of empiricism's action. How can we train cadre if we teach that Empiricism, a definite trend in bourgeois ideology, gathers knowledge dialectically and materialistically. If we mean to state that all knowledge is gathered dialectically and materialistically, in the sense that man is part of dialectical nature whose thinking proceeds in accordance with its objective laws, then we are talking about "unconscious dialectics" which, as Trotsky pointed out, applies both to the peasant woman tasting broth as well as the fox taking the measure of a chicken. But dialectical materialism is a conscious method and it develops in struggle against empiricism, and there is nothing gained by combining the two.

10. **"When** *Subjective Cognition* **interpenetrates through antithesis the 'theory of knowledge' it conditions itself as** *substance* **similar in example to positive and negative electricity."** (Pt. 3, p. 6)

This is out-and-out mystical Hegelianism. Man is transformed into "self-consciousness," which Cde. Healy chooses to refer to as **Subjective Cognition.** Subjective cognition is not an attribute of man any longer; rather, it is transformed into an independent subject, which is able to "condition[s] itself as substance."

From there, Cde. Healy proceeds to substance "as a dialectical category" — thereby mystifying the Spinozaist conception of substance, which is no longer substance as substance, but substance "as a dialectical category" — as a mode of Subjective Cognition. In other words, we have Spinoza a la Hegel.

Without being conscious of it, Cde. Healy has managed to reproduce, virtually word for word, the whole course of Critical mystification against which Marx fought in *The Holy Family.*

"A few quotations will show that by overcoming **Spinozaism Criticism** ended up in **Hegelian idealism,** that from the **'Substance'** it arrived at another **metaphysical monster, the 'Subject', 'Substance as a process', 'infinite self-consciousness',** and that the final result of 'perfect' and 'pure' Criticism is the **restoration of the Christian theory of creation** in a **speculative, Hegelian** form." (*The Holy Family,* p. 170)

Interestingly, virtually the entire terminology is to be found at some point or another in the "Studies": "perfect", "infinite consciousness", "Substance", "Subject", etc.

"... Herr Bauer makes **'Substance emerge** from its **logical simplicity** and assume a definite form of existence in the power of the community.' He applied the **Hegelian** miracle apparatus by which the 'metaphysical categories' — abstractions extracted out of **reality** — emerge from **logic,** where they are dissolved into the **'simplicity'** of thought, and assume 'a definite form' of physical or human existence; he makes them become incarnate. Help, **Hinrichs!"** *(Ibid.,* p. 170)

"Bauer's **self-consciousness** too, is **Substance raised** to self-consciousness or **self-consciousness as Substance;** self-consciousness is transformed from an **attribute of man** into a **self-existing subject.** This is the **metaphysical-theological** caricature of man in his **severance** from nature. The **being** of this self-consciousness is therefore not **man,** but **the idea** of which self-consciousness is the **real existence.** It is the idea **become man,** and therefore it is **infinite. All human** qualities are thus transformed in a **mysterious way** into qualities of **'infinite self-consciousness'.** Hence, Herr Bauer says **expressly** that **everything** has its **origin** and its **explanation** in this 'infinite self-consciousness', i.e., finds in it the **basis** of its **existence.** Help, **Hinrichs!"** *(Ibid.,* pp.171-72)

11. Examine the following passage by Cde. Healy as an illustration of the method described above:

"... Subjective cognition is a decisive impulse, through antithesis and interpenetration it is negated *into* **the 'theory of knowledge' and into the mental world [!] embodying [!!] the individual in which Causality and Substance build up to**

Reciprocal action through necessity to the leap to the abstract Notion." (Pt. 3, p. 6)

Subjective Cognition to 'Theory of Knowledge' into 'mental world' which 'embody[s]' the individual. Simplified, Subjective Cognition (thought) is negated (or alienated) into the mental world which embodies the individual. This is sheer idealism: the individual is embodied in the mental world; man is self-consciousness.

12. Just so there should be no doubt about the speculative construction of the entire argument, let us pass on to a passage a bit further down:

"The abstract notion completes the dialectical process of thought within the self-relation between individual and Universal and vice versa. The *theoretical* **notion is the external world itself which supplies the positive side to the Notion. The practical impulse has emerged from subjective self-impulse, which is** *thought to objective practice."*

We have already been informed that the mental world embodies the individual. The individual, at best, can only be Subjective Cognition. What is the self-relation between the individual and the Universal. In Hegel it is between Absolute Spirit and the dialectical movement of consciousness. To go on, the **theoretical** notion, we are told, **is the external world** [!!], which merely "supplies" the Notion with its "positive side."

The whole conception upon which this is based arises from the recognition of man only as self-consciousness, as thought. As in all idealism, "the movement of the universe only becomes **true** and **real** in his ideal self-movement." *(Ibid., p. 177)*

Hegel "substitutes **self-consciousness** for **man,** the **most varied** manifestations of human reality appear only as **definite** forms, as determinateness of self-consciousness. But mere determinateness of self-consciousness is a **'pure category';** a mere 'thought', which I can consequently also transcend in 'pure' thought and overcome through pure thought. In Hegel's *Phaenomenologie* the **material, sensuously perceptible, objective** foundations of the various estranged forms of human self-consciousness are allowed to **remain.** The whole destructive work results in the **most conservative philosophy** because it thinks it has overcome the **objective world,** the sensuously perceptible real world, by transforming it into a 'Thing of Thought', a mere **determinateness of self-consciousness,** and can therefore also dissolve its opponent, which has become **ethereal,** in the **'ether of pure thought'.** The *Phaenomenologie* is therefore quite consistent in that it ends by replacing human reality by **'absolute knowledge' — knowledge,** because this is the only mode of existence of self-consciousness, and because self-consciousness is considered the only mode of existence of man — **absolute** knowledge for the very reason that self-consciousness knows **only itself** and is no longer disturbed by any objective world. Hegel makes man the **man of self-consciousness** instead of making self-consciousness the **self-consciousness of man,** of real man, i.e., of man living also in a real objective world and determined by that world. He stands the world **on its head** and can therefore **in his head** also dissolve all limitations, which nevertheless remain in existence **for bad sensuousness,** for **real** man. Moreover, everything that betrays the **limitations of general self-consciousness** — all sensuousness, reality, individuality of men and of their world — is necessarily held by him to be a limit. The whole of the *Phaenomenologie* is intended to prove that **self-consciousness** is the **only reality and all reality."** *(Ibid.,* pp.238-39)

"Finally, it goes without saying that whereas Hegel's *Phaenomenologie,* in spite of its speculative original sin, gives in many instances the elements of a true description of human relations, Herr Bruno and Co. on the other hand, provide only an empty caricature, a caricature which is satisfied with deriving any determinateness out of a product of the spirit or even out of real relations and movements, changing this determinateness into a determinateness of thought, into a **category,** and making out that this category is the **standpoint** of the product, of the relation and the movement, in order then to be able to look down on this determinateness triumphantly with old-man's wisdom from the standpoint of abstraction, of the general category and of general self-consciousness." *(Ibid.,* pp.239-40)

V. Notes for a Critique of Comrade G. Healy's "Studies" (continued)

November 4, 1982

Article I: "Subjective Idealism Today"

1. "Dialectical Materialists get to know the world initially through a process of Cognition."

What is meant by "Dialectical Materialists" as opposed to all other human beings? Is it being suggested that "Dialectical Materialists" get to know the world initially in a manner different from everyone else?

What is meant, at any rate, by "get to know the world initially through a process of Cognition"? Both historically and in their individual biographies, men "get to know the world initially" through practice. It is the historical development of social practice that gives rise to consciousness and its specific forms through which the external world is cognized.

2. "As forms of motion and change of the external world, these images are processed as concepts of phenomena. Upon negation through their dissolution from the positive sensation into their abstract negative, they are negated again as the nature of semblance which is the theory of knowledge of a human being. During this interpenetration process, the images as thought forms are analyzed through the science of thought and reason which is Dialectical Logic."

Comrade G. employs the language of Hegelian mystification to wind up with a purely idealist and ahistorical conception of the development of knowledge. He presents, in mystical language ("their dissolution from the positive sensation into their abstract negative, they are negated a g a i n . . . "), the empty abstract form of the movement of thought as the real process of conceptual thinking. But in doing so, he tells us nothing at all about how real concepts have been and are being developed. Let us ask, "Upon negation through their dissolution from the positive sensation into their abstract negative," whereupon "they are negated again as the nature of semblance," are we formulating the concept of a strike, a state, or a bee's sting on our arm?

What is meant by "the images as thought forms are analyzed through the science of thought and reason which is Dialectical Logic." This is not materialism, certainly, and it isn't even Hegel.

3. More idealist mystification: "From synthesis, which is implicit in the science of dialectical perception, Dialectical Logic takes over [??] and reveals concepts [?] and categories for analysis, thereby activating the science [???] and the theory of knowledge and historical materialism. [???] Thus, the ever-changing properties of thought in Dialectical Logic in self-relation [?] between [?] subject and object, coincide materially with the theory of knowledge."

Dialectical Logic is presented as an independent subject, which activates not only the theory of knowledge but historical materialism as well!!

4. Then, the next section, entitled "Historical Materialism as a method," we are told:

"Historical Materialism is a method for the building of the Revolutionary Party, based upon the Cognition of its **object,** which is **society consisting of conscious human beings** with the will to go on changing the world independently of each other as individuals."

Historical materialism cannot be correctly defined as a "method" for the building of the Revolutionary Party ..." It is, as Lenin explained, "the consistent continuation and extension of materialism into the domain of social phenomena ..." which "made it possible for the first time to study with scientific accuracy the social conditions of the life of the masses" and which ascertained "the objective laws governing the development of the system of social relations..." (Vol. 21, p. 56)

Its "object" is not **"society consisting of conscious human beings** with the will [??] to go on changing the world independently of each other as individuals."

The philosophical foundation of historical materialism is that social being exists independently of social consciousness. The reference to "conscious human beings" muddles everything, and is directly opposed to the very conceptions advanced by Lenin in Volume 14, which Cde. Healy praises but does not understand. Lenin wrote: "In all social formations of any complexity — and in the capitalist social formation in particular — people in their intercourse are **not conscious** of what kinds of social relations are being formed, in accordance with what law, they develop." (Vol. 14, p. 323)

The reference to "will" is also a complete departure from historical materialism; history cannot be explained from either the "will" or intentions of men. The historical "will" of social men can only be understood as arising out of definite material conditions.

As for "changing the world independently of each other as individuals," it would appear that Cde. G. has just abolished social man. Instead of history developing through the collective social practice of man independent of consciousness, we have a history arising out of willful and conscious human beings who change the world independently of each other as individuals!

5. "The **'relations of production'** are sometimes referred to as the mode of production, whilst the **material productive forces** may be called the means or **tools of production."**

In fact, it is the unity of the material productive forces and the relations of production which constitute the mode of production.

This astonishing ignorance of the most fundamental conceptions of historical materialism provides, it might be said, the key to a real understanding of GH's subjective-idealist mutilation of Marxism. The transition of Hegel to Marx cannot be understood as a sort of empty logical evolution from objective idealism to dialectical materialism. Dialectical materialism must not be reduced to historical materialism, but the working out of the world outlook of dialectical materialism proceeded through the development of historical materialism. As Marx himself noted in his brief intellectual autobiography, the beginning of his intellectual break with Hegel came after he found himself "in the embarrassing position of having to discuss what is known as material interests." *(A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,* p. 19) The political struggles which arose therefrom led him to "a critical re-examination of the Hegelian philosophy of law... My inquiry led me to the conclusion that neither legal relations nor political forms could be comprehended whether by themselves or on the basis of the so-called general development of the human mind, but on the contrary they originate in the material conditions of life..." *(Ibid.,* p.20) From there Marx summarizes his oft-quoted conclusions — the concise outline of the materialist conception of history. As the development of historical materialism proceeded through the critique of the official and left-Hegelian school, the foundations of dialectical materialism — that is, the work "of extracting from the Hegelian logic the nucleus containing Hegel's real discoveries in this field, and of establishing the dialectical method, divested of its idealist wrappings" *(Ibid.,* pp. 224-25) — were laid down. This process cannot be correctly conceived of in some sort of strict chronological sequence; rather, it was a truly dialectical process, in which the reworking of the Hegelian method proceeded simultaneously with the positive elaboration of historical materialism. In turn, the development of historical materialism requires a "correct mode of conceptual evolution" — "the method which underlies Marx's critique of political economy..." *(Ibid,* p. 225)

To believe that one can be a dialectical materialist without a real study of the real theoretical foundations of Marxism and its subsequent development is a dangerous misconception. Healy's problem is not simply that he is confused by Hegel. As Marx said of Proudhon, he "does not give us a false criticism of political economy because he is the possessor of an absurd philosophical theory, but gives us an absurd philosophic theory because he fails to understand the social system of today in its **engrene¬ment...**" (Marx-Engels *Selected Correspondence,* p. 34) Marx stresses in his letter to Annenkov that Proudhon does not understand the real material foundations of man's historical development. Thus, "M. Proudhon, incapable of following the real movement of history, produces a phantasmagoria which presumptuously claims to be dialectical. He does not feel it necessary to speak of the seventeenth, the eighteenth or the nineteenth century, for his history proceeds in the misty realm of imagination and rises far above space and time. In short, it is not history but old Hegelian junk... The **evolutions** of which M. Proudhon speaks are understood to be evolutions such as are accomplished within the mystical womb of the absolute idea. If you tear the veil from this mystical language, what it comes to is that M. Proudhon is offering you the order in which economic categories arrange themselves in his own mind. It

will not require great exertion on my part to prove to you that it is the order of a very disorderly mind." (*Ibid,* p. 36)

Unfortunately, this disorderly method has served to disorient the International Committee.

VI. Political Summary of Critique of G. Healy's "Studies"

November 7, 1982

1. "Studies in Dialectics" has brought into the open a crisis that has been developing within the International Committee for a considerable period of time.

2. For several years (in my opinion, this began in 1976 and only began to predominate in 1978), in the name of the struggle for dialectical materialism and against propagan¬dism, the International Committee has drifted steadily away from a struggle for Trotskyism.

3. An increasingly one-sided and narrow concentration on the "process and practice of cognition" — almost entirely divorced from a concrete study of the objective situation — has led, as is expressed in "Studies," to a blatantly idealist vulgarization of dialectics, a caricature of Lenin's work on Hegel's *Science of Logic,* that reproduces the very forms of mystification that Marx criticized in his writings against the Left Hegelians 140 years ago (and which Engels exposed in his polemic against Duhring in the 1870s).

4. Historical materialism has been ignored. It has been forgotten that Marx and Engels, according to Lenin, "naturally paid most attention to crowning the structure of philosophical materialism, that is, not to materialist epistemology but to the materialist conception of history." (Vol. 14, p. 320)

5. As Hegel has been elevated within the International Committee to his present status alongside Marx, Engels and Lenin, Trotsky has been demoted: virtually no attention is now placed on a study of his writings. (This can be proven very simply: in all of the international conferences and cadre schools since 1978, how much time has been spent on a study of Trotsky's writings compared to Volume 14, Volume 38 and the Hegel *Logic?)*

6. Corresponding to a decline in the study of Trotsky's writings, the theoretical aspect of the struggle against Pabloism has been virtually abandoned.

7. A vulgarization of Marxism, palmed off as the "struggle for dialectics," has been accompanied by an unmistakeable opportunist drift within the International Committee, especially in the WRP.

8. The work of the IC in the Middle East, which has never been guided by a clear perspective of building the International Committee in that area of the world, has now degenerated into a series of pragmatic adaptations to shifts in the political winds. Marxist defense of national liberation movements and the struggle against imperialism has been interpreted in an opportunist fashion of uncritical support of various bourgeois nationalist regimes. The outcome of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon has starkly revealed the bankruptcy of this approach. At the present time, the IC has been unable to make an assessment of the situation in the Middle East. The WRP has yet to take a clear position on the present diplomatic maneuverings of the Reagan Administration.

9. This has not developed overnight. The line of the IC is littered with unclarified questions:

a. The "alliance" with the Libyan Jamahiriya in August 1977;

b. The support of the Iraqi Baathists' persecution of the Stalinists.

10. During the six years in which the IC has conducted work in the Middle East, there has not been a single statement in which class relations in that area of the world have been analyzed. There has not been a single article in which the development of the working class has been analyzed. For all intents and purposes, the Theory of Permanent Revolution has been treated as inapplicable to present circumstances.

11. The same uncritical approach to developments had been manifested toward the independence struggle culminating in the establishment of Zimbabwe.

12. As for Iran, the greatest revolutionary upheaval in the colonial world since the events in China, the International Committee has produced not a single critical analysis since February 1979.

13. Out of all the pragmatic day-to-day shifts there is beginning to coalesce a political tendency that has a definite Pabloite taint. Thus, we find in a statement of the WRP Political Committee, dated December 11, 1981:

> "But Gaddafi has politically developed in the direction of revolutionary socialism and he has shunned the palaces and harems of some other Arab leaders.
>
> **"For this reason he has become the undisputed leader of the Libyan people and bis name is now synonymous with the strivings of the oppressed in many countries."** *(News Line,* December 12, 1981)

14. The dangers of such an impressionistic approach, against which we warned many times in the course of the struggle against Pabloism and the SWP, has been clearly shown in the events which followed the Israeli invasion.

15. The reaction of the WRP to the outbreak of the war in the Malvinas should be taken as a serious sign of political disorientation. With the outbreak of war, the oldest and most experienced section of the International Committee took an incorrect position, which was essentially pacifist, which was corrected only after nearly two weeks. Given all the work that has been carried out by the WRP in the Middle East in defense of oppressed nations against imperialism, it must be asked why the WRP had such difficulty recognizing the same issue in the Malvinas war.

16. These are not isolated incidents which can be overlooked. We are reviewing several years of work during which an increasingly definite opportunist tendency has become apparent in our work.

17. This does not mean that our work has been all wrong and that no achievements have been registered. That is, of course, not the case. But the rapid development of the world crisis, the desperate crisis of Stalinism, and the radicalization of the masses in all the major capitalist countries present an unparalleled opportunity for Trotskyism. However, we would be committing the greatest political error if, at this very moment, we pulled in our Trotskyist horns.

Appendix: On G. Healy's Use of Sources in "Studies"

1. Another "aspect" of Healy's articles deserves special notice, for it lays bare the charlatanry which underlies the entire operation. It turns out that GH is a plagiarist! Striving to achieve the heights of profundity, he is not averse to "borrowing" the ideas and words of others — without bothering to provide citations. Entire passages from the writings of Soviet authors are simply lifted and inserted into articles that appear in the "Studies."

2. On page 55 of the "Studies," we read a sentence which seems to be dropped in the article for no apparent reason: "The principle of coincidence enables us to define the objective content of a **given** category by revealing its relations as a stage of knowledge in relation to other categories such as necessity, probability, possibility."

But on page 255 of *Dialectical Materialism and the History of Philosophy,* by the Soviet theoretician Theodore Oizerman, we will find the source of this idea. "However, that is not all there is to applying the principle of coincidence, because the point is not only to reveal the content of a given category and stress its relativity as a stage of knowledge, but also to define its place among other categories and its relation to them. For example, when we deal with the category of necessity, we must define its relation to such categories as law, essence, possibility, chance, probability, basis, etc."

3. On page 63 of "Studies," we find: "Substance as a dialectical category has proved to be a necessary condition, without assuming which it was impossible in principle to understand, the mode of interaction between the thinking body and the world within which it operated as a thinking body."

What is the source of this "innovation": the "thinking body"? The inspiration is to be found on page 60 of E.V. Ilyenkov's *Dialectical Logic.* There we find: "Substance thus proved to be an absolutely necessary condition, without assuming which it was impossible in principle to understand the mode of interaction between the thinking body and the world within which it operated as a thinking body." This passage appears in Ilyenkov as part of a discussion about Spinoza. In Healy, the passage is just dropped in out of the blue, without bothering to mention Spinoza at all.

4. Perhaps the most obscure of all the sections of Cde. GH's very obscure articles is a section entitled "Empiricism and theoretical thinking." Those who accept the "Studies" in good faith may be excused for believing that only a genius could decipher this section. In fact, one needs only to have in one's possession the third number of the 1982 edition of the Soviet journal *Social Sciences,* which carries an article by one Vladimir Shvyrev entitled "The Empirical and Theoretical in Scientific Cognition."

On page 70 GH tells us that "Scientific knowledge at this early stage arises from an interaction between sensuality and thought, wherein the source of **sensation** is in the external world." In the original, S. writes: "Thus, scientific knowledge always presupposes an interaction of the mechanisms of sensuality and thought." *(Social Sciences* p. 128)

GH writes on page 72: "Our empirical investigation **orientates** cognition towards the identification of relationships between the conceptual apparatus of science and the reality which is beyond and which is seen through analysis as a whole as being beyond the **conceptual field,** only to be revealed in 'living contemplation.' Science, it must not be forgotten, provides a knowledge of objective reality and not some closed conceptual structure."

Very profound, it might seem, and certainly hard to follow. But how did he arrive at this insight, which bears little connection to what came before it? It is necessary to consult Shvyrev, who wrote:

"If, on the other hand, we take up the **empirical** investigation, its general characteristic, most likely, is the **orientation of cognition towards the identification of the relationships between the conceptual apparatus of science and the reality** which is beyond the conceptual sphere and which, in the final analysis, is seen in 'living contemplation.' The determination of such relationships is an indispensable function of the scientific cognition which is implemented precisely by empirical investigation inasmuch as science is not a closed sphere of artificial conceptual structures but a knowledge of objective reality." *(Ibid.* pp. 130-31)

GH writes on page 72: "Whenever the **empirical** and the **theoretical concept** interact, a very definite function takes place in the **interaction.** This is in accordance with the findings of observation and experiment with corresponding results through improvement in the cognitive process itself."

Shvyrev put it better in the original: "However, whenever there is a real interaction of the two, significant for the functioning and the development of science, the empirical has a very definite functional task in this interaction; it ensures the relationship of the theoretical conceptual apparatus with the findings of the observation and experimentation, with the results of 'living contemplation'." *(Ibid.,* p.131)

GH writes on page 72: "Concepts such as **elaboration** and **perfection** constitute an act of **singling out** and **penetrating**

The article by V. Shvyrev which was plagiarized by Healy and the cover of the journal in which it appeared

objective reality, in an ever-**fuller** and ever deeper reflection of its **substance."**

All this must be incomprehensible to even the most experienced cadre, for the concepts referred to by Healy have never been utilized within the Trotskyist movement. As it turns out, GH has again plagiarized Shvyrev... badly. The Soviet author stated:

"In real fact, however, when we say that theoretical cognition is oriented toward the elaboration and perfection of the conceptual apparatus, we should not overlook that elaboration and perfection constitute an act of singling out and penetrating the **objective** reality, ever fuller and ever deeper reflection of its substance." *(Ibid.,* pp. 131-32)

In the course of freely plagiarizing from Shvyrev, he renders the poor man incomprehensible; for GH "quotes" without concern for context — picking up parts of paragraphs and inserting them in his article for no apparent reason. For example, he writes on pages 72-73:

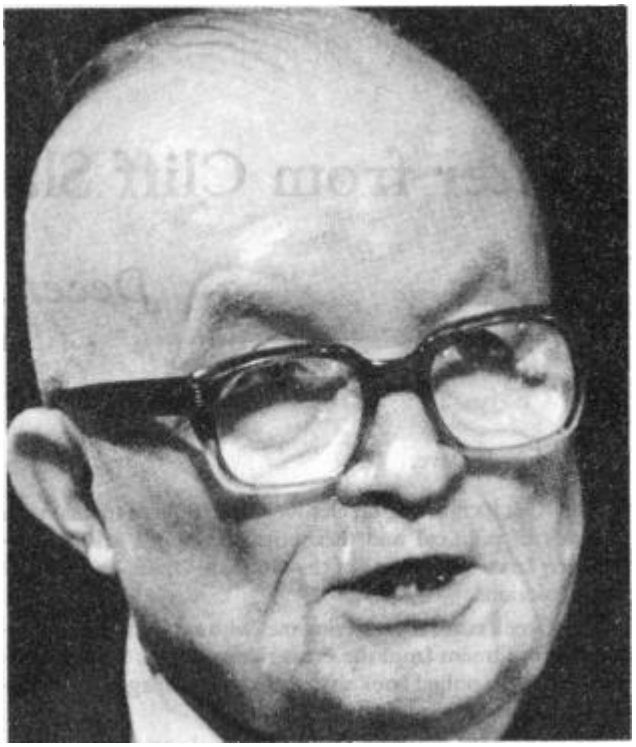
"In the early stages of dialectical materialism as a scientific study, we quickly arrive on the scene of a study of concepts. In this relationship, such a study provides guidance for an empirical examination in the proper sense of the word. That is why **induction** as a method in science, through which a general conclusion is drawn from a set of premises, must **not** be used at the **empirical stage of science.**

GH confuses induction with deduction, but the fault does not lie with Shvyrev who cannot be blamed if his article is not understood by the man who is plagiarizing from it. This is what S. actually wrote:

"The things which appear to be simple and clear for ordinary consciousness become an object of conceptual analysis in the early stages of scientific study. The important thing for us to emphasize is that this conceptual analysis gives guidance and directs empirical examination in the proper sense of the word. This is precisely why the induc¬ tivist model of cognitive activity is invalid at the empirical stage of science, as a 'linear process' of the gradual inductive ascension of facts to generalizations." *(Ibid.,* pp. 134-35)

I suspect that there are other sections which are plagiarized from various Soviet sources. But what is the significance of this? Trotsky was fond of the Buffon epigram: "The method is the man." Plagiarism is, as a method of work, totally alien to Marxism. In *Capital,* Marx never failed to credit by name the author of every idea to which he had occasion to refer. This was in accordance with his dialectical materialist conception of the historical development of theoretical concepts. From the opposite standpoint, the charlatanry which permeates .GH's "Studies" finds its clearest expression in plagiarism, i.e., the perpetration of outright intellectual fraud. One can recall Marx's assessment of Proudhon's *Philosophy of Poverty:*

"High-sounding speculative jargon, supposed to be German-philosophical, appears regularly on the scene when his Gallic acuteness of understanding fails him. A self-



G. Healy

advertising, self-glorifying, boastful tone and especially the twaddle about *"science"* and sham display of it, which are always so unedifying, are continually screaming in one's ears ... Add to this the clumsy erudition of the self-taught, whose natural pride in his own original thought has already been broken and who now, as a *parvenu* of science, feels it necessary to bolster himself up with what he is not and has not." (Marx-Engels, *Selected Correspondence,* p. 15 5)

The following from Marx's epitaph for Proudhon is worth quoting as well:

"Proudhon had a natural inclination for dialectics. But as he never grasped really scientific dialectics he never got further than sophistry. In fact this hung together with his petty-bourgeois point of view. Like the historian *Raumer,* the petty-bourgeois is composed of On The One Hand and On The Other Hand. This is so in his economic interests and *therefore* in his politics, in his scientific, religious and artistic views. It is so in his morals, in everything. He is a living contradiction. If, like Proudhon, he is in addition a gifted man, he will soon learn to play with his own contradictions and develop them according to circumstances into striking, ostentatious, now scandalous or now brilliant paradoxes. Charlatanism in science and accommodation in politics are inseparable from such a point of view. There only remains one governing motive, the *vanity* of the subject, and the only question for him, as for all vain people, is the success of the moment, the attention of the day." *(Ibid.,* p. 157)

Letter from Cliff Slaughter to David North

December 1983

Dear Comrade Dave,

The IC at its meeting on October 29 to 30 had to deal with **a series** of political and theoretical problems arising particularly from the reports of the German, Greek and United States sections.

The Greek comrades, having met with some initial successes in recruitment from the crisis-ridden Greek Stalinist forces, had to be pulled back sharply from a propagandist adaptation to this development.

At stake here was the conscious development of dialectical materialist analysis of every development revealed by practice, comprehending these developments as forms of appearance of the essential movement of the world revolutionary crisis; and from this comprehension arming the party's cadres for an enriched practice in the class struggle.

The German section's report shows the great dangers of a refusal consciously to develop the dialectical materialist method through the training of cadres to compare and analyze every new development as a manifestation of capitalism's world crisis.

Instead, these comrades applied "Marxist" labels to the living developments, in order thereby to abstain from the necessary intervention. Such is the depth of the crisis that this retreat from the IC's struggle for method and cadre-training now produces the crudest forms of economism and worship of spontaneity.

What is behind these problems, which, of course, we must expect to emerge in many forms and which require our attention, theoretical and practical. Their most general (universal) source, upon which all analysis is posited is the **furious** pace of development of the world crisis, always revealing new forms, and condemning to "tailism" all those **who** do **not** face it with the dialectical materialist approach **to** unity of theory and practice.

But, as was pointed out in the discussions in the International Committee, the crisis and its development take not only social, economic and political forms, but also ideological ones.

Every development of the class struggle brings new ideological reflections in the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie, new "defenses" for the bourgeois order; and **these are** relayed into the working class, especially through **the** agency **of** the reformists, centrists and Stalinists.

The ideological pressure on the revolutionary party intensifies, creating **the** constant danger of opportunist and sectarian tendencies. As Trotsky insisted in *In Defence of Marxism:*

C. Slaughter

"In order not to give way under the pressure of bourgeois public opinion, and police repression, the proletarian revolutionist, a leader, all the more, requires **a clear, far-sighted, completely thought-out world outlook. Only upon the basis of a unified Marxist conception** is it possible to correctly approach 'concrete' questions." (pp. 143-144) (My emphasis)

Now this brings us to the report which you made on the US section and the comments which I made then, followed by Comrade Banda's remarks.

The ideological pressure to which I have referred has the effect of producing a scepticism about the possibility of achieving the great tasks before us with our numerically small forces.

This scepticism takes the form of paralysis before the everyday necessity of making changes in the party's practice and the developments *(sic)* of the party's cadres.

It is precisely at that level of struggle for change that the

"clear, far-sighted, completely thought-out world outlook" of dialectical materialism must overcome the resistance of the pressure of the bourgeois order.

And the most fundamental level at which this struggle for cadre-training must be understood and consciously, explicitly fought for, is the level of method, of the dialectical comprehension of the forms in which the essential development of the world crisis and the world revolution, including our own activity and its effects, takes place.

In Defence of Marxism is the record of Trotsky's struggle to place these principled struggles at the base of the work of the movement.

My concern in the IC discussion was that your report showed the dangers that we are not holding fast to these very basic lessons of Trotsky's last struggle and the whole struggle of the International Committee.

Your own heavy emphasis on the "political independence of the working class," backed by a quotation from *In Defence of Marxism,* will become a weapon in the hands of all those who retain the mark of pragmatism, because it will be treasured by them as something more "concrete" than the explicit struggle to develop and comprehend the categories of dialectics as the method for that life-and-death matter of grasping the rapid and all-sided developments thrown up by the world crisis. We must be absolutely explicit and firm against all enemies, about where we stand on Trotsky's conclusion about the struggle and the American party:

"**Not all comrades possibly are content** with the fact that **I gave the predominant place in the discussion to the matter of dialectics.** But I am sure that it is now the only way to **begin the theoretical education of the party,** especially of the youth, and to **inject an aversion to empiricism and eclectics.**" (p. 120) (My emphasis)

It is absolutely clear that the 1939-1940 struggle showed once again, that there is **no** "political independence of the working class," without, as its **principal** presupposition, the struggle to make the dialectical materialist method victorious over empiricism, eclecticism and impressionism, the combination of which is uniquely achieved in American pragmatism, an accomplished form of subjective idealism.

My aim in writing these things is to make as clear as possible the issue which was raised at the IC meeting. It is a continuation, at a much more developed stage of the revolutionary crisis, of the point made in my letter to you in April this year. There I drew your attention to a *Bulletin* editorial, in which Marx's dialectical materialism was characterized as a direct continuation of earlier materialist philosophy, thus excluding the crucial contribution of the dialectical method contained in Hegel's objective idealist philosophy.

In other words, we had Marxist philosophy presented in a manner doctored to meet the requirements of American pragmatism.

As your reply (July 21) pointed out, the fact that such a mistake could appear, despite the unceasing struggle of the IC's educational work for many years against exactly this misconception, was "not without significance." "We still have a lot of hard work to do against pragmatism in the United States." Now this "hard work" is continuous, inceasing *(sic)* and never completed, of course.

The concern which I and other comrades had at the October 1983 IC meeting, was that you concentrated on matters of program to the exclusion of an explicit treatment of the struggle for the dialectical method in the day-to-day fight with the party cadres, and that this can only bring dangerous letting-up in the conscious struggle against propagandism.

This pragmatism, and its persistence against the achievements of a fully-worked out Marxist world outlook, is the most fundamental level at which bourgeois ideology fights our party from within, and must be explicitly combatted, above all by the daily struggle to develop the dialectical method in cadre-training.

In this way, the theoretical problems revealed in discussion in other sections' reports are repeated in forms characteristic of the class struggle and ideological history of the United States.

Comrade Banda then raised the question of the *Bulletin's* headline (Friday, October 28, 1983): "Reagan is a Liar." We are obliged, of course, to fight consciously against every new form of pressure of bourgeois public opinion, mediated by the petty-bourgeois ideologists, that you replied to Comrade Banda that the Workers League Political Committee Statement on the Grenadian invasion (on the inside pages of the same issue) did indeed take a firm defeatist line.

As for the front-page lead, this had waited for Reagan's TV speech and been written, including the headline, in reply.

This does not, of course, alter in any way the fact that the essential class line of the party must predominate and be carried on the front page. "Reagan is a Liar" is a propaganda response which actually does not differentiate us from all sorts of centrist and petty-bourgeois tendencies — emphasis on "political independence of the working class" notwithstanding.

To the extent that there is any letup — the day-to-day fight to comprehend dialectically all the new manifestations of the world crisis and of the pressure of the class enemy — to the extent that there is danger of our independent revolutionary line being lost, even if that happens through the mechanism of pulling back into a journalistic routine.

The fact that you had to be somewhere else and leave the job to someone else does not affect the argument.

After all, you were in the same position when another comrade in the leadership wrote the *Bulletin* editorial of April, and, as you yourself said then: "This is neither an excuse nor a justification for the editorial, but an explanation of how the editorial was written. Of course, it is in terms of crisis that the problems of the cadre are revealed most clearly..." Precisely.

This brings me to the final point. The statement of the Political Committee on Grenada is in fact by no means as explicit as you had thought. I am not raising this here as a matter for political dispute, but in order to direct your attention to the implications of all this, these theoretical questions which have been raised here. The PC statement "calls on the entire American labor movement to fight for the withdrawal of all US troops from that island (Grenada)."

This is of course correct, though it does not by itself differentiate our line from that of many who will say, "Bring our boys home!"

Your only direct reference to the defeat of US imperialism in this war is in Point 9: "US imperialism's naked aggression in Grenada and throughout the world cannot be defeated through protest, but only through mobilizing the

strength of the working class in struggle against the capitalist system." There follows, again, the correct demand for immediate withdrawal of all **US** forces in Grenada.

What is needed here is a clear statement and brief explanation of the fact that the struggle of the workers in the **US** (and other advanced capitalist countries) and of the colonial and ex-colonial peoples is one, and that a defeat for **US** imperialist forces in Grenada would be a victory for the American working class and workers everywhere, making it clear that we are for unconditional support even of the military clique in power in Grenada.

This is not of course opposed in your resolution, but it is not clearly stated and emphasized. And it is **not** correct to say: "The main target of the policy of global counter-revolution is the enormous power of the American labor movement."

It is not a question of the "main target" at all. There is a tinge, here, of reservation about the anti-imperialist content of the colonial revolution, a tinge of reservation about the unity of the proletarian revolution in the advanced capitalist countries and the colonial-national liberation movements.

It is correct **in general** to insist, as your resolution's concluding section does, that "The central issue facing the American working class is the necessity to establish its political independence through the formation of a Labor Party, and the struggle for a workers' government committed to abolishing the capitalist system and establishing socialism."

Yes, but the road right now, to "establishing the political independence of the American working class" is by recognising that the "central issue" is to fight for the defeat of the **US** imperialist invasion of Grenada and its coming attack in **Nicaragua.**

That is what is established by a dialectical cognition of the crisis' latest manifestations and the consequent Party tasks. Grenada and Lebanon are real developments and must be comprehended as the suddenly rapidly developing drive to war and **US** imperialism's "global responsibilities."

It is not the same as referring to the Grenadian issue as the "central task of establishing the political independence of the working class."

Your PC statement in the *Bulletin* (for Tuesday, November 1, which I saw after writing this) does correct the formulation.

The two issues in the discussion are the issue of the dialectical method in training the cadres, and the issue of our line on the Grenadian invasion — are connected after all. The concentration on dialectical method and the great questions of program, strategy and tactics cannot be separated. Their unity is constituted by the cadre training of the revolutionary party.

"Without an extensive and generalized dialectical comprehension of the present epoch as an epoch of abrupt turns, a real education of the parties, a correct strategical leadership of the class struggle, a correct combination of tactics, and above all, a sharp and bold and decisive re-arming at each successive breaking-point of the situation are impossible. And it is just at such an abrupt breaking-point that two or three days sometimes decide the fate of the international revolution." (*The Third International After Lenin,* p. 65)

Fraternally,

Cliff

Letter from David North to Cliff Slaughter

December 27, 1983

Dear Comrade Cliff:

Thank you very much for your recent letter which Comrade Mike has passed on to me. I appreciate the time you have taken to analyze the political and theoretical issues which arose at the last meeting of the International Committee. Your contributions to the political development of the Workers League are always welcomed and respected.

I take with extreme seriousness your concern that my report on October 30, 1983 indicated a drift toward pragmatism in the work of the American section, and that, despite my claims to the contrary, the failure of the Workers League, in your judgment, to take a clear stand for the defeat of US imperialism is the outcome of this rejection of the conscious struggle for the development of the dialectical method.

You write that my report — with its "heavy emphasis on the 'political independence of the working class'" — "showed the dangers that we are not holding fast to these very basic lessons of Trotsky's last struggle and the whole struggle of the International Committee."

Considering the entire history of the Fourth International and, within that, of the Workers League, I could not imagine a more serious admonition. Every struggle within the movement since 1939-40 has demonstrated that the rejection of the dialectical method MUST lead — sooner rather than later — to an abandonment of the principles of Trotskyism, no matter how loudly and frequently programmatic orthodoxy is proclaimed. The great achievement of the International Committee has been its defense of materialist dialectics against all forms of bourgeois ideology. It has been on this basis that the IC has withstood and defeated every challenge to Trotskyism. Whatever the problems in its own political development, the Workers League strives each day to base its work on the lessons of this history. The OCI's denial of the necessity of a specific study of the dialectical method as the Marxist theory of knowledge and its attempt to liquidate theory into program was no less reactionary than Hansen's effort to equate dialectical materialism with his so-called "consistent" empiricism. From somewhat different standpoints, both Hansen and the OCI — later to be joined by Wohlforth — were arguing for complete freedom from scientific method, that is, for pragmatic adaptation to the line of least resistance based on an uncritical worshipping of the surface appearance of phenomena.

The IC never rested on purely verbal affirmations of the dialectical method. In all the fundamental struggles against revisionism, it has — as Trotsky did in 1939-40 — demonstrated the essential link between method and political conclusions. As Trotsky insisted and as the IC has repeatedly shown, the method may be conscious or unconscious but it makes itself known.

For this reason, I found myself in complete agreement with your letter's opening remarks on the ideological implications of the development of the world capitalist crisis. However, it is with the way in which you relate these general conclusions to the problems of the Workers League that I take exception. It is one thing to urge that every effort be made to develop the dialectical materialist method. It is quite another to presume it is being abandoned and then base a set of political conclusions upon that assumption, without demonstrating either point or establishing the inner connection between false method and wrong conclusions.

While you state that it was my political report at the IC which raised your concerns, you say very little about the substance of that report. It dealt with the political implications of the latest stage in the development of Pabloite revisionism in the United States — in which the SWP's repudiation of the theory of Permanent Revolution is being accompanied by an ever-more open orientation toward the Democratic Party. I then attempted to explain the political basis for the decision of the Workers League to intervene for the first time in its history in a national Presidential election.

This is not a minor political step, and I thought it necessary to stress that the basis of this intervention must be the fight for the political independence of the working class. I also pointed out that opposition to this perspective was inseparable from revisionist skepticism about the revolutionary role of the working class, and it was within this context that I quoted the extremely important observation made by Trotsky on pages 14-15 of *In Defense of Marxism.* Permit me to add that I also stated, quite explicitly, that neither the political independence of the working class nor its revolutionary role could be grasped or established at the level of empiricism.

Nevertheless, you warn that the "heavy emphasis on the 'political independence **Of** the working class' ... will become a weapon in the hands of all those who retain the mark of pragmatism, because it will be treasured by them as something more 'concrete' than the explicit struggle to develop and comprehend the categories of dialectics as the method for that life-and-death matter of grasping the rapid and all-sided developments thrown up by the world crisis."

You find in our response to the American invasion of Grenada the justification for this special warning.

Though you state that you are "not raising this here as a matter for political dispute," it would have to be and should be an urgent matter for discussion within the International Committee if the Workers League had drifted away from a clear position of revolutionary defeatism. But I do not agree with your analysis of our position.

In the issue of October 28, 1983, the political content of both the Political Committee statement (entitled "Mobilize Labor Against US Imperialism") and the front page statement itself took a clear defeatist line against the American invasion. Nothing in this issue justifies the very serious political accusation that the Workers League is retreating from a principled stand in defense of the colonial people against US imperialism on the basis of a policy of revolutionary defeatism. In this very issue, no less than 7 pages out of 16 were explicitly devoted to the struggle against the US invasion of Grenada.

Rather than simply take one issue, however, let us review the political content of the *Bulletin* in the two months prior to the American invasion.

ISSUE OF SEPTEMBER 6, 1983: There is a Political Committee statement entitled "Imperialist Provocation Against the USSR" which explicitly defends the USSR against the anti-communist hysteria whipped up over the shooting down of the KAL jet.

ISSUE OF SEPTEMBER 9, 1983: The headline is "Reagan Launches Lebanon War." It calls for the revolutionary mobilization of the working class to overthrow imperialism, and explains that the first step toward this goal is the building of a Labor Party.

On page 3, there is an article on the KAL incident, which declares: "The Workers League, as the Trotskyist movement in the United States, unconditionally defends the USSR, despite the Stalinist bureaucracy, as part of the struggle to mobilize the working class against imperialism."

ISSUE OF SEPTEMBER 13, 1983: On pages 2 and 3, there are articles defending the USSR in the KAL incident. One of these articles is an analysis of the anti-Soviet frame-up by Ron May.

ISSUE OF SEPTEMBER 16, 1983: Headline is "US Troops Out of Lebanon" and the article declares: "The American labor movement must come to the defense of the Lebanese and Palestinian masses against the Reagan Administration and its Zionist and Lebanese fascist clients. Labor must demand the immediate withdrawal of all US, Israeli and other imperialist forces from Lebanon and the eastern Mediterranean and the cutting off of all aid to Gemayel and Israel." The statement then denounces the "unspeakable pro-Zionist policy of the Kirkland bureaucracy."

This issue carries a front-page ad announcing a September 25th meeting entitled: "Defeat Reagan's War Drive! Build a Labor Party!"

ISSUE OF SEPTEMBER 20, 1983: Headline is "Democrats Back Reagan's War" and the article declares that "The struggle of the Lebanese National Movement deserves the full support of the American working class and youth." It concludes with the call for the mobilization of the working class "against the imperialist policies of Reagan and the Democrats" on the basis of the fight for a workers' government.

ISSUE OF SEPTEMBER 23, 1983: Headline is "WAR **POWERS CONSPIRACY."**

ISSUE OF SEPTEMBER 27, 1983: carries a full page report on the WL Public meeting. It reports the statement of Cde. McLaughlin that "the WL stands for the defeat of US imperialism and its imperialist, Zionist and fascist allies in Lebanon and for the military victory of the Lebanese National Movement and the PLO." The article also carries extracts from my speech at the meeting, which emphasized both the program of revolutionary defeatism and the unity of the struggles of the colonial masses, the working class in the advanced capitalist countries, and the working class in the workers' states. It denounced pacifism and explained the Leninist policies of revolutionary defeatism. In a direct quote, the speech included the following:

"The choice of policies in the struggle against war is not at random. Just as the foreign policy of an imperialist ruling class is inseparable from its domestic policies, in that the ruling class defends on a world scale the same interests it defends on the national scale, the anti-war policies of the working class is dictated by the logic of the class struggle itself."

ISSUE OF SEPTEMBER 30, 1983: The *Bulletin* provided a full page of detailed coverage of the Nicaraguan Sandinista leader's UN denunciation of US aggression in Central America.

ISSUE OF OCTOBER 4, 1983: A full page article on Page 5 entitled: "Defeat US-Syrian Conspiracy Against PLO!"

ISSUE OF OCTOBER 7, 1983: An article on the AFL-CIO Convention, concentrating on its support for imperialist foreign policy.

ISSUE OF OCTOBER 14, 1983: The editorial is entitled: "Kirkland Meets Major Blowtorch," and it denounces the AFL-CIO President's connections with US imperialism's role in Latin America. The connection between his alliance with the imperialist butchers and his betrayals of American workers is clearly made.

ISSUE OF OCTOBER 18, 1893: The headline is "Stop Terror Against Nicaragua" and the accompanying front-page article is a PC Statement. It again clearly calls for the mobilization of the working class in defense of the Central American masses and for the replacement of Kirkland and the CIA stooges in the labor movement.

ISSUE OF OCTOBER 25, 1983: Headline is "Withdraw Troops From Lebanon."

This is the record of the *Bulletin* in the period directly prior to the US invasion of Grenada. It shows very clearly that the WL continuously raised the issue of mobilizing the working class in the United States against imperialism and in support of the masses of the semi-colonial countries. I do not claim that this record, in itself, is a decisive reply to the criticisms which you have made. Great events do produce sudden changes in program and perspectives that reflect the pressure of powerful social forces upon the revolutionary vanguard.

But this record does show that the campaign against American imperialism and its war preparations did constitute the central political theme of the *Bulletin* and the political work of the Party. We directed this fight toward the working class in direct struggle against the AFL-CIO leader-

ship, which, we are proud to say, has acknowledged our efforts by attempting officially to proscribe the *Bulletin* in the trade union movement. As for the impact of the invasion itself, there is no sign whatsoever that the Workers League retreated from its position of revolutionary defeatism.

However, you find inadequate the sentence with which point 9 of the statement begins: "US imperialism's naked aggression in Grenada and throughout the world cannot be defeated through protest, but only through mobilizing the strength of the working class in struggle against the capitalist system." I think this statement is clear enough, as we are directly speaking of the political means through which the working class will defeat imperialism. Moreover, your criticism that we failed to stress the unity of the struggles of the colonial masses and the workers in the advanced capitalist countries is simply contradicted by the paragraphs in section 9 to which you fail to refer.

Were it only a matter of taking exception to your criticism of our position, this letter would not be necessary. However, in the conclusion of your letter it becomes clear that there is a substantial difference between the perspectives of the Workers League and those which you advance.

Please reread. Comrade Cliff, how you formulated the central tasks of the Workers League in relation to the imperialist invasion of Grenada:

> "It is correct IN GENERAL to insist, as your resolution's concluding section does, that 'The central issue facing the American working class is the necessity to establish its political independence through the formation of a Labour party, and the struggle for a workers' government committed to abolishing the capitalist system and establishing socialism.'
>
> "Yes, but the road right now, to 'establishing the political independence of the American working class' is by recognizing that the 'central issue' is to fight for the defeat of the US imperialist invasion of Grenada and its coming attack in Nicaragua.
>
> "That is what is established by a dialectical cognition of the crisis' latest manifestations and the consequent Party tasks. Grenada and Lebanon are real developments and must be comprehended as the suddenly rapidly developing drive to war and US imperialism's 'global responsibilities'."

I am astonished by this argument, which goes against everything that we have been taught by the International Committee and by you, personally. Taking issue with our assertion that the task at hand is the fight for a Labor Party and a workers' government, you argue, "Yes, but the road right now ... is to fight for the defeat of the US imperialist invasion of Grenada and its coming attack in Nicaragua."

This approach, which explicitly separates the fight for the defeat of the US invasion of Grenada from the struggle to establish the political independence of the working class, is identical to that of every revisionist and Stalinist group in the United States. Wasn't it against this invidious distinction that the Workers League and the IC based their struggle against the opportunist Pabloite conception of the "anti-war" movement? Do they not always claim that our "sectarianism" consists of our principled approach to all political developments, and our refusal to abandon a strategical line worked out over many years to suit what is happening "right now"? As Trotsky insisted in his reply to Shachtman, our politics is of a principled and not of a conjunctural character. Proceeding from the opposite standpoint, the SWP has always attacked our "fixation" with the Labor Party issue. Tom Kerry thought he was delivering a powerful blow against us when he noted sarcastically that the "hotshots" of the Workers League not only call for the Labor Party on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, but on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday as well.

Revolutionary defeatism is not simply a slogan which we print in our newspaper. It is a perspective that is bound up with definite practices within the workers' movement. As we understand revolutionary defeatism, it means that a Marxist party MUST WORK for the defeat of its own ruling class during war. In practical terms, this means that the Workers League must fight for the maximum development of the class struggle within the United States, and at the forefront of this fight must be the struggle for the political independence of the working class from the bourgeois-imperialist parties through the building of a Labor Party.

You state that "Grenada and Lebanon are real developments ..." Do you mean to suggest that the fight for the political independence of the working class in the United States is any less real? Is this not the classical form of pragmatic argument which counterposes "concrete" political events to "abstract" matters of principle and program? Far from being an example of "a dialectical cognition of the crisis' latest manifestations and the consequent Party tasks," your formulation calls to mind the impressionist worshipping of the "realities of living events" against which Trotsky so frequently warned.

I do not want to write more sharply than is necessary, but the approach you suggest would lead, if accepted by the Workers League, straight toward outright opportunism. After all, if Grenada and Lebanon are to be counterposed as "real developments" to the strategical line of the fight for the political independence of the working class, why not proceed in the same manner toward every other important new development in the class struggle.

For example, in the case of the Greyhound strike, we insisted that the central task is the industrial and political mobilization of the working class against the Reagan Administration and its Democratic Party allies. To which the SWP and various revisionist tendencies (such as the followers of Thornett) reply, "Yes, that is true in general, but right now we must fight for the victory of the strike." And on this basis they refrained from making any criticism of the trade union bureaucracy, silently walked on the picket line without selling their newspapers or identifying themselves politically.

Of course, you would never suggest such a political line, but your formulation, however unintentional, has a logic of its own.

As you certainly know, the "fight for the defeat of the US imperialist invasion of Grenada" — however "concrete" this slogan may appear to the pragmatist — is, from the standpoint of Marxism, little more than abstract phrasemongering when separated from the Labor Party struggle. Had the *Bulletin* of October 28, 1983 repeated 100 times the call for the defeat of US imperialism but left out the issue of the Labor Party as the central task facing the American working class, the Political Committee statement would have represented a centrist evasion of the real concrete tasks.

No matter how "abstract" the political independence of **the working class may appear to revisionists,** it is the only historically concrete strategical basis for a real struggle against imperialism. Though this is certainly not your intention, this perspective is belittled in your letter. For example, you refer to US imperialism's "coming attack in Nicaragua" as if it were already an accomplished fact. No doubt, such preparations are already at a very advanced stage. But we do take seriously the IC's insistence on the undefeated character of the working class in the imperialist centers, and it is our belief that the best-laid plans of the Pentagon can be disrupted by the development of the class struggle within the United States.

You also take exception to our statement that "The main target of the policy of global counter-revolution is the enormous power of the American labor movement." Taken entirely by itself, this statement could appear one-sided. But within its entire context, the statement is essentially correct, and, incidentally, it makes the very point that you claimed was lacking: "that the struggle of the workers in the US ... and of the colonial and ex-colonial peoples is one ..." The main enemy of the American bourgeoisie is at home, in the sense that US imperialism cannot establish global hegemony — a goal which requires the complete militarization of American industry — without smashing the labor movement in the United States. Unlike the revisionists, we firmly believe that this task is beyond the capacity of the Reagan Administration. The historically-necessary transition to more direct forms of Bonapartist military-police rule will not be accomplished without enormous internal crises which will facilitate the development of a revolutionary situation within the United States.

Finally, Comrade Cliff, you note "a tinge ... of reservation about the anti-imperialist content of the colonial revolution, a tinge of reservation about the unity of the proletarian revolution in the advanced capitalist countries and the colonial-national liberation movements."

I do not see why emphasis on the class struggle in the United States should be interpreted as a "reservation" about the historical and political significance of the struggles in the semi-colonial countries. Let me assure you that no such reservation exists. But is there any point in discussion of this issue at such a level? Neither of us believe that abstract declamations about "the unity of the proletarian revolution in the advanced capitalist countries and the colonial-national liberation movements" is a worthy substitute for a scientific political estimate of the class forces and the leaderships involved in each of the struggles. There is, without any question, a powerful anti-imperialist content within the colonial revolution, but that is not the only element within this historical phenomenon. All colonial-national movements are a unity of antagonistic class forces, and the relationship of each of these class forces to the main imperialist powers is by no means identical. The pressure of imperialism does not mitigate but rather intensifies the class struggle within the semi-colonial countries.

Again in contradistinction to the Pabloites and the Stalinists, we hold that the anti-imperialism of the colonial bourgeoisie is of a relative and not an absolute character, conditioned by the level of development of class contradictions within each of the oppressed nations. The objective anti-imperialist content of the colonial revolution and its historical unity with the proletarian struggles in the metropolitan centers must be strengthened and actualized through a consistent struggle against the bourgeois-nationalist leaderships of the mass movements within the oppressed countries.

This perspective of building independent Trotskyist parties to win the leadership of the national anti-imperialist struggle does not detract one iota from our unconditional defense of national movements in the oppressed countries, whatever the character of their existing leaderships. Our concept of unity is dialectical, i.e., it contains difference within it, and it is on the basis of the building of revolutionary parties of the working class in all countries that we establish, as revolutionary Marxists within the class struggle, the unity of all the oppressed.

At the very conclusion of your letter, you write:

> "The two issues in the discussion — the issue of the dialectical method in training the cadres, and the issue of our line on the Grenadan invasion — are connected after all. The concentration on dialectical method and the great questions of program, strategy and tactics cannot be separated."

We do not deny this connection, but it is not explained by purely formal references to the dialectical method. Of that any pragmatist is quite capable. What must be studied and developed is the correct application of the dialectical method and historical materialism. However, this is by no means undermined by "heavy emphasis" on the "political independence of the working class." I believe that a serious study of all of Lenin's works — and, most explicitly, his earliest economic and philosophical studies — will reveal the inner connection between his concentration on the correct application of the dialectical method and his "heavy emphasis" on the political independence of the working class.

I must admit that I am disturbed by the very suggestion that an emphasis on the "political independence of the working class" could be characterized as "very heavy" within the International Committee — especially in relation to the report from a sympathizing section in a country in which the working class has not yet broken politically from the liberals. All the organizational, political and theoretical tasks of a Marxist party — above all, in the United States — are directed precisely toward the achievement of this political independence.

While you suggest that this emphasis "will become a weapon in the hands of all those who retain the mark of pragmatism," I see nothing that supports this conclusion. The whole fight against the SWP since 1961 — not to mention the entire history of the struggle of Bolshevism — has hinged on this very issue. Far from embracing the concept of the political independence of the working class, it is under relentless attack by Stalinists and revisionists all over the world today. The neo-Stalinism of the SWP does not originate in the head of Mr. Barnes, but is a very definite response of US imperialism to the new stage of the capitalist crisis and the revolutionary upsurge of the world proletariat. In this way Pabloism serves as a medium for the transmission of imperialist pressures into the workers' movement. As I have heard you insist so many times in the past, it is at precisely such a point that the International Committee must be on the alert for any trace of the revisionist outlook

within its own ranks and at the same time intensify its political and theoretical assault against Pabloism. As you will certainly agree, this fight against Pabloism is by no means behind us.

It is precisely for this reason that I believe that a clarification of the issues you have raised in your letter is very necessary.

Comrade Cliff, we do not doubt or deny that the struggle against pragmatism is not a finished question inside the Workers League. However, we feel strongly that we have been able to develop a correct political line on Grenada and on other major developments because we have attempted to learn from the IC's struggle for dialectical materialism.

With warmest fraternal regards,

David North

cc: Comrade Gerry
Comrade Mike

Letter from David North to Mike Banda

January 23, 1984

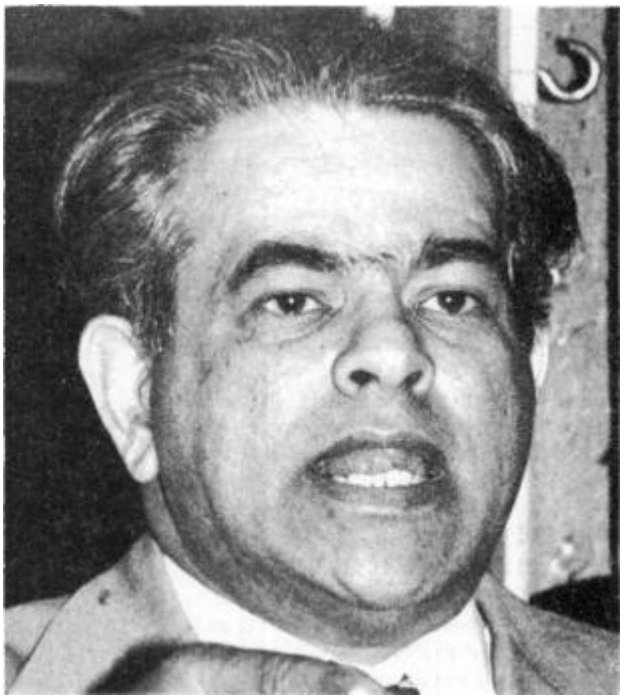
Dear Comrade Mike:

Somewhat more than 30 years have passed since the International Committee was formed in order to defend the Fourth International against the growth of a revisionist tendency, led by Pablo and Mandel, which challenged in theory and practice all the fundamental Marxist conceptions for which Leon Trotsky had fought and died. In 1953 Pablo directly challenged the historical role of the Fourth International as the "World Party of Socialist Revolution" and called into question the revolutionary role of the working class as the gravedigger of capitalism and the builder of a socialist society. He put forward the position — at first surreptitiously but gradually with ever increasing boldness — that the independent revolutionary role ascribed by Marx, Lenin and Trotsky to the proletariat could be fulfilled by the Soviet bureaucracy — the parasitic social caste which Trotsky had declared to be counter-revolutionary "through and through."

Underlying Pablo's revisions of the essential programmatic conceptions of the Fourth International was the abandonment of the dialectical method and historical materialism of Marx and its replacement with crass impressionism supplemented by idealist speculation about the revolutionary socialist "potential" of non-proletarian class forces.

Less than eight years later, the British Trotskyists — led by Comrade Gerry and yourself — were forced to assume responsibility for the defense of the International Committee against the open resurgence of Pabloism in an even more dangerous form. The upsurge of the colonial revolution was interpreted by the Socialist Workers Party as "proof" that the petty-bourgeois nationalist leaders, under whom limited victories had been won, could serve as a substitute for the development of Trotskyist parties of the working class. The SLL resolutely opposed the SWP's reactionary adulation of petty-bourgeois nationalists such as Ben Bella and Castro, and insisted that Hansen's positions represented an explicit repudiation of Trotskyism. The SLL was not intimidated by Hansen's provocative allegations of "ultra-left sectarianism" and refused to be stampeded into the unprincipled reunification of the SWP and the European Pabloites in 1963.

The stand taken by the British section of the International Committee was of historic significance — no less vital to the defense of Marxism and its revolutionary continuity than the founding of the Fourth International itself in 1938. All the considerable gains made by the Trotskyist movement over



M. **Banda**

the last 20 years — in which we include the founding of the Workers League — were only possible as a result of that struggle. Therefore, we have always accepted as correct your insistence that the unrelenting struggle against Pabloite revisionism in all its forms — theoretical, political and organizational — is the vital and essential foundation for the building of sections of the International Committee in every part of the World. For the sake of clarity let us stress that this "building of sections" is not the mechanical accumulation of national parties, formally proclaiming adherence to the International Committee, but rather the continuous development of a politically-unified international practice based on a scientific conception of the world class struggle as a whole.

We are writing this letter to you because we are concerned that the International Committee is now in danger of losing the gains of its many years of principled struggle. We doubt that it is necessary to assure you of our profound respect and admiration for the comrades in Britain who have played such a decisive historical role in the building of the Trotskyist movement over the last 30 years. Every comrade

in the Workers League is proud to be known as a "Healyite." But we must state that we are deeply troubled by the growing signs of a political drift toward positions quite similar — both in conclusions and methodology — to those which we have historically associated with Pabloism. We are not suggesting that any section of the International Committee — and least of all the Workers Revolutionary Party — is to be accused of any conscious retreat from Trotskyist principles. **As** far as the Workers League is concerned, the example of the WRP remains the political model upon which we **seek** to base our work each day. However, we do feel that the International Committee has for some time been working without a clear and politically-unified perspective to guide its practice. Rather than a perspective for the building of sections of the International Committee in every country, the central focus of the IC's work for several years has been the development of alliances with various bourgeois nationalist regimes and liberation movements. The content of these alliances has less and less reflected any clear orientation toward the development of our own forces as central to the fight to establish the leading role of the proletariat in the anti-imperialist struggle in the semi-colonial countries. The very conceptions advanced by the SWP in relation to Cuba and Algeria which we attacked so vigorously in the early 1960s appear with increasing frequency within our own press.

Characteristic of this worrisome trend within the pages of the *News Line* — which functions not only as the organ of the WRP but also as the authoritative voice of the International Committee — are the series of articles which have recently been published on the significance of the meeting held between Yasir Arafat and Hosni Mubarak. We do not agree with the way this issue has been approached. What we find so disturbing is not that you have defended Arafat's decision to meet Mubarak, but the manner in which this defense has been undertaken. Article after article in the *News Line* presents this visit as a strategical tour de force on the part of Arafat that has left his enemies confounded once again. Such an approach, however sincerely motivated by a determination to defend the PLO against its enemies, serves only to mislead and disarm our cadre and the readers of our press.

As Marxists our starting point in making political analysis is never the conscious intentions of political leaders; it must be the class forces they represent and the logic of the class struggle of which their actions are a necessary expression. The policies of Arafat inevitably reflect his class standpoint as a petty-bourgeois nationalist. He is maneuvering not only between different bourgeois regimes within the Middle East but also between the opposing class forces within the Palestinian movement. However great his personal courage and heroism, Arafat's policies cannot provide an answer to the great historic problems of the Palestinian struggle for self-determination. While it is our duty to defend him and the PLO against the reactionary machinations of the Syrian Ba'athists, we are by no means obligated to hail his pragmatic turn to Mubarak as some sort of strategical masterstroke.

However, the *News Line* editorial of December 30, 1983, entitled "Arafat's role," provides little more than journalistic rationalizations for Arafat's meeting with Mubarak and for the political rehabilitation of the Mubarak regime. Denouncing Habash's "slanderous accusation" against Arafat, the *News Line* writes:

PLO leader Yassir Arafat

> "These verbal assaults are the product of limited minds and narrow outlooks. Arafat's talks with Mubarak do not constitute support for Camp David. On the contrary. Arafat's audacious diplomacy has helped to undermine the treaty between Egypt and Israel, not strengthen it.
>
> "The essence of the Camp David conspiracy between Sadat, Beigin and Carter was to ignore the existence of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and to dismiss the struggle of the Palestinian people for self-determination.
>
> "This is why the treaty was so vigorously opposed. But now Mubarak has welcomed Arafat in Cairo. This is not a meeting of individuals. It signifies the Egyptian government's recognition of the PLO, its legitimacy in the Middle East struggle and its inalienable right to fight for the liberation of Palestine.
>
> "Does this serve Camp David? Does it serve Zionist imperialism? Of course not. It is a severe diplomatic and political blow to the crisis-stricken Shamir regime, and that is why Tel Aviv has been angrily denouncing the Arafat-Mubarak talks."

Such analysis — in which phrases such as "Of course not" and "On the contrary" are presented as answers in themselves — has little in common with Marxism. The suggestion that Mubarak's meeting with Arafat somehow supersedes and cancels out Sadat's trip to Jerusalem and the signing of the Camp David agreement is a sophistry which has now been used by the Islamic Conference to excuse its resumption of relations with Egypt. We find it difficult to believe that the *News Line* could suggest that Mubarak has been transformed into a defender of the rights of the Palestinians. While the *News Line* refers to the statements of Shamir on the Mubarak-Arafat meeting, it says nothing about the far more important pronouncements of the Reagan Administration, which immediately hailed the meeting and referred to Arafat as a "moderate" leader.

Egyptian President Mubarak

Sadat's trip to Jerusalem and the Camp David summit represented an historical milestone in the degeneration of bourgeois nationalism in the Middle East. Camp David marked a definitive turn by the Arab bourgeoisie as a whole toward an abandonment of the Palestinian struggle for self-determination and toward an unprincipled accommodation with imperialism within the Middle East. The Egyptian-Zionist agreement, achieved under the direct auspices of US imperialism, set the stage for the Zionist invasion of Lebanon and all the savage crimes that have been subsequently committed against the Palestinian people. Arafat's second exile from Lebanon within little more than a year is the consequence of the earlier betrayals of the PLO by the Arab bourgeoisie. Far from representing a repudiation of Camp David, Mubarak has insisted that the Arafat visit vindicates the course pursued by the Egyptian regime over the last six years. As the *Wall Street Journal* reports from Cairo:

> "Now, Egyptian officials and the popular press are saying the ICO (Islamic Conference Organization) invitation is a vindication of the process that began in 1977 with the late Anwar Sadat's visit to Jerusalem. The officials and the newspaper commentators are celebrating the ICO move with an exuberant 'I told you so' attitude." (January 23, 1984)

The stench of Camp David was not buried with Sadat. The Arab bourgeoisie — shattered by the virtual collapse of OPEC and terrified by the specter of socialist revolution — is searching desperately for a formula which will allow them to bury the hatchet with Egypt. Then the stage will be set for an accommodation with Israel itself. Thus, the cynical claims by Arab bourgeois leaders that Camp David is a dead issue is merely a face-saving device to cover up their own treachery. At any rate, the Egyptian government has explicitly rejected any conditions for its acceptance of the invitation to rejoin the ICO. However, putting aside all speculation about the concealed aims behind the present diplomatic intrigues, the historical fact remains that Camp David was a demonstration of the counter-revolutionary nature of the Arab bourgeoisie and its organic incapacity to **wage a principled and consistent struggle against im**perialism — of which the defense of the Palestinian struggle for self-determination is the highest test.

This very point was made powerfully by the *News Line* following Sadat's initial trip to Jerusalem:

> "This visit itself should only surprise those who still have illusions that the bourgeois national movement in the Middle East has some kind of future. Words such as Arab Nation, Arab homeland, Arab world, whilst expressing genuine national sentiment simply confuse the naked facts of the role of US and Zionist imperialism in a period when the world crisis of capitalism dominates and accelerates the tendency towards world slump. The bourgeois national struggle is insoluble in the Middle East and elsewhere in the world except through the socialist revolution." (November 21, 1977)

While indicting the PFLP for its "hopeless failure to grasp the great changes which have taken place in the Middle East since Sadat's execution," the *News Line* offers no analysis of those changes and does not explain why — from the standpoint of the class struggle within the Middle East — Arafat's meeting with Mubarak is politically correct. One development which would certainly deserve examination is the extent to which Egypt has become integrated into the Middle East military forces of US imperialism. Egypt has opened up its territory for American military exercises and provided logistical support for the US-backed French intervention in Chad. Another expression of the "great changes which have taken place" is the US financing of a Jordanian version of the Rapid Deployment Force. The actual relations between imperialism and its clients in the Middle East as well as the changes in class relations within each Arab country are not even referred to. Instead the *News Line* offers a purely journalistic appraisal that uncritically endorses a policy based on pragmatic maneuvers which evade the central problems confronting the Palestinian Revolution.

> "Arafat has brilliantly managed to bring Egypt back into Middle Eastern calculations and, at the same time, to stay out of the clutches of both Damascus and Amman."

The conception that the course of history is determined by inspired acts of genius on the diplomatic chess board belongs to idealist bourgeois historiography and not to the materialist conception of history. Our calculations, if not Arafat's, are always based on an estimate of class forces and the potential of the working class for revolutionary struggle against the bourgeoisie. For us, the salvation of the Palestinian Revolution does not lie in escaping from the "clutches" of Syria by leaping into the clutches of Egypt, Morocco and, in fact, Jordan — with whose King the PLO is presently engaged in intense negotiations and with whom Mubarak is now scheduled to meet next month. Are we now to welcome and place confidence in this new round of diplomacy? Our strategical goal should always be the mobilization of the working class — supported by the peasantry — against the bourgeoisie in each and every Middle Eastern country. But another perspective emerges in the *News Line:*

> "We stand by the principle that the PLO has the right to political independence. And we give full credit to chairman Arafat for exercising his right to win a tactical ally in

the Egyptian regime, boost the nationalist morale of the Egyptian masses and build the unity of the Egyptian and Palestinian oppressed."

In place of the Leninist principle of "March separately, strike together," we now seem to have adopted a formula which grants to the PLO a carte blanche to do what it likes — with our support guaranteed in advance. As used here, the slogan of "political independence" is reduced to an almost meaningless abstraction, which serves to cover up the danger that the political logic of the PLO's maneuvers — whatever Arafat's intentions — leads inevitably toward its subordination to the interests of the Arab bourgeoisie and world imperialism. Certainly it is our duty to at least raise this as a real danger confronting the Palestinian Revolution. Unless we clearly warn the Palestinian movement of the dangers raised by Arafat's playing of his "Egyptian card," the only "political independence" which we, in practice, guarantee to the PLO is "independence" from Trotskyist criticism!

Furthermore, why should we welcome the boosting of "nationalist morale" in Egypt under the leadership of Mubarak? Do we really believe that an alliance with Sadat's successor will gain for the PLO the allegiance of the Egyptian proletariat and the impoverished peasantry? This view is expressed somewhat more explicitly by our Australian comrades who, basing themselves on the *New Line* editorial, have written in the January 10th issue of *Workers News* that the meeting with Mubarak enables the PLO "to tap the strength of the 40 million-strong mass movement in Egypt."

This sort of argument simply writes off the class struggle within Egypt and adapts to the dangerous illusions of the PLO leadership, which clearly does not base itself on the class struggle of the Arab proletariat against the native bourgeoisie. In reality the unity of the Palestinian and Egyptian masses will be achieved not through alliances with Mubarak but in struggle against him. That this is not understood by Arafat and the PLO leadership is an expression of the weakness and fundamental class limitations of bourgeois nationalism within the Palestinian movement. With riots sweeping Morocco and Tunisia and with Egypt seething with discontent, not to mention the massive strikes shaking Israel, the cause of the Palestinian Revolution would gain far more from an appeal to the working class of Marrakesh, Tunis, Cairo and, let us add, Haifa, than from meetings with Mubarak, Hassan and Hussein.

Our point is not that Arafat should be condemned for acting as a bourgeois nationalist leader. BUT WE MUST NEVER FORGET THAT HIS POLICY IS NOT OUR POLICY, and that our analysis must always be directed toward the development of the Marxist leadership which is required to defeat imperialism and its bourgeois agents in the Middle East. This is precisely the conclusion that was drawn in November 1977:

> "Let the fires of the social revolution be lit throughout the length and breadth of the feudal states, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the Gulf Emirates, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan.
>
> "It is only a matter of time when other 'devout' Moslem leaders such as Khaled, Assad and Hussein reach out for the prayer mats advertising Coca Cola at the Jerusalem Mosque supplied by kind permission of Menachem Beigin and Moshe Dayan in the presence, no doubt, of the CIA directors of the Jerusalem bottling plant.
>
> "To light the fires of social revolution it is necessary to build revolutionary parties in all these countries with their trained cadres and military fighters.
>
> "Whatever the sincere differences that exist over the development of Marxism, these will be overcome in that common struggle.
>
> "The Workers Revolutionary Party believes that these parties can only be effective if they are part of the struggle to build the forces of the International Committee of the Fourth International, which is the nucleus of the World Party of Socialist Revolution.
>
> "That is the lesson which follows Egypt's capitulation to Zionist imperialism." (November 21, 1977, p.2)

However, the December 30th *News Line* editorial is directed against such a perspective. This is not an isolated mistake. An uncritical adulation of the PLO leadership characterizes virtually all our articles on the Palestinian Revolution. For example, the *News Line* has also printed, without comment, a statement issued by Arafat under the headline, "Arafat's Hedge to the Revolution." This statement — if taken at face value — advances political conceptions that cannot and will not advance the Palestinian Revolution one inch. We know that the *News Line* cannot possibly agree with Arafat's praise for the United Nations, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, the Egyptian-French initiative, Italy, and the Kremlin bureaucracy. And yet this statement is published as a "pledge" to the revolution!

Even more politically disturbing is another article, in which the *News Line* reports that Arafat's meeting with Mubarak had been criticized by the Fateh Central Committee. The *News Line* then hastens to reassure its readers that

> "These mildly critical remarks form part of the PLO's diplomatic struggle in the Arab world and are intended for consumption in the Arab press. (!) In reality, it does not represent a serious rebuke to the PLO chairman or to his audacious visit to Cairo two weeks ago." (January 7, 1984)

Were the statements of the Central Committee nothing more than diplomatic snow jobs, it would hardly speak well of the PLO leadership, as it would mean that the Central Committee was attempting to deceive the Palestinian masses, who, after all, do read the Arab press. It is clear from the entire text of the communique that while the Central Committee rejected the slanders of Syria and Libya, it did criticize the "organizational error" committed by Arafat. Despite the very cautious wording, it is obvious that the communique reflects serious and legitimate differences within Fateh. Whatever its limitations, the Fateh Central Committee's statement represents a more serious analysis of the problems now confronting the Palestinian Revolution than that made by the *News Line.* Why, Comrade Mike, should we be less willing to make an objective analysis of Arafat's policies than his comrades on the Fateh Central Committee? Moreover, at a time when the PLO leadership is attempting to find a principled response to the serious problems it confronts within its own movement, have we not an obligation to provide them with the benefits of a scientific Marxist analysis of the present tasks of the Palestinian Revolution? If we have nothing to offer but our totally uncritical support, why should Palestinian workers and peasants — in the West Bank, Gaza, within Israel and throughout the Middle East — be drawn to the banner of the International Committee of the Fourth International?

In another article, the *News Line* of January 13th cites a

public opinion poll that shows mass support for Arafat. What political conclusions are we to draw from this information? Should the outcome of an opinion poll determine our line on the visit to Egypt? We do not doubt the popularity of Arafat among the Palestinian masses. But did we ever accept popularity as a criteria for determining our political assessment of, for example, the Cuban Revolution? Was it not Hansen who told us that given Castro's vast popularity, it would be "suicide" for Latin American Trotskyists to criticize his regime. Nor are we quite sure what to make of the *News Line's* reference to the opinion of the *Jerusalem Posts* "PLO watcher Matti Steinberg" who declares that Arafat's "meeting with Mubarak has undoubtedly opened up new political vistas for Arafat..." By writing articles which serve only to justify what has already been done by Arafat, and which paint in bright colors this or that pragmatic maneuver, the danger arises that we are falling victim to a political outlook that calls into question the real necessity to build the Trotskyist movement in the semi-colonial countries and within the anti-imperialist national liberation movements. If Arafat, guided only by his intuition, can successfully lead the PLO, what need is there for the training of Palestinian cadre as dialectical materialists? Involved here is not a single article or merely the Arafat-Mubarak episode. We now have gone through years of experiences since 1976 which has shown again and again that emphasis on the special qualifications of this or that leader paves the way for serious miscalculations, dangerous errors and intractable contradictions in our political line. Let us merely note that among the staunchest supporters of Arafat's meeting with Mubarak is Saddam Hussein, whom we once enthusiastically supported but for whose overthrow we now regularly call, and that among Arafat's bitterest opponents is Muammar Gaddafi, who, until recently, received the same sort of praise we now bestow upon the PLO leader.

We feel that the basic problem is that the International Committee has not yet drawn up a real balance sheet on its work over the last eight years. Surely, we cannot simply go from alliance to alliance without making an analysis of each concrete experience through which the International Committee has passed. Without such an analysis we will face greater and greater confusion which inevitably, if not **cor**rected, will produce political disasters within the sections. No matter how promising certain developments within the national work of the sections may appear — such as our own experiences in various trade union struggles — these will not produce real gains for the sections involved unless such work is guided by a scientifically-worked out international perspective. The more the Workers League turns toward the working class, the more we feel the need for the closest collaboration with our international comrades to drive the work forward. The degeneration of the Socialist Workers Party, culminating in the open split with Mandel, is the greatest historic vindication of the struggle you waged against Pabloism. We are proud to have been your students in this struggle. But the new stage in the crisis of imperialism and Stalinism and the break-up of revisionism poses the necessity of a great development in our theoretical work and practical activity. We believe that this development requires a renewal of our struggle against Pabloite revisionism — above all, against the manifestations of its outlook within our own sections. Let us begin this work by availing ourselves of the opportunity presented by the scheduled IC meeting to prepare the foundation for an exhaustive discussion on international perspectives, aimed at the drafting of a comprehensive international resolution. The time has certainly come for the International Committee to issue its reply to the attacks of the SWP neo-Stalinists on the Theory of Permanent Revolution and to demonstrate that it remains the indispensable scientific foundation for the building of the World Party of Socialist Revolution. It might be of assistance to the preparation of the coming meeting if an agenda were drawn up and made available to the sections' leaderships before they arrive in London. We are looking forward to collaborating closely with you in beginning this work.

With warmest fraternal regards,

David North

cc: Cde. Gerry

Political Report by David North to the International Committee of the Fourth International

February 11, 1984

1. The 30-year history of the International Committee of the Fourth International has been the record of the continuous struggle of the world Trotskyist party to resolve the crisis of revolutionary leadership. This has been a history of struggle against all those forces — Stalinist, Social Democratic, and Pabloite — through which the working class is subordinated to the bourgeoisie. The International Committee is based upon the traditions and principles established through the political, theoretical and organizational struggles of all previous generations of Marxists — and the way in which this continuity of the IC with these previous generations has been developed is through the struggle against every variety of anti-Marxism that has emerged within the workers' movement, especially within the Trotskyist movement itself. The form assumed by each of these struggles has always been determined by the actual content of the international class struggle. Basing itself on the dialectical method and historical materialism, the International Committee has constantly fought to uncover the class forces at work in each of these struggles and to expose in each new manifestation of revisionism the ideological forms through which imperialism seeks to vanquish Marxism.

2. Throughout the history of the revolutionary movement such forms of ideological attack on Marxism have emerged precisely when the class struggle was undergoing a rapid development and posed a very direct threat to the rule of the bourgeoisie. Bernsteinism emerged with the development of imperialism and the beginning of the epoch in which the socialist revolution would be posed (as was already seen very clearly in the 1905 Russian Revolution). Stalinism was the political and theoretical expression of the pressure of imperialism upon the first workers' state — the greatest challenge ever to the rule of the world bourgeoisie. Within the Trotskyist movement, the connection between the growth of revisionism and the pressing needs of imperialism have been even more direct. There was nothing "coincidental" about the emergence of Burnham and Shachtman at the very beginning of World War II — the point of the greatest crisis of imperialism. We have stressed many times the historical significance of Pabloism, which emerged within the Trotskyist movement precisely under conditions of the great post-war crisis of the Stalinist bureaucracy which reflected the over-all crisis of world imperialism. The vulnerability of cadre to the class pressures which become exceptionally powerful at the point in which the imperialist contradictions become exceptionally acute is bound up with fundamental questions of method. For empiricists and pragmatists like Pablo and his American counterpart, Clarke, who substitute their superficial impressions for a scientific study of class relations based on the dialectical materialist method and historical materialism, the need for a revision of Trotskyism and an abandonment of principled positions in line with the "reality of living events" becomes all consuming. Those who stand on principle are habitually denounced as "ultra-left" and "sectarian." In each stage of the struggle against Pabloism, however, its "new reality" was shown to be nothing more than an uncritical adaptation to the illusory stability of imperialism and those political forces who temporarily predominate within the workers' movement and the national liberation struggles.

3. The struggle waged by the Socialist Labour League against the SWP between 1961 and 1964 brought to the fore all the fundamental theoretical and political issues involved in the struggle against Pabloism: the rejection of the revolutionary role of the working class as the gravedigger of capitalism and the builder of a socialist society; the rejection of the dictatorship of the proletariat; the denial of the struggle against spontaneity and the necessity for a conscious struggle for Marxist theory; the renunciation of the historical role of the Fourth International. In its very first letter to the SWP, the national committee of the SLL issued this warning:

> "The greatest danger confronting the revolutionary movement is liquidationism, flowing from a capitulation either to the strength of imperialism or of the bureaucratic apparatuses in the Labour movement, or both. Pabloism represents, even more clearly now than in 1953, this liquidationist tendency in the international Marxist movement. In Pabloism the advanced working class is no longer the vanguard of history, the center of all Marxist theory and strategy in the epoch of imperialism, but the plaything of 'world-historical factors', surveyed and assessed in abstract fashion ... Here all historical responsibility of the revolutionary movement is denied, all is subordinated to panoramic forces; the questions of the role of the Soviet bureaucracy and of class forces in the colonial revolution are left unresolved. That is natural, because the key to these problems is the role of the working class in the advanced countries and the crisis of leadership in their labour movements ...
>
> "Any retreat from the strategy of political independence of the working class and the construction of revolutionary parties will take on the significance of a world-historical blunder on the part of the Trotskyist movement." *(Trotskyism Versus Revisionism,* Vol. 3, pp.48-49)

Michel Pablo

In direct response to the efforts of the SWP to revise Trotskyism on the basis of the defeats inflicted upon US imperialism by Castro, the SLL wrote in May 1961:

> "An essential of revolutionary Marxism in this epoch is the theory that the national bourgeoisie in underdeveloped countries is incapable of defeating imperialism and establishing an independent national state. This class has ties with imperialism and it is of course incapable of an independent capitalist development. In national liberation movements the workers' organizations must follow Lenin's slogan: 'March separately, strike together' against the foreign imperialists and their immediate collaborators. Following Marx, we say: support the bourgeois and petit-bourgeois parties insofar as they help strike common blows against our enemy; OPPOSE them on every issue in which they want to stabilize their own conditions of existence and their own rule ... It is not the job of Trotskyists to boost the role of such nationalist leaders. They can command the support of the masses ONLY because of the betrayal of leadership by Social-Democracy and particularly Stalinism, and in this way they become buffers between imperialism and the mass of workers and peasants." (Vol. 3, pp. 64-65)

4. The speech delivered by Jack Barnes on December 31, 1982 and published in the first edition of "New International" is a powerful vindication of the struggle waged by the International Committee. The SWP, some 20 years after the split, is now stating unambiguously that it rejects the theory of permanent revolution and the programmatic foundation of the Fourth International as it was elaborated in the Transitional Program of 1938. Let us pay some attention to what Barnes has written, because the published edition gives us a much richer picture than the abbreviated transcription upon which the statement published by the Workers League this past summer was based.

5. Barnes claims that he is not rejecting the important role Trotsky played in the fight against Stalin's abuse of power, and he leaves open the possibility that "Trotsky's contributions will find their place in the political arsenal of the international communist movement as the world revolution **progresses." (p.83) However, these "contributions" must be** disentangled from Trotsky's error on the theory of permanent revolution.

> "This usage of the term poses the biggest *political* problem for us, because it has brought weaknesses into our movement associated with Trotsky's wrong pre-1917 theory. Above all, it has led to a tendency to concentrate solely on the proletariat's alliance with the agricultural laborers and poor peasants against the rural exploiters, undoubtedly a central task in the countryside, to the exclusion of recognizing the centrality of the proletariat's alliance with the broadest possible layers [of] the rural producers in the fight against imperialism and against the landlord-capitalist regimes in the colonial world. The world class struggle since World War II, especially in this hemisphere since 1959, should convince us that to the extent those who are identified as Trotskyists base themselves on these weaknesses in Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution, the door is open to leftist biases and sectarian political errors.
>
> "Permanent revolution does not contribute today to arming either ourselves or other revolutionists to lead the working class and its allies to take power and use that power to advance the world socialist revolution. As a special or unique frame of reference it is an obstacle to reknitting our political continuity with Marx, Engels, Lenin, and the first four congresses of the Communist International. It has been an obstacle in our movement to an objective reading of the masters of Marxism, in particular the writings of Lenin.
>
> "If we are to learn what we can learn as part of the political convergence under way among proletarian revolutionists in the world today, and bring into that process Trotsky's enormous political contributions, then our movement must discard permanent revolution." *(New International,* Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 12-13)

What Barnes is saying is that Trotsky placed a one-sided emphasis on the class struggle of the proletariat at the expense of a correct appreciation of the anti-imperialist struggle which binds together the working class and all sections of the peasantry. According to Barnes, the post-war developments — above all, those beginning in 1959 with the victory of Castro — prove that the anti-imperialist movement as a form of struggle uniting all sections of the population is far greater than anticipated by Trotsky and the Fourth International's relations with such movements, and the prospects of a "convergence" of all anti-imperialist forces, have been limited due to the incorrect emphasis placed by the theory of permanent revolution upon the independent role of the proletariat and the class struggle.

6. Let us continue with Barnes:

> "The Comintern taught us that the democratic, anti-imperialist, agrarian revolution, and the socialist revolution are combined in the oppressed nations. It charted a course toward building anti-imperialist united fronts and fighting for proletarian leadership of them. It taught us that communists, while supporting every concrete struggle against imperialism, no matter how limited or under what leadership, have to distinguish between revolutionary nationalist movements based on the workers and peasants, and bourgeois-dominated

nationalist movements that are an obstacle to the oppressed toilers' fight for national liberation." (p.33)

"Trotsky counterposed the proletariat's alliance with the peasantry as a whole to an alliance with the rural poor. Lenin, on the other hand, pursued a course aimed at advancing the working class along a line of march that would enable it to lead the democratic revolution and be in the strongest possible position to move forward from there toward the expropriation of the exploiters. Unlike Trotsky, Lenin presented a strategy for the transition from the democratic to the socialist revolution based on a concrete understanding of the shifting class alliances at each stage of this gigantic process of political, social and economic transformation." (p. 44)

7. In placing this great emphasis on the democratic revolution as a distinct transitional stage, which he calls the workers' and peasants' government, prior to and apart from the dictatorship of the proletariat, the counterrevolutionary line of Barnes becomes absolutely unmistakable. What is involved here is not simply that Barnes is challenging some sort of theoretical icon of the Trotskyist movement. There are very definite political implications. In essence, Barnes rejects the dictatorship of the proletariat as the instrument through which the democratic revolution is achieved. He denies the class nature of the peasantry (which represents a fundamental repudiation of Lenin's teachings, which then leads to a reactionary vulgarization and distortion of the pre-1917 conceptions of the democratic dictatorship), and ignores all class distinctions within the "anti-imperialist" movement, or claims that they are relatively unimportant. He clearly implies that without the prior establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the transition from the "democratic" to "socialist" stages of the revolution can be peaceful and gradual, whereas, in reality, as history has demonstrated again and again, there can be no peaceful "growing over" from the rule of one class to another without a violent revolution. This was the basic flaw which Trotsky detected in Lenin's pre-1917 theory of the democratic dictatorship. Based on an analysis of the nature of the epoch, Trotsky foresaw that the bourgeois-democratic tasks of the peasant revolution could develop only through and under the leadership of the proletarian revolution.

All this is denied by Barnes in his critique of Trotsky:

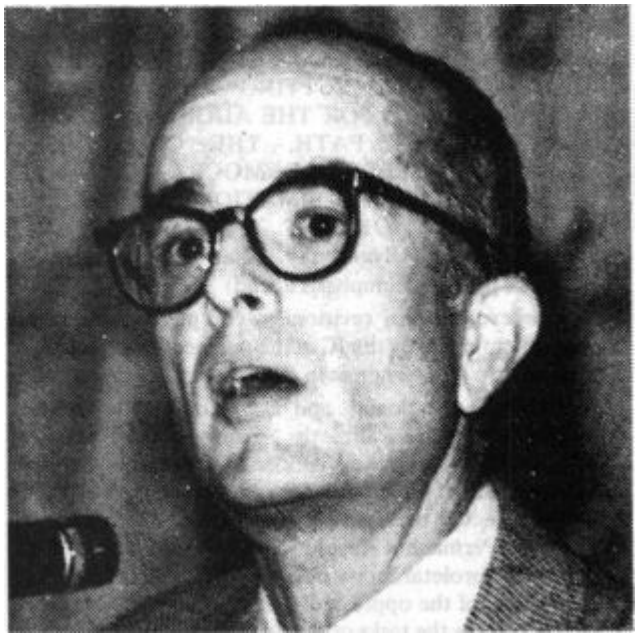
"In combatting Stalin's rightist errors, Trotsky in 1928 injected some leftist erro[r]s. While not directly challenging the Bolshevik's pre-1917 strategy as applied to Russia, Trotsky in fact revived his own pre-1917 position, rejecting an alliance with the peasantry as a whole in the democratic revolution. He now applied this to China, and, by implication, to other countries in the colonial world. Trotsky's 1928 document had no concept of a transitional regime and period, based on this worker-peasant alliance. It advanced no strategy that would enable the Chinese workers to gain experience and lead their most consistent allies, the agricultural wage workers and poor peasants, in the expropriation of the exploiters and the establishment of new relations of production based on state property and planning." (p. 53)

8. Finally, Barnes sums up the conclusions he draws from the critique of Trotsky's permanent revolution.

"We believe that history has shown that in our epoch a workers' and farmers' government that will come out of a successful anticapitalist revolution. It is the first form of government following a victorious uprising against the bourgeoisie — a government that will not turn power back over to the capitalists, but will take power *away* from them and use it to open up the road to deepening the mobilization of the workers and farmers and the expropriation of the exploiters.

"But this is a process. In colonial and semicolonial countries, the initial tasks of the new revolutionary government are primarily those of democratic revolution — national liberation, agrarian reform, measures to improve the conditions and expand the rights of the working class and peasantry ... It is this all important transitional stage, and the rich concreteness of the class struggle and proletarian leadership of its allies during the transition, that is lost sight of when the workers' and farmers' government is rejected.

"To us, the workers' and farmers' government [NOT THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT - D.N.] is a decisive question." (p.76)



Jack Barnes

9. Barnes' position is not really original; it is based on the old conceptions of Stalinism, which the bureaucracy now puts forward under the slogan of "the non-capitalist road" to justify its unprincipled alliances with bourgeois nationalist regimes. The Stalinists are very explicit: there exists a "non-capitalist road" for underdeveloped countries which allows them to complete the democratic revolution and embark upon the tasks of socialist construction without the dictatorship of the proletariat.

"The tactics and strategy of the Communists must unfailingly cooperate with national-revolutionary and revolutionary democrats: this is an essential condition for the success of all anti-imperialist forces which do not regard capitalism as a remedy against age-old backwardness. Under these circumstances the slogan calling for a transition to the non-capitalist path is in fact orientation toward such a class shift to the left which would bring consistently democratic forces to power. They will fail to

achieve their tasks without making 'steps toward socialism', but they will only be able to make these steps on the basis of 'left-wing bloc' tactics. In practice, this often amounts to the organization of mass pressure on bourgeois democracy thus helping it to realize its progressive potentialities, and at the same time the setting of democratic tasks which its most consistent wing that has become revolutionary-democrat or is capable of becoming such will be able to fulfill ... Thus the adoption of the non-capitalist path is a phased process and the Communists who are interested in it more than anyone else cannot bring about such a shift at will ... IT IS ALSO NECESSARY TO BEAR IN MIND THAT THE PROMOTION OF THE SLOGAN CALLING FOR THE ADOPTION OF THE NON-CAPITALIST PATH BY NO MEANS IMPLIES THAT IT ALSO CALLS FOR A SOCIALIST REVOLUTION, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY AND THE ASSUMPTION OF POWER BY THE COMMUNISTS, FOR THAT WOULD AMOUNT TO ASSERTING THAT ONLY A PROLETARIAN TAKEOVER IS CAPABLE OF SOLVING THE PROBLEMS OF A DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION. BY PUTTING FORWARD THE SLOGAN CALLING FOR THE ADOPTION OF THE NON-CAPITALIST PATH, THE COMMUNISTS WANT TO DEEPEN DEMOCRATIC, ANTI-IMPERIALIST TRANSFORMATIONS AND AT THE SAME TIME ORIENT THEM TOWARD SOCIALISM." (Ulyanovsky, National Liberation, Progress, pp.51-53, emphasis added)

10. The evolution of revisionism completely vindicates the assessment made by the IC in the perspectives resolution of the Fourth World Congress in 1972:

> "Inside the colonial and semi-colonial countries, revisionism again directly assisted the Stalinist bureaucracy and the nationalist leaders as the revolutionary representatives of the masses. They completely rejected the essence of Lenin's position and the theory of Permanent Revolution: the construction of independent proletarian parties, leading the working class at the head of the oppressed peasantry, as the only force able to resolve the tasks of the democratic revolution and go beyond them to workers' power, as part of the international socialist revolution." (Vol. 1, p. 32)

11. The bankruptcy of Barnes' position: the "models" to which he refers as examples of "workers' and peasants' governments" or as the forces out of which the new alignment of "communists" shall emerge are the New Jewel Movement, the Sandinistas, the Farabundo Marti, and Castroism. In each case, the development of the world crisis of imperialism has had a devastating impact — and it shows the betrayals to which Barnes' position must lead. At any rate, our position is not based upon the disposition of forces within a single country — whether the immediate conditions seem favorable for the victory of insurgent forces — but on the perspective of international socialist revolution. This is the basis upon which we set out to resolve the crisis of leadership — never adapting ourselves to those political tendencies within the nationalist movement which immediately predominate. Moreover, we should not forget that the toppling of a reactionary puppet regime in a semi-colonial country does not, of itself, resolve the problems. As Lenin and Trotsky pointed out, in such countries far greater problems than the seizure of power **emerge** after the successful revolution. This has certainly been shown in Nicaragua and Cuba, not to mention Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Angola, Kenya, Nigeria, etc.

12. The development of the IC has proceeded through the struggle against revisionism. The struggle recorded in the six volumes published during the 1970s is the theoretical foundation for the training of our cadre, just as the writings of Trotsky during the 1920s formed the basis for the political education of the early forces of the Fourth International. The latest attack by Barnes on Trotskyism must bring this entire history forward; precisely because the International Committee has always recognized that such crucial developments within the ranks of the revisionists inevitably foreshadow great new chapters in the world socialist revolution. Moreover, we don't simply look upon revisionism as some sort of bacteria that exists inside a test-tube, safely stored in a laboratory. Precisely because revisionism has material roots in the actual development of the class struggle of which we ourselves are a part, because it reflects the pressure of alien class forces upon the working class and its revolutionary vanguard, our response to revisionism finds its highest expression in the analysis of our own political development.

13. It is for this reason that we feel the time has come to examine the whole development of the IC during the past decade. We are strongly of the opinion that we have steadily drifted away from positions for which we tenaciously fought for more than 20 years after the original split with Pablo. In a letter to Comrade Banda, written on January 23, 1984, I suggested that the time had come to draw a balance sheet on the entire experience of the IC in relation to the national liberation movements. I feel that such a balance sheet is necessary because there has been really no objective examination of our experience — as a World Party — with the various nationalist bourgeois regimes and liberation movements with which we have established relations. We feel that the record is one which merits a serious critique, in order to defend the continuity of the IC and to train the cadre in each of the sections. We are not here to assign blame, but to work for the development of the IC as the World Party of Socialist Revolution.

14. In the summer of 1976, the IC first discussed initiating more active contact with the national liberation movements — principally the PLO. At the time the dangers inherent in such work were clearly stressed — that such movements were of a heterogeneous character, within which the imperialists and Stalinists worked actively. This approach was correct and principled. Further discussion at the Seventh Congress of the IC in May 1977, at which the work was guided by the newly published protocols of the Second Congress of the Communist International. Following the Congress, the IC sent a delegation to Lebanon. In July of 1977 the WRP signed an alliance with the Libyan Jamahiriya. Relations were then developed with the Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party of Iraq. It is clear that by mid-1978 a general orientation toward relations with nationalist regimes and liberation movements was developing without any corresponding perspective for the actual building of our own forces inside the working class. An entirely uncritical and incorrect appraisal began to emerge ever more openly within our press, inviting the cadres and the working class to view

these bourgeois nationalists as "anti-imperialist" leaders to whom political support must be given.

15. Iraq — We assumed an increasingly uncritical attitude toward the regime of Saddam Hussein, providing political support for his struggle against the Iraqi Communist Party, including the execution of 21 members.

> "The fact is that the CP members were executed according to military codes which the Iraqi CP discussed, approved and agreed to implement. To this day the Iraqi CP has not called for the repeal of the military laws which ban the formation of secret cells in the army. It has never contested the fact that the arrested officers were guilty of the charges brought against them.
>
> "This is a straight case of Moscow trying to set up cells in the Iraqi armed forces for the purpose of undermining the regime. It must accept the consequences ... It is a principle with Trotskyists that we defend workers, whether they are Stalinists, revisionists or Social Democrats, from the attacks of the capitalist state. But, as the facts show, that has nothing to do with the incidents in Iraq." *(News Line,* March 8, 1979)

This position was never rectified even though it had no precedent within the Trotskyist movement. We had simply ignored what Trotsky wrote about the role of the trade unions — whose leaders were among the victims of Hussein's purges — in the less developed countries. Our praise for Hussein continued unabated. In the summer of 1980, we published a six-part series in which the Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party and Saddam Hussein were the subject of lavish praise. These articles were reproduced as a pamphlet, which was never repudiated.

These articles appeared on the eve of the invasion of Iran by Iraq. It is important to note our reaction to this development. Our own relations with the Iraqis were so well known that our own statements reflected the ambiguities within our position. We correctly opposed the war, but we did not denounce Iraq as acting on behalf of imperialism. Rather the WRP Political Committee statement declared:

> "We call for full support for the national revolutionary movements including the Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party and the Iranian Revolution in their fight against imperialism." *(News Line,* September 25, 1980)

Saddam Hussein

16. We continued to oppose to the war and call for the end to hostilities. Then following an Iranian offensive which crossed into Iraq, the *News Line* of July 16, 1982 published an editorial which declared:

> "The Iranian invasion of Iraq is a disservice to the besieged Palestinian and Lebanese fighters in Beirut and to the Iranian Revolution itself, and must be denounced."

17. By September 1983, we had come to shift our line completely. We adopted, without any serious analysis and explanation, a position of support for the military victory of Iran over Iraq. Responding to the sale of Exocet missiles to Iraq, the *News Line* declared:

> "The Iraqi regime has been militarily defeated and comprehensively exposed as a tool of imperialism. It must be overthrown by the Iraqi masses without delay. Its continued existence is giving imperialism a military base and pretext for their war plans."

18. This has continued to be our line — which corresponds to an uncritical attitude toward the Islamic Republic, a position which directly contradicts the one and only analysis made by the IC of the Iranian Revolution — five years ago. The IC Statement of February 12, 1979 — published in the *News Line* of February 17, 1979 — issued a clear and unequivocal statement:

> "The truth is that the masses were moved by CLASS questions, not religious ones.
>
> "However, in the absence of an organized revolutionary leadership and because of the cowardly class-collaborationist policies of Iranian Stalinism in the Tudeh party, Ayatollah Khomeini and other religious leaders of the Shi'ite sect have been able to establish a virtual political monopoly on the opposition forces...
>
> "The policies of Khomeiny reflect the contradictory and equivocal nature of the bazaar merchants and other elements of the Iranian native capitalist class and petty-bourgeoisie...
>
> "But they cannot and will not challenge capitalist state power in Iran ... The Stalinists and centrists of all varieties will oppose the strategy of advance to the socialist revolution in Iran, on the grounds that the revolution there is first and foremost a bourgeois revolution, i.e., a revolution for democratic demands to abolish feudal and semi-feudal oppression and permit the free development of national capitalism and democracy.
>
> "They will say it is 'sectarian' to advocate policies for the working class which are independent of and opposed to the bourgeoisie."

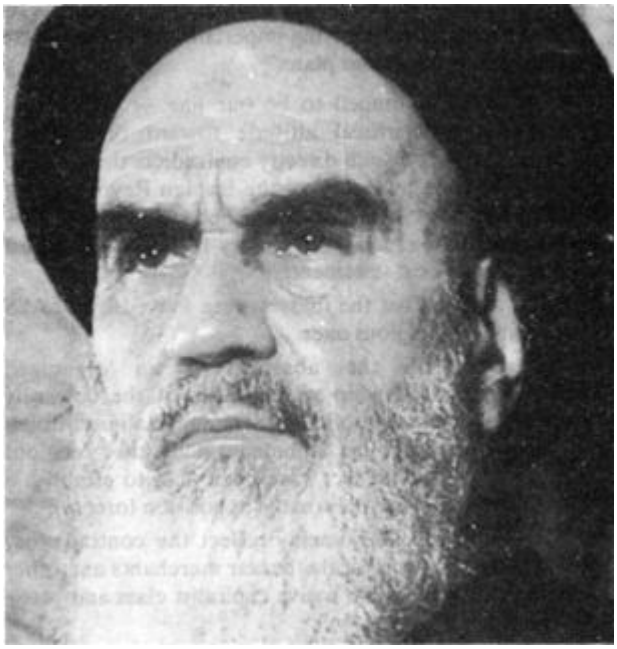
19. No further class analysis was ever made of the development of the Iranian Revolution. Our line came to consist simply of unconditional support for Khomeiny, despite the mounting persecution of every single left-wing organization in Iran. In the absence of any Marxist analysis of the development of this revolution, an obviously non-Trotskyist and revisionist line began to find its way into our international press — most notably in the articles written by Comrade Savas following his trip to Iran, which occurred in the midst of arrests and trials of Tudeh Party leaders. The tone for this series was set in the first article, entitled "The

Rule of the Deprived." Among the first points made was the following:

> "For a person coming from the West, especially from a country like Greece, that has gone through decades under the police state of the right-wing and through dictatorship, one fact is striking: nowhere can one see a policeman."

What we found striking was that a virtually identical observation was made by Mary-Alice Waters of the SWP upon her return from Nicaragua:

> "The first thing you realize is that you're not scared of the police. Army, militia, police. They're all over the place. But you feel good about it, and so does everybody else. Almost everybody else. The 'forces of repression' are all laughing, smiling, joking with the hundreds of ordinary working people milling around." (Education for Socialists, December 1980, p. 5)



Khomeiny

Assuming from the absence of police the absence of repression, the article made the following statement:

> "If we consider the degree of popular support as a basic criterion for estimating the degree of political stability of a regime then, undoubtedly, the Islamic regime in Teheran must be considered as extremely stable. Its foundation is the masses. Between the masses and their leadership, especially Imam Khomeini, there are mighty bonds, forged in the furnace of the revolution.
>
> "In the forging of these very deep bonds, an immense role was and is played by the influence of the ideology of Islam upon the masses. So, it is not accidental that the Western imperialist and also Stalinist propaganda are raging particularly against this."

20. This article is of exceptional significance for the IC and it deserves the closest and most ruthless critical analysis within every section. It is not only that the trip of Comrade Savas, which included a television appearance at a time of mass arrests, seriously compromised the IC in the eyes of the working class. Revealed in these articles is a method which reveals very clearly the real disorientation within the IC and its leadership. We have here an outstanding example of the complete and unabashed substitution of impressionism for Marxism. Class forces no longer exist. Everything has become the "masses" — a category which explains nothing about the class dynamics and contradictions within Iran. Analysis is reduced to casual observation: "I don't see any police so the state no longer exists!" The method of historical materialism, which strives to uncover the material bases of all political developments, is replaced with the eye of the journalist. As Trotsky once wrote, "Empiricism, and its foster brother, impressionism, dominate from top to bottom."

21. Not just the fault of Comrade Savas. One uncorrected error leads inevitably to others. Nothing essentially different from the dozens of articles which appeared in the *News Line* on the Libyan Jamahiriya between 1977 and 1983, in which there was never a single appraisal of class relations in Libya and the class nature of the Libyan regime. At the high point of our relations with the Gaddafi regime, the following assessment appeared in a statement of the WRP Political Committee, dated December 12, 1981:

> "When Gaddafi and the Free Unionist Officers seized popular control in 1969, they set Libya on the road of socialist development and expansion ... Gaddafi has developed politically in the direction of revolutionary socialism and he has shunned the palaces and harems of some other Arab leaders."

Since the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, our approach to Gaddafi has lost its previous enthusiasm. But throughout the recent fighting in Tripoli, we studiously avoided direct criticism of Gaddafi's role in the conspiracy against Arafat.

22. Now we have the trip to Egypt. This is hailed without any analysis whatever or reference to previous statements. We are disorienting our cadre and the working class. We are inviting cynicism toward our political line. The continuous shifts in our political line, in which no analysis connects a new conclusion with the one it both replaces and contradicts, are the hallmark of pragmatism. As Trotsky said of Burnham and Shachtman:

> "The opposition leaders split sociology from dialectical materialism. They split politics from sociology. In the sphere of politics they split our tasks in Poland from our experiences in Spain — our tasks in Finland from our position on Poland. History becomes transformed into a series of exceptional incidents; politics becomes transformed into series of improvisations. We have here, in the full sense of the term, the disintegration of Marxism, the disintegration of theoretical thought, the disintegration of politics into its constituent elements." *(In Defense of Marxism,* pp. 114-15)

23. We are not raising these issues because we have noted this or that incorrect formulation in an occasional article. Every section makes its share of mistakes. But after a lengthy period in which mistakes go uncorrected, they become a tendency, and this tendency inevitably makes itself felt in every area of our political work. Just as the retreat of the SWP back toward Pabloism found its expression in an ever more open orientation to centrist and middle class radical elements with the United States, we must express the concern that the same tendency is manifesting itself within the work of the WRP in Britain.

24. The record of the Party on the Malvinas War — the line which was originally taken was absolutely wrong: This Is Not Our War. But no analysis of this position was ever made inside the IC.

25. We feel an explanation should be made about our relations with Livingstone, Knight and the GLC in general. What is our political assessment of these forces. Do we believe that the Labour group that leads the GLC deserves the unreserved political confidence that they have been given by the *News Line?* We are very concerned that the WRP is on the verge of being seriously compromised by the future actions of these social-democrats. We are concerned that we are making the very opportunist errors which led in 1926 to the betrayal of the General Strike. We have gone out of our way to compliment Livingstone, to suggest that he is very different from other Labourites. Our opinion is that while it is of course correct to defend local government against the Tories, we should not place any confidence in Livingstone at all. We are disturbed that neither the *News Line* nor the *Labour Review* has commented on the interview with Livingstone that was published in the July-August 1983 issue of *New Left Review.* The interview was conducted by none other than Tariq Ali. Nothing in this article suggests that Livingstone's "socialism" is anything more than an eclectic amalgam of petty-bourgeois protest politics, pacifism, left social democracy, and bits and pieces of Marxist phraseology. He is certainly not a Trotskyist, and his attitude toward the Labourite traitors is entirely apologetic:

> "You've got to be fairly certain that someone has gone over to the politics of pure careerism before you start kicking them around the room. This is a congenital weakness of the Left. I suppose it is understandable given the almost permanent record of betrayal by Labour leader after Labour leader that people spend a lot of time waiting for the next one to go over. There are many cases, however, of people whom we've lost who might have been retained if we'd engaged in comradely debate rather than uncomradely denunciations. If your main function is building up your own membership it is inevitable that you end up with interminable attacks on other left groupings. The amount of time Left activists spend rolling around in hysterics reading the attacks made by one grouping against another has always amazed me. Unless this method of organization is altered it will be difficult to unite the Left."

We won't go into the idealist views propounded by Livingstone on the question of women's liberation, which he admits has been a major influence on his development ("I have always felt that the Labour Party's almost exclusive concentration on the employed male white working class was a weakness") or his vulgar views on the nature of class society ("I have come to leftwing politics not through a theoretical Marxist background but via a study of animal behavior and evolution.") No wonder he is interviewed by Tariq Ali! But the problem is that this man is being clearly boosted and unconditionally and uncritically supported by the Workers Revolutionary Party as a leader of the working class in London. We have provided both him and Knight with a platform. We are defending them against criticism on the left. We know less about Knight — except that until about two years ago I heard his name mentioned only in association with his desertion from the Party to join the Labourites. Now the impression is given that he is our man. That I am sure is not the case. His leaving us in 1963 could not have been accidental.

26. Our concerns about the relations with Livingstone and Knight and the GLC are heightened by the recent role played by the WRP in the NGA strike. We cannot agree with the way in which the WRP tail-ended the NGA leadership, covered up for them, put forward no independent demands, and, in the end, was compromised by their payment of the fine and their calling off of the Warrington demonstration. The WRP Statement attacking those who criticize the NGA was really unprecedented in the history of the British section.

> "Through its determined fight for principles the NGA is marching in the footsteps of those pioneers who battled under conditions of illegality and state repression to build independent trade unions...
>
> "Having raised the political level of the working class in this vital way, the NGA is now refusing to submit to the rule of the TUC class collaborators. It is fighting on and basing itself on the undefeated strength of the working class.
>
> "The policy of the WRP is unambiguous — we salute the NGA for its courageous action and we stand in complete solidarity with its fight to defend the union from the Tories' legal conspiracy...
>
> "The NGA has rightly taken the fight into the center of the TUC and shown who is selling the rights of the trade unions down the river. It is a craft union of politically moderate opinion, not a revolutionary party as the revisionists seem to think. And under the exceptional circumstances of state persecution, we believe they are acquitting themselves very well."

WHAT ARE THE "POLITICALLY MODERATE" OPINIONS OF THE NGA LEADERS? Are there not Stalinists and Social Democrats among them. These leaders are brought before the YS Annual General Meeting as "heroes" of the working class. Is this how young Trotskyists are to be trained?

27. During the strike, the WRP elaborated a truly incredible line on the nature of the anti-union laws. The speech given by Comrade Banda: we quote the *News Line* of December 7, 1983:

> "But what was this law? asked Banda. Normally, all laws were made to defend the rights of individuals [!], or concerned the rights of individuals in relation to the public interest [!!]. But the Tory Employment Acts were unique. They were not just laws [!], but fundamental constitutional changes because they dealt with the relationship between classes [!!]... These Acts are completely illegitimate from an historical standpoint and a political standpoint. They are a declaration of war against the working class."

Now we are against "bad" laws which regulate the activities of classes and for "good" laws which defend the rights of individuals. If there had not been a single other quotation read at this meeting, this would be sufficient to warrant the most searching analysis of the political line of the WRP.

The political line of the WRP raises many questions. How do we now foresee the development of the social revolution? Should any political demands be placed upon the Labour Party and its trade unions. In relation to the latter, we waited

as long as possible before calling for a General Strike. We **did not demand new elections and the return to power of** Labour. Our slogan of a Workers Revolutionary Government, under conditions in which we have not captured the leadership of any significant section of the working class, is very abstract. It appears very "left" but it is coupled with uncritical relations with right-wing "politically-moderate" trade union bureaucrats. We place no demands upon the Labour Party — as if the task of exposing them has already been carried out.

28. This has not developed overnight — long process of adaptation to petty-bourgeois forces. This does have definite theoretical roots — an empiricist method dressed up with Hegelian phraseology — but one which has absolutely nothing to do with Marxism. The glorification of sense perception and the rejection of historical materialism. **A serious critique must be** made **of Studies** in **Dialectics.**

29. Slaughter's letter was taken by the WL leadership as a very grave warning. We are worried by the depth of political and ideological differences. But we believe that the problems can be surmounted through serious and honest discussion. What is needed is a real discussion within the IC and the leaderships of the national sections. Documents should be prepared and circulated. This is the way to proceed. The IC can only emerge strengthened. The Workers League is very anxious to participate and to learn from this discussion. We treasure our collaboration with the British comrades and with every section of the IC. Let us set a definite timetable for this discussion, and on this basis work toward an IC Conference.

Letter from Aileen Jennings to the Workers Revolutionary Party Political Committee

June 30, 1985

Dear Comrades,

During the course of action on the Manchester Area certain practices have come to light as to the running of Youth Training by a homosexual and the dangers this holds for the Party in relation to police provocation. I believe the Political Committee was correct in stating that a cover-up of such practices endangered the Party from a serious provocation.

Having realised this I must therefore say to the Committee that I can no longer go on covering up a position at both the office and in the flats at 155 Clapham High Street which also opens the Party to police provocation; namely that whilst for 19 years I have been the close personal companion of Comrade Healy I have also covered up a problem which the Political Committee must now deal with because I cannot.

This is that the flats in particular are used in a completely opportunist way for sexual liaisons with female members employed by the Party on *News Line,* female members of the International Committee and others.

On any security basis one of these or more has to be the basis of either blackmail by the police or an actual leak in security to a policewoman. I am asking the Political Committee to take steps to resolve the position for Party in the present political situation.

In 1964, after the Control Commission of Investigation Comrade Healy gave an undertaking he would cease these practices, this has not happened and I cannot sit on this volcano any longer.

Yours fraternally,

Aileen Jennings

Letter from Cliff Slaughter to Sections of the ICFI

October 5, 1985

To Comrades of the German, Greek, Spanish, Australian, Sri Lankan and Peruvian sections of the International Committee of the Fourth International:

Comrades:

The International Committee has not met since the 17th of August. At that meeting, a report on the finances of the WRP was the basis for raising pledges of some £82,000 from the IC sections. Comrade North, who brings this letter to you, will report on the political and organizational matters underlying the calling of that IC meeting and the entirely false financial report which was made. I want to make it absolutely clear that Comrade North travels and speaks to the sections on these matters with my complete support and confidence, and that this support and confidence are shared by Comrade M. Banda.

At the center of the crisis in the WRP and the IC are the methods, practices and theoretical revisions of G. Healy. We in the WRP are engaged in a life-and-death struggle too put an end to those methods. The retirement of G. Healy is only the first step. The IC is directly involved in the same fight, and not simply as an "interested party" or merely by implication. Healy's work has for many years constituted a systematic destructive attack on the whole cadre of the ICFI — organizationally, politically, theoretically, and also physically. Since June of this year, incontrovertible evidence has come forward to the Political Committee of the WRP of gross abuses of comrades, of practices entirely alien to the Trotskyist movement. These practices have sustained a "theoretical" line in which so-called "dialectical cognition" has been more and more substituted for any political analysis. In consequence, individualist imposition of arbitrary and capricious notions replaced the development of Marxist analysis, strategy and tactics. Among the deadly serious consequences has been an unprincipled relation — politically and financially — to bourgeois national movements. This has been paralleled in the advanced capitalist countries — particularly Britain — by a "left" shouting about revolutionary situations and even civil war situations and "dual power," while at the same time giving uncritical support to and providing a mouthpiece for centrists and opportunists (Livingstone, etc.).

Behind this has been a clique method of leadership around Healy which produced a theoretical and political crisis in the IC. Its result has been the loss of any revolutionary perspective or any analysis of the world situation. The false theory was built up that some world-revolutionary "essence" now flowed into and determined uninterruptedly, without hindrance and without unevenness, the class relations in every country. This is, in fact, the only content of the 10th Congress Resolution. We must begin work immediately to reject and overcome it. We must put an end **now** to the old relations in the IC. Neither the WRP nor any other section is the "leading" section of the IC. The WRP has the same financial and political obligations to the IC as every other section. No section has any financial obligation to the WRP. That does not, of course, exclude financial assistance where necessary.

In Comrade North's report, gross abuses of individual comrades by G. Healy will figure. I must stress that these are not matters of love affairs, infidelities, or casual incidents, lapses of individual conduct. What is involved in *[sic]* the abuse of political authority and abuse of political confidence to bully and to debase, even corrupt, young comrades. This affected every sphere of the political life of the WRP and the IC. Interwoven with every political struggle have been unspoken motives involving the subordination of political principles to the basest personal interests by Gerry Healy. What we have witnessed, and must now overcome, I repeat, is a long-term and systematic attempt to destroy all the gains of the struggle for revolutionary Marxism, embodied in the cadres of the IC sections.

We hope that you will subject what Comrade North has to say to a thorough and objective analysis, and then join us in summoning up every ounce of revolutionary energy and resource to face up to, negate, and go beyond the stage the IC has reached.

We have complete confidence that this will prove the most decisive and positive step in the history of the IC, and that together we can arm all our sections for a decisive turn to the working class and real gains in the building of the International Committee.

Fraternally,

Cliff Slaughter
Secretary of the International Committee

Joint Communique from the Greek and Spanish Sections of the ICFI

October 21, 1985

The Central Committee of the Workers Internationalist League, the Greek section of the International Committee of the Fourth International, and the Central Committee of the Workers Communist League, the Spanish Section of the International Committee of the Fourth International, declare our loyalty to the Tenth World Congress of the ICFI as the highest body of the ICFI and its policies and resolutions can only be changed by another congress.

The policies and the leadership of the Congress were attacked by a faction in the WRP led by Mike Banda and supported internationally by Dave North and Ulli Rippert who manoeuvred to expel comrade Gerry Healy without any discussion in the international nor in a committee meeting or in a conference but by manoeuvrings in the WRP Central Committee.

We affirm our confidence in the historic role of the ICFI and in the methods of dialectical materialism as the philosophy of Marxism.

The struggle for dialectical materialism establishes the historical continuity of Marxism and of the Fourth International founded by Leon Trotsky.

We do not accept the expulsion of the most world-known leader of the International, Comrade Gerry Healy, behind the backs of the International.

We are calling Comrade Gerry Healy as the historical leader of this movement and as the leader of the Tenth World Congress as well as the most outstanding fighter for its perspectives to call an emergency meeting of the International Committee of the Fourth International and we will not recognise any other factional meeting called fraudulently in the name of the ICFI.

We are calling upon all leaders and members of all sections of the International Committee of the Fourth International to support our communique.

Resolution of the International Committee of the Fourth International on the Crisis of the British Section

October 25, 1985

The present political situation in the Workers Revolutionary Party has produced the biggest crisis in the International Committee of the Fourth International since its formation in 1953.

What is in danger are all the achievements made in the decades-long struggle to build the Trotskyist movement in Britain and internationally. None of those gains would have been made without the protracted and difficult struggle against Stalinism and Pabloite revisionism in which the leadership of the WRP and its predecessor the Socialist Labour League played the decisive role.

All the sections of the ICFI were formed as a result of the struggle by the British comrades against the attempt of Pabloite revisionism to liquidate Trotskyism.

At the root of the present crisis which erupted with the exposure of the corrupt practices of G. Healy and the attempt by the WRP Political Committee to cover them up, is the prolonged drift of the WRP leadership away from the strategical task of the building of the world party of socialist revolution towards an increasingly nationalist perspective and practice.

Once the corrupt practices of G. Healy were revealed in the June 30th letter of Comrade A. Jennings, the WRP Political Committee refused to confront the crisis in the Party in a principled manner.

Rejecting collaboration with its international comrades, and co-thinkers in the ICFI, the WRP Political Committee began a systematic campaign to cover up Healy's corruption both from the ICFI and the WRP Central Committee.

A meeting of the ICFI scheduled for July, to which evidence of Healy's corruption could have been presented, including his signed statement acknowledging the truth of the allegations, was cancelled.

The ICFI meeting of August 17th was given a false report of the financial crisis of the WRP. This bogus report was used to obtain pledges from the ICFI sections totalling £82,000 to assist the WRP. Not a word was said about the allegations of Healy's corruption, although all members of the WRP Political Committee knew them to be true.

Had the issue of Healy's corruption been brought to the ICFI, a proper investigation could have been carried out through the committees of the WRP and the ICFI.

The WRP Political Committee opposed this course of action, and instead worked to suppress the Jennings' letter, and prevent Party members from exercising their constitutional right to have a Control Commission investigation into Healy.

As a result there is now within the WRP a justified mistrust of the leadership, a breakdown of discipline in Party bodies, and the disruption of Party work.

The first step towards overcoming the crisis in the WRP is the recognition by its leadership and membership that it requires the closest collaboration with its co-thinkers in the ICFI.

In the past the WRP has correctly urged its international comrades to always begin from the needs of the world party and not from narrow national considerations.

Now the ICFI calls on all leaders and members of the WRP, whatever their legitimate differences on perspective and programme, to subordinate themselves to the discipline of our international movement and uphold its authority.

If this is not done, there is the imminent danger of a split without clarity on issues of principle and programme. Such a split would severely weaken the Party and create the conditions for provocations against the WRP and other sections of the ICFI.

Certainly the section which has played the leading role in exposing the activities of the agencies of imperialism and Stalinism in the Trotskyist movement cannot be unmindful of the dangers inherent in the present situation.

Political differences should be neither suppressed nor concealed. They exist and must be openly and fully discussed in a Party united under the leadership of the ICFI and the Central Committee of the WRP. In this way the cadre of the WRP and the entire international movement can be educated and the present crisis overcome in a way which will bring gains for the ICFI as a whole.

The ICFI puts forward the following measures:

(1) The re-registration of the membership of the WRP on the basis of an explicit recognition of the political authority of the ICFI and the subordination of the British section to its decisions.

(2) Full collaboration by every member of the WRP with an International Control Commission to investigate, but not limited to, the corruption of G. Healy, the cover-up by the Political Committee and the financial crisis of the WRP.

(3) All charges against members of either the minority or majority factions, which have arisen as a result of the eruption of the crisis in the Party shall be referred to the International Control Commission.

All disputes are internal to the WRP and the ICFI, and must remain so.

The operation of this agreement shall be regulated by the

ICFI and all violations shall be promptly reported to the International Control Commission which shall complete its report by 1st January 1986.

Upon acceptance of these proposals preparations must be made for the 8th Congress of the WRP early in 1986, starting with the circulation of documents by both the Majority and Minority tendencies.

We recognize that our British comrades work under enormous class pressures generated by the ruling class of the oldest capitalist country. These can be surmounted only on the basis of a truly internationalist practice.

We again appeal to all members of the WRP to recognize their historic responsibilities to the Fourth International, the international implications of their decisions, and to therefore accept these proposals.

Statement of the International Committee of the Fourth International on the Expulsion of G. Healy

October 25, 1985

The International Committee of the Fourth International carried the following resolution at its meeting of October 25, 1985.

The International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI) expels G. Healy from its ranks and endorses the decision of the Workers Revolutionary Party Central Committee to expel him from the British Section.

Healy grossly abused his political authority over a protracted period, using the cadre of the ICFI and the WRP for his personal purposes and violating their rights.

In so doing he abused the political trust and confidence placed in him by all sections of the ICFI.

The practices which he carried out constituted an attack on a historically selected cadre of the Trotskyist movement.

The ICFI has in its possession overwhelming evidence establishing the ground for Healy's expulsion.

The ICFI is by no means unmindful of or indifferent to the political contribution made by G. Healy, but these abuses are so great that it is the duty and responsibility of the ICFI to take this course of action.

There is no toleration of corruption within the ICFI. All leaders are accountable for their actions and cannot act outside the constitution of the Party.

Healy has at no time made any attempt to contact the ICFI in order to try to refute the charges or to argue against his expulsion.

On the contrary, in the recent period he conducted an unprincipled factional campaign within the ICFI exploiting personal contacts to portray himself as a victim of political conspiracy and to engage in a scurrilous slander campaign against leading members of the ICFI.

In expelling Healy the ICFI has no intention of denying the political contributions which he made in the past, particularly in the struggle against Pabloite revisionism in the 1950s and the 1960s.

In fact, this expulsion is the end product of his rejection of the Trotskyist principles upon which these past struggles were based and his descent into the most vulgar forms of opportunism.

The political and personal degeneration of Healy can be clearly traced to his ever more explicit separation of the practical and organizational gains of the Trotskyist movement in Britain from the historically and internationally grounded struggles against Stalinism and revisionism from which these achievements arose.

The increasing subordination of questions of principle to immediate practical needs centered on securing the growth of the Party apparatus, degenerating into political opportunism which steadily eroded his own political and moral defenses against the pressures of imperialism in the oldest capitalist country in the world.

Under these conditions his serious subjective weaknesses played an increasingly dangerous political role.

Acting ever more arbitrarily within both the WRP and the ICFI, Healy increasingly attributed the advances of the World Party not to the Marxist principles of the Fourth International and to the collective struggle of its cadre, but rather to his own personal abilities.

His self-glorification of his intuitive judgments led inevitably to a gross vulgarization of materialist dialectics, and Healy's transformation into a thorough-going subjective idealist and pragmatist.

In place of his past interest in the complex problems of developing the cadre of the international Trotskyist movement, Healy's practice became almost entirely preoccupied with developing unprincipled relations with bourgeois nationalist leaders and with trade union and Labour Party reformists in Britain.

His personal life-style underwent a corresponding degeneration.

Those like Healy, who abandon the principles on which they once fought and who refuse to subordinate themselves to the ICFI in the building of its national sections must inevitably degenerate under the pressure of the class enemy.

There can be no exception to this historical law.

The ICFI affirms that no leader stands above the historic interests of the working class.

Special Congress Resolution of the Workers Revolutionary Party (Healyite)

October 26, 1985

The Workers Revolutionary Party, British section of the International Committee of the Fourth International, has been split in two by the anti-Bolshevik, unconstitutional and wrecking actions of the general secretary, Michael Banda *[sic]* and his academic attorney, Cliff Slaughter.

They have deliberately conspired to whip up a lynch mob atmosphere in sections of the party to frame and expel the founder-leader of our movement, Comrade Gerry Healy.

The chief instruments for this attack are an unscrupulous smear campaign against Comrade Healy and an attack on dialectical materialism spearheaded by D. North of the US Workers League.

Both attacks have failed: Comrade Healy's record as founder and builder of the International Committee of the Fourth International and of the Workers Revolutionary Party are matters of objective historical truth.

We reject with contempt Banda and Slaughter's conspiracy to drive him from the party, and are proud to proclaim him as a members *[sic]* of the Workers Revolutionary Party.

Banda-Slaughter and their clique no longer represent the traditions of the Trotskyist movement. They have definitively broken from the principles of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

They have rejected dialectical materialism in favour of subjective idealism; violated the constitution flagrantly and replaced it with rank and fileism, freedom of criticism and rule from below; and set out to destroy the party, the Young Socialists, the *News Line*, the first daily Trotskyist newspaper in the world, by capitulating to social democracy and the "new reality."

But they cannot destroy the Workers Revolutionary Party, its theoretical foundations and its practical achievements in the working-class movement. It will go forward on the basis of:

1. Upholding democratic centralism embodied in the party's constitution.

2. Fighting for the resolutions of the 7th Congress of the Workers Revolutionary Party and the 10th World Congress of the ICFI.

3. Training a cadre in the working class and youth in the dialectical materialist method.

We call upon all members of the Workers Revolutionary Party to rally to the fight for these Marxist principles as the only guarantee of building the party of socialist revolution.

SIGNED:

Sheila Torrance, Richard Price, Corin Redgrave, Vanessa Redgrave, Alex Mitchell, Ben Rudder, Simon Vevers, Ray Athow, Frank Sweeney, John Eden, Claire Dixon, David Oatley.

"Split Exposes Right-Wing Conspiracy Against Party"

Statement of the Central Committee of the Workers Revolutionary Party (Healyite)

October 30, 1985

The Workers Revolutionary Party, British section of the International Committee of the Fourth International, has passed through the biggest political crisis in its history.

But it has emerged with its revolutionary principles unimpaired, its fighting traditions upheld and its cadre politically and theoretically strengthened.

A necessary and long over-due split with the revisionist, anti-Trotskyist Banda clique has been carried out successfully.

Banda and Bradford University lecturer Cliff Slaughter have been left with a rump of politically deranged malcontents plus those individuals who are desperately seeking a way out of the intensifying class struggle.

The Workers Revolutionary Party will continue to fight on the platform of the perspectives unanimously decided at the Seventh Congress in December 1984, the Party constitution which embodies the Leninist principle of democratic centralism and the struggle for dialectical materialist theory and practice in the Party and the working class.

At a special congress on October 26, 1985, the Workes *[sic]* Revolutionary Party decisively split fro *[sic]* the Banda-Slaughter clique which had attempted to hi-jack the Party, the daily *News Line* and the *Young Socialist.* (See Special Congress resolution printed on this page).

This impelled the Banda group a further stage in its anti-party frenzy and its rabid political degeneration.

They lined up with the forces of the capitalist state to bring down an unparalleled witchhunt on Trotskyism and its most outstanding post-war leader, Comrade Gerry Healy.

Lying charges against Comrade Healy were published in Banda's organ, delighting the Tory press, the Stalinists, revisionists and Trotskyist-haters everywhere.

The best elements in the labour and trade union movement are furious with Banda's cowardly attack on Comrade Healy. They have been outraged by the ferocity of Banda's onslaught on the Party that he once led as general secretary.

The source of this sudden and virulent attack from within the WRP itself is the immense revolutionary changes in the objective world situation.

The political and economic crisis is deepening all over the world. The Reagan administration has officially adopted pre-emptive terrorism as a weapon of its foreign policy in the Middle East and Latin America; the Israeli regime is lashing out to behead the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO); the Botha dictatorship in South Africa is conducting a systematic slaughter of black militants; and the Thatcher regime is waging a policy of violent class war at home while carrying out murderous military intrigues in Ireland and against its adversaries in the former colonies.

Because of the emergence of Bonapartism in Britain, the capitalist state and its forces of mass repression are now in the forefront of every struggle facing the working class, the youth and the trade unions.

This has imposed new revolutionary tasks and political responsibilities on the Marxist leadership of the working-class movement, the Workers Revolutionary Party.

This is what lies behind Banda's renegacy and the strange coalition of ex-members, quitters and do-nothings that he now heads.

They have adopted the 'new realism' promoted by the Euro-Stalinists. It amounts to defeatism followed by capitulation to the Labour and trade union bureaucracies and to Stalinism.

Their right-wing politics is the real content of their frenzied attack on Comrade Healy and the Party.

To get to their new right-wing postures, they objectively had to try to smash the WRP, its daily *News Line* and all the great achievements of the Party since its formation in November 1973.

But this political conspiracy failed. They were decisively rebuffed because the cadre of the Party had been trained under Comrade Healy's leadership in the dialectical materialist method and the principles fought for by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky.

Fifteen members of the old Central Committee resolutely refused to be stampeded by the hysteria whipped up Banda, Slaughter and Workes *[sic]* League national secretary David North.

North, who heads an organisation of no more than 74 members, now presents himself as the 'leader' of the rump ICFI. If he has the same success reregistering Banda's faction as he has in the US, then the Banda clique will have a dwindling and short-lived existence!

We place on record our revolutionary greetings to the Greek and Spanish sections of the ICFI which unanimously rejected the Banda-Slaughter-North political coup and stood firm with the ICFI and Comrade Healy in the world movement.

We call on all those who stand by the revolutionary traditions, principles and history of the Party to rally immediately and to repel this orchestrated attack on Trotskyism, which serves only teh *[sic]* state and the ruling class.

We are confident that this struggle is going to strengthen the working class in Britain and internationally and open the way for the building of the ICFI as the world party of socialist revolution.

"Morality and the Revolutionary Party"

News Line Article by Mike Banda

November 2, 1985

It is now four months to the day since Aileen Jennings' letter was read out to the Political Committee of the Workers Revolutionary Party.

In those four months the party has undergone an irrevocable qualitative change and the most traumatic and unforgettable experience. For the first time, and possibly the last, the party has been split not on tactical and programmatic issues, but on the most basic question of revolutionary morality.

The split has taken place on the relation between the sexes in the party and the right of the party to defend the basic rights of its members and to judge and discipline any leader who abuses his authority and the power vested in him by the party.

Any party or leadership which tolerates or condones in any way the abuse of political power for personal gratification is opening the door to bureaucratic degeneration.

The former member of the Workers Revolutionary Party Central Committee Gerry Healy violated the most fundamental principle of Bolshevism, the principle on which Lenin split from the Mensheviks in 1903.

His refusal to answer to the Central Committee, the highest body in the party between congresses, was a total and irrevocable break with the principles which he had hitherto claimed to uphold.

Bolshevism teaches that no person can stand higher than the revolutionary party, the historically determined instrument of the struggle for workers' power.

As Trotsky put it in *The New Course:* "Leninism is genuine freedom from formalistic prejudices, from moralizing doctrinalism, from all forms of intellectual conservatism attempting to bind the will to revolutionary action.

"But to believe that Leninism signifies 'anything goes' would be an irremediable mistake. Leninism includes the morality, not formal but genuinely revolutionary, of mass action and the mass party.

"Nothing is so alien to it as functionary arrogance and bureaucratic cynicism. A mass party has its own morality, which is the bond of fighters in and for action.

"Demagogy is irreconcilable with the spirit of a revolutionary party because it is deceitful: by presenting one or another simplified solution of the difficulties of the hour, it inevitably undermines the next future, weakens the party's self-confidence."

These are the essence of the political differences between the Workers Revolutionary Party and the anti-party group. Their philosophy is based on the principle of "anything goes." It is positivism and pragmatism.

The essence of their position is that there is no such thing as principles, that there is no such thing as objective truth and therefore no absolute within every relative.

The criterion therefore is pure expediency and opportunism, where truth is purely what is considered profitable and useful to one individual or one particular clique.

It is a completely individualist philosophy which glorifies the will of the individual, of the great leader, and the cult of individual infallibility and counterposes it to so-called "mob rule" which is the movement of the masses expressing law-governed historical necessity.

This is not to deny the role of leaders and their will and perception in history. But the method and outlook of an anti-party group which rejects the will of a democratic majority in the party rejects the revolutionary role of the working class and above all its vanguard in the form of the revolutionary party.

As Trotsky said, again in his *History of the Russian Revolution:* "The masses go into a revolution not with a prepared plan of social reconstruction, but with a sharp feeling that they cannot endure the old regime.

"Only the guiding layers of a class have a political program and even this still requires the test of events and the approval of the masses... Only on the basis of a study of political processes in the masses themselves, can we understand the role of parties and leaders, whom we least of all are inclined to ignore.

"They constitute not an independent, but nevertheless a very important, element in the process. Without a guiding organization the energy of the masses would dissipate like steam not enclosed in a piston-box.

"But nevertheless, what moves things is not the piston or the box but the steam." (Leon Trotsky, *History of the Russian Revolution,* page 18, Gollancz edition)

The arrogance, the cynicism, the perverse indifference and hostility to democratic centralism is not only a clear expression of the reactionary subjective idealist outlook of this group, but bears the unmistakable imprint of a reactionary middle-class clique.

It is not prepared to subordinate itself to the historic interests of the working class represented by the revolutionary party, its organizational rules and discipline.

Such a group cannot and never will lead a revolutionary struggle to overthrow capitalism. But they are entirely capable of assisting the counter-revolutionary labour bureaucracy and imperialism itself against the revolution.

That was the essence of their unsuccessful attempts to mount a counter-revolution within the Workers Revolutionary Party. The morality of the revolutionary party is the indispensable foundation for the organization of the party, the mobilization of the masses and the overthrow of the imperialist state.

We will let Trotsky have the final word: "Bolshevism created the type of the authentic revolutionist, who subordinates to historic goals irreconcilable with contemporary society the conditions of his personal existence, his ideas, and his moral judgements.

"The necessary distance from bourgeois ideology was kept up in the party by vigilant irreconcilability, whose inspirer was Lenin. Lenin never tired of working with his lancet, cutting off those bonds which a petty-bourgeois environment creates between the party and official social opinion.

"At the same time Lenin taught the party to create its own social opinion, resting upon the thoughts and feelings of the rising class. Thus by a process of selection and education, and in continual struggle, the Bolshevik party created not only a political but a moral medium of its own, independent of bourgeois social opinion and implacably opposed to it.

"Only this permitted the Boisheviks to overcome the waverings in their own ranks and reveal in action that courageous determination without which the October victory would have been impossible." *(History of the Russian Revolution,* Vol. 3. Page 166, Gollancz edition)

That is why the Redgrave-Healy group must and will be expelled and the party cleared of this corrupt bureaucratic degeneration as well as its reactionary subjective idealist outlook and method.

Letter from the International Committee to the Central Committee of the Workers Internationalist League, Greek Section of the ICFI

November 9, 1985

Dear Comrades,

We are extremely concerned that unless you change course immediately, you will complete a totally unprincipled split from the International Committee of the Fourth International, following the refusal of your delegates to attend the properly constituted ICFI meeting of October 25, 1985.

Such a split by you would constitute an enormous betrayal of the International and the Greek working class.

The refusal of the WIL delegates to attend the October 25 meeting, and the endorsement of this action by your Central Committee, left the IC with no alternative but to suspend the WIL as its Greek Section.

One thing must be made clear: this action was taken only because of the refusal of the WIL delegates to attend the IC meeting, and for no other reason. Therefore, as soon as the WIL undertakes to resume its proper place in the ranks of our World Party and to uphold the authority of its bodies, the suspension will be lifted. In order to clear away any possible confusion about the validity of the October 25 meeting, it must be understood that it was called by the ICFI Secretary, C. Slaughter, at the request of six IC sections. The position advanced in the WIL-CWL (Spain) joint communique of October 21, that only G. Healy can call a meeting of the IC, and that "We will not recognise any other factional meeting called in the name of the ICFI" is preposterous. Comrade Slaughter was elected IC Secretary at the 10th World Congress of the ICFI in January 1985. G. Healy was not elected to any position in the IC, took part only sporadically in the Congress proceedings, and was expelled by the WRP from its ranks on October 19.

You may, of course disagree with that decision, and with the October 25 decision to expel G. Healy, and fight for your position within the ICFI. We would remind you that the ICFI is the world party of socialist revolution founded by Leon Trotsky in 1938, and not a cult grouped around some individual "historic leader."

By refusing to attend the October 25 meeting of the highest body of our movement between World Congresses, the IC, the WIL delegates have arbitrarily denied members of the Greek Section their right to be informed of the position of the other IC Sections on the crisis in the WRP. Such a rejection of the internationalist principles on which our movement is based is essentially nationalism, expressing the pressure of the class enemy. At the same time, the action of the WIL delegates has denied the right of the ICFI and its sections to hear and discuss the views of our Greek comrades. If the WIL delegates considered that the other sections were being led into a trap or manoeuvre then their duty was to make these views known.

Refusing to recognize the authority of the ICFI, the WIL delegates engaged in an unprincipled collaboration with the clique which has split from the British section, the WRP. According to this clique's newspaper, they have "joined forces with the Greek and Spanish sections of the ICFI."

The fact is that the pro-Healy clique claimed and was given minority rights in the WRP on October 11, 1985. It used these rights, but then refused to attend the Central Committee of October 19, 1985 and the Special Conference of October 26. Since then its leading members have resorted to the capitalist state courts to seize the assets of the WRP.

In the week preceding the October 25 IC meeting, repeated attempts were made to establish contact with the leadership of the Greek Section in order to arrange an IC meeting at a time and place enabling all sections to be represented. We were informed on 18/19 October that Comrade Savas was not available and would not return from work in Northern Greece until late on Monday, 20 October. In fact he was in Barcelona collaborating with leading Spanish comrades, preparing against an IC meeting. While accusing the IC of organising a trap or manoeuvre he himself was leading a secret faction to split the IC. In the following days, between October 19 and the IC meeting of October 25, he was contacted by the Peruvian IC delegate. At that time this comrade had no documents or information on the issues in the WRP, and favoured no particular position. Comrade Savas worked to persuade her not to attend the IC. (This she ignored. She took a principled stand, attended the IC, and has supported the IC resolutions on Healy's expulsion, and the situation in the WRP, as well as on the sending of this letter.)

On Wednesday, October 23, IC comrades from five sections spoke by telephone to Comrade Savas, urging him to attend the IC, but without success. Instead, Savas attended the meeting of splitters supporting Healy, and issued a joint communique with the Spanish Section leadership, opposing the IC and the WRP and putting forward the proposal that only GH could call any international meeting. The Greek leadership thus provided a bogus international cover and platform for these unprincipled splitters, and must take major responsibility for the subsequent events, including the use of the bourgeois state courts and the media by the expel-

Savas Michael

led minority in their attempts to destroy the WRP and the ICFI.

The IC meeting was not called to change the policies decided at the 10th Congress, nor could it. The policies of the ICFI can be changed only at the International Congress (the 11th in 1986), preparation for which has now begun.

The IC meeting on October 25 did expel Healy from its ranks after hearing a report from the British section. The WIL delegates could have taken what positions they wished on that issue and fought loyally for that position, as had been pointed out to them.

The ICFI also adopted a resolution to regulate the internal discussion in the leadership of the WRP and its ranks, with full rights for the then minority faction in the WRP. A representative of that minority was informed of the existence of these proposals and an attempt was made to arrange a meeting with the ICFI delegates. The WRP minority **rejected discussion and openly split from the British section** by convening a separate conference on October 26.

The issues are clear. The WIL is on the road to split with the IC on an unprincipled basis. This must be prevented at all costs.

We know there are principled Trotskyists in the leadership who will stand firm, and that the same is true of the ranks of the Greek Section. We call on them to act now to reverse the arbitrary decision of their ICFI delegates and return their section to the World Party.

The anti-internationalism which led to the refusal to attend the October 25 IC meeting must be rejected. If not, the WIL faces destruction as a Trotskyist party. The WIL is on the brink of announcing the "transformation of the League into the revolutionary party." Comrade Savas and the CC know that there are gigantic destructive dangers in founding a party on the unprincipled foundation of a break with internationalism. The very best interpretation which can be placed on Comrade Savas and the Greek CC's break from the IC is that they fear disruption of their work for the transformation into a party. Such a position, politically, means that internationalism, the foundation of our movement in every country, is rejected in favour of immediate national concerns as perceived by the WIL leadership.

A party formed on this basis could never be a section of the World Party of Socialist Revolution, the Fourth International. It would attract all those petty bourgeois elements who reject our internationalist foundations. We urge you with all the force at our command to turn back from the path upon which you have embarked, to return immediately to the IC, and to conduct the work of founding the revolutionary party in Greece on this, the only principled basis.

Fraternally,

Lucia, Secretary Peruvian Section ICFI
Keerthi Balasuriya, Secretary Sri Lankan Section ICFI
Nick Beams, Secretary Australian Section ICFI
Mike Banda, Secretary British Section ICFI
Ulli Rippert, representing the German Section ICFI
C. Slaughter, Secretary ICFI
D. North, Secretary, Workers League (USA),
in political solidarity with ICFI

Letter from the Workers League Central Committee to the Workers Revolutionary Party Central Committee

November 21, 1985

To The Central Committee of the Workers Revolutionary Party

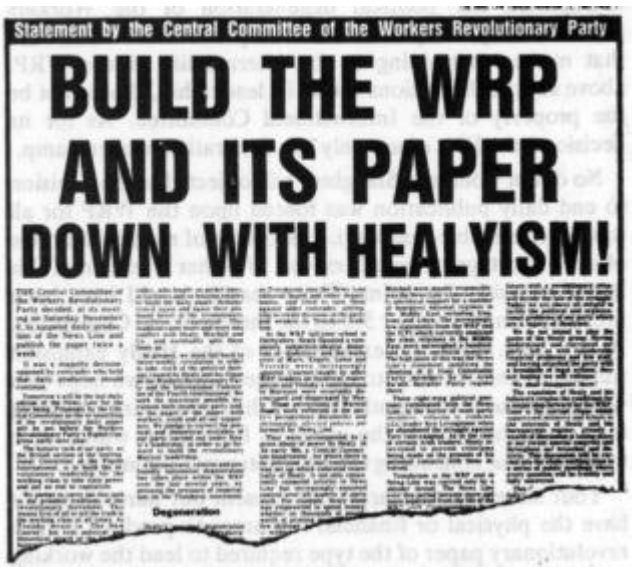
Dear Comrades:

At its meeting of November 17, 1985, the Central Committee of the Workers League discussed at length the crisis in the Workers Revolutionary Party and the decision to end daily publication of the *News Line.* You can rest assured that the Workers League stands fully behind the struggle against Healy and the renegades who have split from the party and who are now resorting to the capitalist courts in order to destroy it. These are the actions of petty-bourgeois elements who hate the principles of the Trotskyist movement, have contempt for the working class and have broken completely with the Fourth International. There will be no compromise with the renegades. All the political resources of the International Committee must be mobilized to expose and destroy this rotten clique.

But for this struggle to be waged requires the maximum clarity within our own ranks as to the historical and political issues which must be confronted in the aftermath of the split. For this reason we are troubled by your CC statement, published on November 12, 1985, and are in sharp political disagreement with the manner in which the WRP is conducting the struggle against the anti-party renegades since the split of October 26, 1985.

We are deeply disturbed by the mounting evidence that our comrades in the leadership of the British section of the International Committee of the Fourth International have not yet begun to analyze the political issues raised by the split nor confronted the source and nature of the degeneration that has produced the explosion inside the WRP. Our great concern is that in the absence of such an analysis, which is the precondition for the theoretical rearming of the section, the split will remain at the level of a purely organizational break with Healy and his supporters. This would mean that the WRP will continue to drift further and further away from Trotskyism and the International Committee of the Fourth International.

The basic source of our disagreement and the cause of increasing friction between us is that the Workers Revolutionary Party leadership is not prepared to acknowledge, except in a verbal and platonic form, the authority of the International Committee of the Fourth International. Precisely because it does not recognize that the most essential feature of Healy's political degeneration was his subordination of the international movement to the practical needs of the British section, the WRP leadership is in real danger of continuing, albeit in somewhat different form, the same nationalist-opportunist course.


Statement by the Central Committee of the Workers Revolutionary Party

BUILD THE WRP AND ITS PAPER

DOWN WITH HEALYISM!

The statement which appeared in *News Line* on November 12, 1985, announcing the decision of the WRP Central Committee to suspend daily production of its newspaper

Permit us to examine the Central Committee statement of November 12th, since it lays bare all that is wrong in the conduct of the WRP leadership.

After 16 years of continuous publication, the daily newspaper of the Trotskyist movement in Britain has been shut down virtually without discussion. Despite the fact that neither the *Workers Press* nor *News Line* could have been launched or sustained without the enormous sacrifices of the cadre of the entire World Party, the ICFI was not even informed in advance, let alone consulted, about the plan to liquidate the *News Line.* Comrade North was told over the telephone by Comrade Slaughter of the decision to end daily publication on November 11th, two days after the vote had been taken by the WRP Central Committee and Special Conference.

At the IC meeting held on Tuesday, November 5th — for which the delegates from North America made a special trip — not one word was said by the British delegation, which included Comrades Slaughter and Dave Bruce (standing in for Mike Banda who chose not to attend) about the imminent

demise of the daily *News Line.* Both delegates must have known that the proposal to end daily publication was going to be put before the upcoming Central Committee. Only a few hours before the IC meeting, Comrade Banda had written a statement in which the General Secretary declared that the founding of the daily newspaper in 1969 had been a "colossal political mistake."

This and other liquidationist opinions expressed by Comrade Banda were not brought to the attention of the International Committee. While Comrade Slaughter, who knew of Banda's views, once referred obliquely to the danger of an organizational collapse, he also chose not to raise the question of the *News Line's* future.

Here, again, we have the continuation of the same unprincipled attitude toward the International Committee that has exemplified the political degeneration of the Workers Revolutionary Party. The leadership continues to believe that matters pertaining to the internal life of the WRP, above all, the discussions within its leadership, should not be the property of the International Committee. As for its decisions, the IC is of use only as a decorative rubber stamp.

No doubt Comrade Slaughter will object that the decision to end daily publication was forced upon the WRP for all sorts of irresistible reasons, i.e., shortage of money, shortage of staff, shortage of members, etc. Whether true or not, this is really beside the point. These reasons could have been presented on November 5th to the International Committee. At any rate, after the experiences of the Healy expulsion statement and the turn to the bourgeois press, we hope you will forgive us if we bluntly tell you that we are tired of being told, after the fact, of the necessity for actions which were taken without consulting the International Committee.

Your statement declares: "At present our party does not have the physical or financial resources to produce a **daily** revolutionary paper of the type required to lead the working class." On what information is this conclusion based? There has not been, as yet, any financial report given to either the WRP membership or the ICFI. The International Committee has only just begun an examination of the WRP's finances.

The Workers League is not contesting the right of the WRP to make an organizational retreat, if that is absolutely necessary, and temporarily suspend daily publication. But such a serious decision would have to be based on the most careful discussion within the International Committee, concentrating not only on matters relating to financial and physical resources but above all on questions of politics and perspectives.

The absence of political preparation is evident from the first issue of the twice-weekly *News Line,* dated November 16th. In a 16-page paper, four pages are devoted to sports and two to television. There is no editorial statement. The main foreign news story, on page 4, is supplied by Reuters. On page 5, we are surprised to find an article reprinted from the *Irish Socialist Press,* which, we presume, is the organ of a group in Ireland which is seeking to establish a relationship with the WRP. As far as we know, neither the politics of this group nor the nature of its relation with the WRP has ever been discussed within the International Committee. And yet a full page is made available to them in which they make the following politically-dubious remarks:

"This is the reality of capitalist Ireland. And there is one other factor. The Protestant working class is understandably totally opposed to a bourgeois 'united' Ireland. Make no mistake!

"**We support them totally in this.** Why should Protestant workers throw off the shackles of Paisley's form of religion to embrace the no less obnoxious religious repression in the south." (*Our emphasis)*

This is not the place where we wish to explain our objection to the above formulation, which could be taken as an indication that this group does not take an unequivocal stand on the right of the Irish people to self-determination. Nor do we find encouraging this group's reference to its on-going perspectives discussion "on the issue surrounding the United Front **strategy** in Ireland." (*Our emphasis)*

At any rate, the place for such an article is in an international discussion bulletin, not in the public organ of our British section, where it is printed without comment. If the editorial decision to publish the article was based on the fact that this group endorses the expulsion of Healy, we consider this unprincipled. Unfortunately, the publication of this article again reflects the fact that the political foundations of your work are not firmly embedded in the Trotskyist concept of a world party of socialist revolution.

This is why, in our opinion, you do not really understand that the daily *News Line* is a political conquest of the International Committee, and that its development is of the greatest concern to every section. If you do not believe that the International Committee should be consulted about a decision which not only affects every aspect of our British section's work and its relation to the workers' movement but also the political life of the entire World Party, then it is clear that we have very different conceptions of the historic role of the Fourth International.

The existence of a World Party is of no political or practical significance, and talk of the international character of the socialist movement loses all meaning, unless it implies, by its very nature, the right of communists of one country to not only advise, but also pass judgment on, the struggle of communists in other countries.

But this is precisely what the WRP leadership is not prepared to concede, and herein lies the enormous danger of continued and irreversible degeneration. We cannot help if you take offense, but we suspect that your refusal to discuss the fate of the *News Line* stems from a reluctance to submit the real political perspective of the leaders of the British section to international criticism.

Moreover, having studied Comrade Banda's private memorandum (which Comrade Bruce, to his political credit, at least made available to Comrade North the day after the IC meeting, and even expressed his disagreement with it), which he described as his "last Will and Testament," we have good reasons for doubting the statement's claim that "Proposals by the Central Committee on the relaunching of the revolutionary daily paper will be put before the Workers Revolutionary Party's Eighth Congress early next year."

The CC statement does admit a nationalist degeneration of the WRP over "several years," but otherwise says nothing about this, which is the essence of the matter. For all the appearance of bitter struggle within the WRP leadership under Healy, its political existence was that of a nationalist clique which rejected any form of supervision or discipline by the International Committee over its work. This was the fun-

damental significance of the British section's refusal to allow any discussion of criticisms of its work, made by the Workers League between 1982 and 1984, within the ICFI. Free of any control or supervision by the international movement, the WRP ever more openly rejected the fundamental principles of Trotskyism in relation to the Permanent Revolution, the *Transitional Program*, and the struggle against Stalinism, revisionism and centrism. While briefly referring to a "profoundly nationalist degeneration," the CC Resolution cannot honestly confront the nature of this degeneration nor explain why no one within the WRP leadership fought against it.

Instead, the Resolution dishonestly evades these fundamental issues by placing virtually all its emphasis on the personal degeneration of Healy and his supporters while attributing all responsibility for the demise of the daily newspaper to "past leaders of the Workers Revolutionary Party, and in particular the group of renegades led by G. Healy, A. Mitchell, C. Redgrave and V. Redgrave."

We address this question directly to Comrades Banda and Slaughter: are you suggesting that **present leaders** of the WRP, above all, yourselves, do not bear substantial responsibility for the present crisis in your party and in the International Committee? For many years both of you played the decisive roles in defending Healy's politics and methods against correct criticisms both within your section and the ICFI. At least in the eyes of the international comrades, your unflagging support for Healy played a far greater role in building up his prestige and authority than anything said or done by Mitchell and the Redgraves, who, it must be remembered, only entered the revolutionary movement after both of you had been outstanding leaders of the British section and the International Committee for many years.

Perhaps the above observations will be taken as "uncomradely," but how can the confidence of the international working class and the cadre of the Fourth International be reestablished in the Workers Revolutionary Party if its leaders refuse to accept any responsibility for the crisis in their own organization? This attempt to evade responsibility is yet another serious warning that the WRP leadership is unwilling to make an objective analysis of the degeneration of the party, which would require not only condemnation of Healy, Mitchell, the Redgraves and Torrance but also a critical re-examination of the present leaders' political biographies.

Instead, attention is focussed on Healy's personal degeneration which the CC statement largely attributes to a "bureaucracy," whose existence, it claims "enabled his vile personal practices to continue."

In our opinion, this concentration on the question of bureaucracy is a facile evasion of the real problems confronting the WRP. Any attempt to attribute the political degeneration of Healy and the WRP as a whole to the existence of a Party "bureaucracy" is to make a mockery of Marxism. On the scales of the British labor movement, not to mention the German and American and those of the Stalinist variety in the deformed and degenerated workers' states, the "bureaucracy" upon which Healy rested is so miniscule as to barely deserve mention.

Moreover, when you attempt to extend this explanation to the Redgraves and Mitchell, it becomes truly ludicrous. We totally condemn their present political course which has led them to cross class lines and use the capitalist courts against the party. But no one can seriously claim that either Corin and Vanessa Redgrave or Alex Mitchell joined and remained in the British Trotskyist movement to find "personal prestige and privilege." And even if that were the case, it would be necessary to explain how such people were brought into the leadership of the party and allowed to remain in positions of authority for so many years.

This is where the real political content of the split emerges with such clarity. Healy has found a political base of support among those elements within the former leadership that have no connection whatsoever to the historical struggle of the ICFI against revisionism. None of them played a role in the theoretical fight against the American SWP or the French OCI. With the exception of Torrance, their rise to positions of authority within the party is entirely bound up with the SLL-WRP's retreat from the Trotskyist principles for which it had fought in the 1950's and 1960's. Vanessa Redgrave and Alex Mitchell are most of all identified with those policies and practices which exemplified Healy's **conscious** repudiation of the programmatic foundations of the Fourth International, i.e., the rejection of the theory of Permanent Revolution and the establishment of unprincipled and mercenary relations with bourgeois regimes in the Middle East.

Having been politically corrupted by these reactionary relationships, it is only natural that they should find nothing wrong with Healy's depraved abuse of the cadre of the Trotskyist movement. Nor should it come as a surprise that the renegades, after having carried out for many years under Healy's guidance a practice based on the rejection of a proletarian class line, now make use of the capitalist courts against the WRP. As for Torrance, the most "outstanding" feature of her political character has been her total indifference to the International Committee. Her only association with international work was when she helped to count the money collected from sections of the ICFI.

No, it is not a "bureaucratic degeneration" that we are dealing with; it is a **political degeneration** toward opportunism, which has been manifested in the resurgence of Pabloite revisionism at every level of the section's perspectives and which the renegades most completely personify. **In our opinion, the most important lesson of the present struggle that must be grasped by every cadre of the International Committee is the enormously reactionary practical implications of any retreat from the defense of Trotskyist principles and the struggle against all forms of revisionism.**

But it is precisely about this that the Central Committee statement says absolutely nothing: there is not a single reference to Pabloism! Instead, you have coined an entirely new political term, "Healyism." In what way does this new term enrich the theoretical vocabulary of the International Committee? We contend that this term is without a serious political content. It serves only to divert the WRP members away from an analysis of the growth of revisionism inside their party, and it deprives them of the historical perspective which they must have in order to comprehend this degeneration and fight to reverse it. We can assure you that we are not splitting hairs over terminology.

The theoretical degeneration of the WRP and the practices which this produced are bound up with the capitulation to the Pabloite attack on the programmatic foundations of Trotskyism. The specific forms this took within the British section, especially the WRP's totally unprincipled relations

with bourgeois nationalist regimes in the Middle East, must be concretely studied. Of course, this cannot be accomplished overnight. But by ignoring this entirely, regardless of your intentions and despite the organizational break with Healy, you allow this political degeneration to continue. Within this context we find highly disturbing the statement's failure to issue a call for a return to the theory of Permanent Revolution and the *Transitional Program.*

Unless the attention of the party is concentrated on these fundamental questions of the history, principles and program of the Trotskyist movement, the cadre of the British section and the international movement cannot be rearmed to defeat this revisionist attack. But instead of making them conscious of the crucial historical issues at stake in this struggle — the defense of the entire political and theoretical heritage of the Fourth International — the cadre are told by Comrade Banda that "the party has been split not on tactical and programmatic issues, but on the most basic question of revolutionary morality." *(News Line,* November 2, 1985)

If that were truly the case, we would have to state that the split was without any principled content; for how is it possible to discuss "revolutionary morality" apart from tactical and programmatic issues? It is entirely appropriate to quote Trotsky on this question: "A centrist readily resorts to pathetic moralizing to cover up his ideological emptiness; he does not understand that revolutionary morality can be formed only on the basis of revolutionary doctrine and revolutionary policy." (*Writings of Leon Trotsky (1933-34),* Pathfinder, p. 234)

We find the roots of Healy's moral degeneration and his abominable abuse of comrades in his political degeneration, not the other way around. Insofar as dangerous tendencies toward subjectivism were to be observed many years before, these were for a long period held in check by the principled struggle waged by the British section for the building of the Fourth International. We will not accept any attempt to rewrite the history of the Fourth International from the standpoint of the moral depravity of Gerry Healy. For this reason we do not agree with the *News Line's* publication on November 8th of a document dealing with the 1943 expulsion of Healy, which, in the absence of an explanation, suggests that his expulsion at that time was correct, and that his readmission into the party was a tragic error that has taken the movement 42 more years to correct. This is a false subjective method which serves only to discredit the entire history of the International Committee.

In fact, in the light of Healy's subsequent degeneration, it would be worthwhile to review what James P. Cannon had to say about the issues raised in the struggles within the British section of the Fourth International during that period. He was addressing the right-wing faction inside the SWP led by Goldman and Morrow:

"Do you know what kind of regime your pals in England have? They have a minority led by Healy whose crimes consisted in the fact that he supported the unity line of the International Secretariat, that he broke with the sectarian nationalism of the WIL, and became a real internationalist, rejected their nationalist taint, and has been sympathetic in general to the Socialist Workers Party political position.

"Do you know what this regime calls Healy? A quisling of the Socialist Workers Party; that is, an agent of an enemy country." *(James P. Cannon's Writings and Speeches, 1945-47,* Pathfinder, p. 182)

It is Healy, not we, who spits on the history of the movement and who rejects the principles for which he fought for many years. If it was his earlier struggle for internationalism which enabled him to overcome, or at least suppress, his serious subjective weaknesses, it was his turn away from those same principles which produced a political degeneration that allowed those weaknesses to develop out of control and assume such malignant forms. Rather than printing childish anti-Healy cartoons, such as that which appeared in the *News Line* of November 16th, we should expose his revisionist politics, his rejection of the principled struggles upon which the movement is based.

Why do we insist on this approach to our history? Because our political relations and those of all other sections of the ICFI with the British movement have been based on principles, above all, on the agreement that the building of the World Party of Socialist Revolution is the fundamental historical task of our epoch. The tradition created by the struggle to build the Fourth International still lives within the WRP, despite the political degeneration of the organization which found its most reactionary expression in Healy. But that tradition must be consciously revived and strengthened. This means, first of all, that the British section must reforge its relations with the International Committee.

This internationalist perspective must animate all aspects of the work of the Workers Revolutionary Party. We are convinced that once the WRP recognizes the necessity for the closest collaboration with the International Committee and fights to break consciously with the nationalist opportunism of the past period, it will quickly recover from the present crisis and acquire tremendous political strength. Armed with this perspective the present cadre of the WRP will generate out of the struggle for Trotskyism all the necessary physical and financial resources to produce a **daily** paper of the type required to lead the working class.

We trust that this letter will be taken as a fraternal contribution to the on-going discussion within the WRP. Accordingly, we kindly request that you make this letter available to all members of the Workers Revolutionary Party.

Fraternally,

David North, on behalf of the
Central Committee of the Workers League

Letter from Cliff Slaughter to David North

November 26, 1985

Dear Comrade Dave,

As you know, the WRP Central Committee called a Special Congress on October 26th and 27th to discuss the situation surrounding the expulsion of G. Healy on October 19th 1985. This Congress was continued on November 2nd and again on November 9th. The discussion was not completed. Party tasks require that some time be left to comrades for their carrying out. The internal bulletin will be used to continue the discussion; and there will of course be the period required by the WRP Constitution for discussion preceding the 8th National Congress called for the weekend of February 9th, 1986. The contents of this letter (following our telephone conversation of some days ago) are based on notes I had prepared for the last session of the Special Conference, and I am submitting a copy of this letter for the written discussion, as well as for international discussion. I enclose also the transcript of my remarks at the London WRP Aggregate meeting of October 18th. In those remarks I used the term "near-fascist ideology" to characterize the conduct (not just the **ideas)** of the then minority. Since then you and others have made attacks on the use of terms such as this (near-fascist, neo-fascist, etc) saying that they are "leftist" in character, obscuring the real process of degeneration. Those who are saying this, however, choose not to present or analyze what was actually said. You will find, on reading my statement, that I go out of my way to point to **parallel** processes in the degeneration of the parties of the Comintern, that I cite Trotsky on the nature of these parallels, and that I do not call anyone a fascist. Not only that; I point out that a degeneration of the depth we have experienced must have its roots in the pressure of decaying capitalism, and not in "human nature" or any such thing; and it should not surprise anyone that the results are ideologically similar to the "culture" of fascism, which is itself the ultimate product of capitalism in decay. If you read carefully what I say, you will see that I do **not** use the word "near-fascist" to avoid or skate over an analysis but to expand it.

I suggest to you that your long speech at the first session of the WRP Special Congress on October 26th requires a very thorough criticism and self-criticism, and that it contains dangers, because it is very one-sided and misleading. It is indeed one-sided and misleading to such an extent that it tends to guide comrades into a much too easy and simple understanding of what is involved in the degeneration of Healy and Healyism and their effects on the WRP and the IC. It gives a picture of a WRP and WRP leadership corrupted to such an extent by Healy that no-one in the WRP could or would raise a criticism of Healy's anti-Marxist writings and practices, while D. North, on the other hand, had, at least since 1982, taken up arms or correct positions against Healy. If such a false picture is allowed to go unquestioned, we shall never understand and overcome the real process of degeneration of which Healy was the arch-representative. I propose therefore to take up your speech point by point. Before doing so, however, I must mention one or two points about the events preceding the Special Congress and your remarks there.

On returning home from a visit to the Central Committee of the Workers League on October 5th and 6th of this year, I was very glad to bring back with me 50 copies of your notes on Healy's *Studies in Dialectical Materialism,* which you published (following agreement with Comrade M. Banda and myself) together with letters from you to M. Banda and C. Slaughter. These materials were, we all agreed, of great value in opening up the necessary discussion in the WRP. What I did **not** understand was why you chose **not** to publish the letters to which you were replying. That would have helped clarify even further. I hope that any future publication of your letters will include Banda's and my own, since our mistakes can then be used for the movement's education. I must also say that your notes on Healy's *Dialectics* appeared without including the full 8 pages of your original notes which were concerned with "Lenin on Dialectics," written by me in 1962 and about which you wrote in 1982: "a major contribution to the struggle for dialectical materialism within the Trotskyist movement, and it remains, to this day, perhaps the best exposition of the general features of the dialectical method." For my part, I do not agree with that, but it would have been useful for the comrades who were just given your 1982 thinking on Healy's booklet to know your thinking on Slaughter.

The second point I want to make before turning to your speech at the Special Congress concerns the few days just preceding that Congress. We must correct the impression that by October 19th or thereabouts you and other IC comrades were for a resolute break with the Healy anti-party group and that the WRP majority leadership was somehow resisting a truly internationalist understanding and treatment of the problem. As you know, as late as October 25th, the very eve of the Healyite rump's calling of a split conference, supported by the leaders of the Greek and Spanish sections of the IC, you, together with comrades from Sri Lanka and Australia called for an approach which started from the perspective of uniting the Party. I remind you

that the ex-minority, although taking full minority rights, had refused to attend the CC of October 19th which heard the charges against Healy and expelled him; and, furthermore, V. Redgrave had begun her recourse to the courts of the bourgeois state and C. Redgrave had attempted to lay claim to the College of Marxist Education. I will only add that when the IC met on October 25th to work for agreement on the IC Resolution eventually carried at the Special Congress, the original draft of this Resolution contained the following clause:

"(4) All actions involving the use of bourgeois state agencies by members of the WRP against other members must be withdrawn immediately. All disputes are internal to the WRP and the ICFI and must remain so."

(At this time of course there was still one day to go before the open split.)

As you know, WRP delegates on the IC (C. Slaughter, P. Jones, M. Banda) spoke strongly against this clause. Our opinion (developed below) was that resort to the bourgeois state put an **unbridgeable** gulf between Redgrave & Co. and the WRP. That is a **class** line, and it is fundamentally wrong to ask that such actions be "withdrawn" and "discussion" for "unity" resumed. This is an extremely important difference,. Internationalism consists precisely of laying down such class lines and fighting them through. My position, as I clearly stated it, was that the IC should declare that such actions, together with those of Healy which brought his expulsion, and also the crimes carried out through collaboration with the Iraqi regime and what lay behind them politically, should be **split** questions, and that the IC should issue an immediate statement to the WRP Special Conference to that effect, accepting as members of the IC section in Britain **only** those who also accepted our line on this question. We voted for the IC Resolution because that was all we could get agreement on. I consider the resolution inadequate. The split, is **not** only over internationalism defined as subordination to the IC, but over the whole programmatic base of Trotskyism and the Marxism of Marx and Lenin which preceded it. At the very center is the theory of permanent revolution and the Transitional Program. Because IC comrades were still toying with the possibility of "the standpoint of the unity of the party" they restricted the conception of internationalism to the formula of subordination to the IC. The importance of this point will, I believe, emerge clearly when we examine your Congress speech and it explains why one WRP comrade could legitimately ask the $64,000 question: "All right, we can't have unconditional confidence in the WRP leadership; why should we have confidence in the IC?" I answered this question by saying that in declaring subordination to the IC we were not at all saying that the IC was unaffected by Healyism — far from it — but we were affirming a basic general principle. That principle had been broken by us under Healy's leadership. As I stated clearly and unequivocally to the Workers League CC on October 5th this year, we have to say there is **no** leading section of the IC, that the WRP has the same obligations to the IC as does every other section, that these sections have no obligations to the WRP but only to the IC, and that the WRP is subject to the authority and criticisms of the IC just like every other section.

Now for the speech you (D. North) made at the WRP Special Congress on October 26th.

You said early in your report: "a split has taken place and this split is decisive because it's on the most fundamental political question of all: who is for the International Committee of the FI and who's against it? Now that reply has come very decisively this week." Now I have already said that I believe this to be too abstract and formal, and the same criticisms apply to the IC Resolution on the split. Without any doubt, the split exists on the IC as well as in the WRP: the Greek and Spanish sections' leaders, at this point, reject the expulsion of Healy and reject any collaboration with the IC. Their split has a basis in program and principle, on fundamental issues of Marxist politics and theory, and the rejection of the authority of the IC is the surest expression of that. They refuse to reject the gross anti-communist abuses — sexual and physical assault carried out systematically over decades, using Party and IC resources to degrade and destroy the cadres of the WRP and other sections of the IC. These resources were garnered and nourished by the sacrifices of hundreds of Trotskyists. Healy, acting on a theory and an ideology which represents directly the most foul degeneration of the bourgeoisie in the epoch of capitalist decay, set about abusing his authority and power in this movement to do the job for imperialism of breaking up and dispersing the cadres of Trotskyism in the WRP and the rest of the IC. Those who say that these are in any way not **political** issues are completely wrong. They could not be more political, more basic. The organized and willful corruption of generations of young leaders — this eats away at the most basic historical requirement of all: the gathering and training of all the alternative revolutionary working-class leadership, without which the working class cannot fulfill its revolutionary role, and thus without which there is no proletarian revolution and no socialism. This is **not** just a matter of two opposite positions in a verbal **debate** about morals; it is a matter of a fight to put a stop to the actual destruction of the WRP and the IC, and to the destruction of its cadres. This destruction consisted of a rejection of the theory of permanent revolution, rejection at the same time of independent leadership, rejection theoretically and physically of the necessity of the independent development of Marxism for the training of Party cadres. We must oppose all attempts to in any way separate the sexual and physical abuse from something called their politics. These abuses were a political war against Trotskyism. C. Redgrave and all those who argue that the revolutionary goal justifies such practices or makes us neutral in attitude to them, are anti-Marxists. They argue that the end, the aim, socialist revolution, justifies **any** means, any action carried out along the way. That is exactly what Trotsky denies and attacks in "Their Morals and Ours." The means we adopt and develop must be such that they really do prepare the working class for having the stature, unity and independence it needs to win power and build socialism. The bullying — sexual, physical, mental — practiced by Healy strengthens and defends and protects the apparatus and the "leader," but it destroys the revolutionary forces brought from the working class and the intelligentsia to the Party, and it continuously works to destroy the confidence between the revolutionary party and the working class. Who can say that all this in any way is non-political? Such a claim is absurd.

The relations of Healy (and, through him, the WRP) with national-bourgeois regimes were not separated politically, ideologically, or materially, from the vile practices at the

center of the WRP up to June 1985. These relations with the rulers of Arab countries cannot be understood solely as concerned with an opportunist search for money at the cost of principles and independence of the revolutionary movement. Both in relation to Arab bourgeois leaders like Saddam Hussein (Iraq) and Gaddafi (Libya), and to the Labour left in the GLC leadership, Healy and the WRP were a long way down a political path which has been well-trodden before: the path of Pablo revisionism. The essence of it is: building of the independent revolutionary party by our small Trotskyist forces has proven too slow and difficult for the real tempo of the revolution, and this revolution may well pass us by. It is further argued that other, non-Marxist, even non-working-class forces can represent these revolutionary currents. The relations of the arch-bureaucrat Healy with these Arab-country bourgeois rulers were entirely opportunist. The real building of the revolutionary parties of the ICFI was abandoned, while Healy bargained for financial resources through relations with these bourgeois rulers. The content of the political degeneration is the same as that of Pabloite revisionism and liquidationism since the Second World War: namely to abandon the permanent revolution and liquidate the essential, central contents of the Transitional Program, the struggle to establish independent revolutionary parties to enable the working class to fulfill its revolutionary role. This content is to be found not in the occasional correct general statements of the WRP and the IC but in the material relations of GH's clique with the bourgeois-national movements, for which formal affirmations of correct positions provided a cover. (This did not of course prevent the descent into entirely false and open declarations which directly contradict the theory of permanent revolution: welcoming Gaddafi as "developing in the direction of revolutionary socialism" and justifying the butchering of members of the Iraqi Communist Party and Iraqi trade unionists in 1979.)

These developments are characteristic, and instructive, of the way Healy's practices worked to destroy the movement. Positive and theoretical work done by others (such as C. Slaughter, M. Banda, D. North and many others) became more and more separated from the actual conduct of the work of the IC, the WRP, and the *News Line*, which was directly governed by G. Healy from his London office and through the Parwich school. It is not just that such theoretical and political writing and speaking gets more and more barren because it is separated from the real working relations of the leadership. It becomes little more than a justification for the real material relations of plunder between Healy's WRP office and the IC sections and for the capitulation to the national bourgeois rulers and the abandonment of building non-independent revolutionary sections in their countries. While comrades wrote perspective documents and conducted IC Conferences (as in the 10th IC Congress where Slaughter, Banda and North worked without any differences with Healy to lay down the line and work of the Conference) they let Healy's unchallenged authority the WRP and IC continue to dominate the IC's practice. There is not the slightest doubt that every one of these leading comrades at more than one point in their political development found themselves faced with criticism and attack for raising criticisms and decided that they would not accept the (at that time) inevitable expulsion and isolation from the movement. The inevitable political compromise which resulted of course deepened the disorientation and degeneration, and it is only by the skin of its teeth that the world movement can now regenerate itself with any contribution from these comrades. This real contradiction, rather than attribution of blame and guilt, is what must be grasped.

It is this real contradiction and its analysis that is missing from your presentation, which left the definite impression of a history of lone protest and declaration of opposition by yourself against the degeneration. That is false, and dangerous. The corruption in relations between comrades, brutally expressed at its sharpest in Healy's sexual attacks on women cadres, cannot be separated as somehow not political or "less political" than this political and theoretical degeneration under Healy's leadership of the WRP, which was accepted by the WRP leaders and members, and of the IC sections and sympathizing organizations (like the Workers League, prevented by legal conditions from being affiliated).

The same extreme decadent capitalist ideology which led to cynical sexual abuse of women comrades, and the cynical justification of these practices by Healy's supporters, was reproduced in the way that the Political Committee of the WRP (on Healy's motion, and with only M. Banda opposing) supported the execution of Iraqi Stalinists in 1979. As Torrance said of one of the girls: "She was rubbish. She would have gone anyway." As Healy and his supporters said of the victims of Saddam Hussein, "They were only Stalinists." The thinking behind this is: our will decides what must be done, and everyone and anyone can be used, are expendable, and can be thrown away when finished with. All this, of course, was done in the name of Trotskyism and in the name of a battle against subjective idealism. It is in part an extreme expression of subjective idealism in its 20th-century degraded form: that of pragmatism and of the "will" (Bergson): the very ideology which inspired Mussolini.

The third fundamental issue involved in the split follows directly from this last point, namely the systematic and long-term revision of Marxist principles in philosophy and scientific world outlook (dialectical and historical materialism) by G. Healy over the last 20 and especially the last 10 years. This version was not "Hegelian" but subjective idealist in character, and it was, I repeat, a subjective idealism of the utterly modern 20th century form, in which arbitrary will and self-justification replaces subjectively interpreted "Reason" of the classical subjective ideology. Healy's "dialectics" is not a philosophy or a logic at all but only the mystified form of a cover and rationalization of Healy's corrupt practices and turn away from the working class. The cult of Healy's advanced and infallible "practice of cognition" was nothing more than a mechanism to justify and enforce the arbitrary control of the WRP and the IC by Healy and his immediate supporters, sealing off Healy from any accountability or criticism and also sealing the WRP off from accountability to the IC. By this mechanism the IC as well as the WRP was simply used and bled white for Healy's political and personal purposes. The "process of cognition" for Marxists, is not some special equipment of logical categories that the brain learns, enabling a person to then "speedily develop practices."

Engels says in "Ludwig Feuerbach" that Hegel's great

discovery, taken over and developed by Marx, was that truth lay **"in this process of cognition itself,"** and he then explains immediately that by the process of cognition is meant the whole history of science, of man's struggle to master and know nature and history. This is the very opposite of Healy's individualist "practice of cognition."

Fourthly, the bullying and brutality of Healy personally was the form through which this class political and theoretical content was most crudely and perfectly expressed. And this form reinforced the content at every point. It was when these forms could no longer contain and repress the problems forced through by developments in the class struggle that the conditions emerged to begin breaking up these forms. And this meant, concretely, breaking Healy's personal grip. During September and early October this struggle to break the very real domination of the movement by Healy's brutal practices clarified greatly what had to be done and what it meant: there had to be a break, a split, with this poisonous right wing. The political struggle in the CC and at aggregates, and the resort to bourgeois law by the Redgraves, clarified that, and I am not sure what you meant by saying that the IC needed to "create the conditions in which the whole cadre within the party and internationally could be clarified as to what this struggle is all about." You should in saying this, actually analyze and learn from the clarification already going on in the WRP **before** October 25. If this had been done, 1 believe, you could not have made the mistake approaching the (then) minority and majority in the WRP "from the standpoint of the unity of the Party," as you put it. And we would have had, then, a split not **only** on the general principle of subordination to the IC but on all the vital political and ideological questions.

In your remarks at the October 25 Special Congress you welcomed the opportunity to speak directly, for the first time except on public or ceremonial occasions, to the WRP membership. You might have added that it was the first opportunity you had had to listen to the WRP membership. However, you have spoken at meetings, Congresses, and schools, and on those occasions you were not the same David North as you are now. You were on those occasions bound by the as yet unbroken "discipline" of Healy's domination, and, like the rest of us, on many occasions you worked as the executor of his policies and methods. I am sure you can recall many examples. In this sense we too, like you, can say that for the first time we have the opportunity of speaking directly to the WRP membership and to each other.

You went on to say that with other comrades you decided in 1982 that Healy's "Studies" was rubbish. You then gained applause by saying that "we asked ourselves how was it possible that such rubbish could be printed and no one in the British section was putting a stop to it." I must say to you that you **know** the regime created by Healy, from your own experience, and you **know** why no one was doing anything about it. The applause you received expressed the entirely justified mistrust of the WRP delegates in the WRP leadership. But it is appropriate to ask, as one comrade did, is not mistrust in the IC equally justified?

You explained, for example, why you withdrew your criticism of Healy's "Studies" in 1982-83. This was because, considering the experience and authority of the WRP and of Healy, and being reminded of the political consequences of the OCI's opposition on similar questions, **and** fearful of a split and isolation from the movement, you withdrew — as I have said in a document dated October 12, you did **so** quite rightly.

Similarly in 1984, when you made correct criticisms of the WRP and IC positions on the national question, you found yourself presented with threats and ultimatums and the immediate danger of split. You said yourself that you then withdrew (February 1984) "influenced" by these threats and by the fact that you still were influenced by the fact that you had always seen the US section as loyal to the WRP and the IC. You added that Mike Banda pointed out that if these criticisms were true then you would have to conclude that the WRP had degenerated into a full-blown revisionism, and so you pulled back. And you conclude: "in fact the very way it was posed contributed very strongly to my withdrawing the documents." (See the speech you made, appended.)

My only point here — a major one, I think — is that this process that you went through has been true of many of us who have worked in the WRP and IC leadership. Opposition on any question brought bitter and ruthless attacks, and if comrades did not at a certain point agree to be wrong, or to put aside their criticisms, they faced only the prospect of isolation, expulsion, as you did. I do not believe that you were any less the victim of this than I, for example, was, and if I had persisted, on earlier occasions, with my criticism on perspectives or on philosophy you could until 1982 have joined in the attack mobilized by Healy.

Because of such considerations we **all** made extremely serious mistakes in the past, and the mistakes made by Cde. Banda in pulling back in 1982, and by me, at the same time, in not supporting your criticism, with which I agreed to a great extent, were undoubtedly among the most serious. If we do not **all** learn from these mistakes we cannot play any role in the necessary regeneration of the movement, we cannot learn anything or correct anything. If we paint a picture of one or more comrades having been correct all along the line, even for just the past four years, we tell a lie, and cannot get down to scientific analysis.

Now, I maintain that the one-sidedness and partial, selective nature of the account you gave to our Congress was disturbing and dangerous, and conflicts with the urgent necessity of facing up to and analyzing our responsibilities. You **omitted** several important political questions which have emerged in the last four years. To analyze these is essential to any clarification of the split. For example, you will recall that the Workers League leadership came to the point of abandoning the long-time perspective of the Fourth International towards a Labour party in the United States. Discussion on the International Committee corrected that. We all know that differences on basic perspective do appear in sections and in the IC itself, and the IC and its sections fight to correct these. But in giving an account of how you challenged Healy's and the WRP's positions and failed to get support in the WRP, it is entirely wrong to ignore **this** question, in which I think you will agree the IC and WRP comrades were right against you and whoever supported your position (which you corrected) in the Workers League. Later, in 1985, you followed with a lapse into an analysis of the trade union bureaucracy in the US which we challenged as being completely non-Marxist in its method and conclusions, and you eventually agreed. Nobody made you write that analysis, and you have presumably made some critical analysis of how you came to proceed in a thoroughly un-

dialectical, completely empiricist and "objectivist" way, in the manner of bourgeois sociology, concluding that the "material base" of the American trade union bureaucracy was its vast empire of wealth, privilege and bureaucratic organization. But you did not incorporate any such invaluable self-criticism in your account of the developments in the IC since 1982. Yet surely there are social forces behind such a prostration before the accomplished fact, just as there are social forces behind Healyism (see the "Political Letter No. 1" issued to Workers League members by yourself on behalf of the Political Committee on July 8 this year).

Finally I must refer to the Workers League Conference of **June 30/July 1 this year,** which is the subject of your Political Letter to which 1 have referred. You presented to the Workers League 12th Congress a perspectives document which was nothing short of a total disorientation. When I began to discuss this document with you (you will recall that I had arrived in Detroit on the eve of your Congress, and until then, like the delegates, had not seen the document), I came very soon to the conclusion that the various formulations I found to be wrong or confused were in fact part of a perspective which could only be called Pabloite.

You had reacted to US government and presidential statements and preparations threatening war, and your conclusion was that the perspective for the Workers League was one of preparing a revolutionary defeatist struggle against the US imperialists when they went to war. This is the old Pabloite "war-revolution" thesis of over 30 years ago. You corrected this position even before the Congress began, and you did the right thing in announcing to the delegates that the perspectives were revisionist through and through, representing an abandonment of Trotskyist program and Marxist method. The written report which I submitted to the WRP on return said the same, and it **also** said that you worked in collaboration with me to turn the Congress round and achieve a strong unity by the end. You will recall that did not in any way use the two day Congress to turn anyone against you or to apportion blame or condemnation, despite the fact that you were personally responsible for this resolution.

I am now convinced, as you are, that such a gross revision of our basic positions resulted from the disorientation created by our own IC 10th Congress's false perspectives, and we must not in any way hold against you the development of these wrong positions in the Workers League. **But** all this is directly contradictory to the impression you created at our special congress, ie. that you were working along a correct line against us, **It was not like that.** Comrades will read your own Political Letter, attached here, on the Workers League Congress which met on the same weekend as Comrade Aileen Jennings' letter was sent, and ask themselves if it could have been written by the same comrade who addressed them on October 26th. Among the works you recommended for reading by every comrade in July, was, among others, Healy's "Studies in Dialectical Materialism." I don't ask you to explain why — we both know why. When I mentioned to you my opinions about this experience, you answered that at our Special Congress we were not discussing American perspectives. That is not the point. The American perspectives cannot be separated from world perspectives, as 1 am sure you agree, and the real point here is something else, namely, that what we **are** discussing is an objective analysis of that past which we have to negate and overcome. It must be objective, not one-sided and subjective, or we shall not avoid similar errors in the future. I am sure you would want to retract your remark that "we were not discussing American perspectives."

One small part of your speech is representative of the same argument. You said that when you visited Britain in August 1985 you were baffled by G. Healy's remarks about Comrade A.J.'s possibly having police connections, but that "we didn't believe that we could raise this with our section on the basis of doubts. We had a crisis which we had to confront, it was our crisis, the crisis of our daily newspaper." I understand the account of your experience and your thoughts very well, it is very familiar to me; but I fail to see why you can present it, correctly, as a true account of why your suppressed your doubts, while condemning others for having rationalized their hesitations on exactly the same way on earlier occasions. The same kind of thinking and self-imposed censorship in response to the pressure of "crisis" explains many actions by many comrades in the past.

In your speech you laid much emphasis on Comrade M. Banda's phone call to you on Sept. 3rd, 1985, when he said, "The time has come to renew the alliance." You used the word "alliance" to draw the conclusion that, "What we were dealing with in Britain was an unprincipled clique leadership that based itself on national considerations, that alliances were picked up and dropped on the basis of what was happening in Britain and that at one point we could be told we had an agreement on political questions (and) at another point we could be told we didn't. We could be told at one moment we had an agreement and one moment we didn't and then on the basis of developments within Britain we could (be) suddenly be called and asked to involve ourselves in an international alliance." You want us to argue that the fundamental issue in this whole experience is the subordination of the WRP to the IC — the opposite of what prevailed under Healy.

Your emphasis on M. Banda's use of the term "alliance" was linked to your earlier recounting of a conversation with Healy — which he had said, when you criticized him, "The alliance is over." In actual fact of course the content of M. Banda's remark was totally different. Rather than concluding that Banda was showing himself to be part of what you call an "unprincipled clique," why did you not conclude that he was taking a vital step **out of** that unprincipled clique by referring the matter to you and thereby to the IC? Developments of the kind we are discussing do not happen by individuals working out pure, correct positions and acting accordingly. Comrades come up against the existing forms in a real struggle and make breaks. However much Cde. Banda might hesitate before and after September 3rd, he was taking actions, such as contacting international comrades, which burned his bridges behind him. You should have based yourself on that objective logic of the break from the clique, with all its real problems and not on the verbal and formal similarity of the uses of the term "alliance." As you know, Comrade Banda, you, I and others actually did work together, and we all agreed that you, not us at that point, would make the international contacts. I gave you, as IC secretary, a letter backing your visits will full political confidence. Your work was **our** work. Remember that you were very definitely against an immediate meeting of **the** IC and in favor of discussions with the individual sections, giving them time to study the documents and experiences as well as

to discuss with you or us. As part of this I visited your own Central Committee on October 5/6. These were certainly not unprincipled relations, and I cannot therefore accept your remark, "how could the leadership of the oldest section of the International Committee have such relations with us." The relations were conceived by us as relations of collaboration necessary in order to fight together as international comrades in one movement against Healy, his practices, his theoretical revisions, his clique domination over the movement. If you insist on characterizing this as using the IC as a weapon for regulating internal WRP disputes, you are wrong.

You say, and we agree: "We want not only Healy destroyed, we want Healyism rooted out of this party." But Healyism, as you yourself pointed out, had victims in all sections of the IC, not only the WRP, and the job cannot be done without facing up to the results of Healyism throughout the cadres of the IC. All the leaders of the IC were part of Healyism as well as its victims, and that must be confronted, analyzed and corrected. The test of leaders today is their ability to face up to, analyze, negate and supersede their own role in all that, not to prove that they were less sullied than others. You suggested in your speech that the WRP leadership (I think you mean Cdes. M. Banda and C. Slaughter especially) persist in trying to settle questions pragmatically, empirically, by way of impressions and pressing immediate national requirements, because, not yet freed of the Healy legacy, we reject, we reject control by the IC and the perspective of building the world party. We consider that that will only be tested in the struggle, but we do know that facing up to one's own responsibility for the present crisis is an indispensable requirement.

I can summarize part of what I have written so far by saying, bluntly, that the many comrades, who, for reasons we all know, are unfamiliar with the history of differences in the IC, have had built up for them a picture of Cde. D. North being right against Healy, at least since October 1982. You earned another round of applause when you asked why the British section leadership responded only when the abuses struck here, inside the WRP. This is just not based on fact. The abuses have been striking blows, vicious blows, against the membership of the WRP for **decades.** What changed in 1985 was that the systematic nature of these abuses in the name of Trotskyist leadership was exposed by the work of a small number of comrades. Their "subjective" preparations could grow and be successful because the whole bureaucratic and opportunist edifice was coming into irreconcilable conflict with the changes in the class struggle and the new demands forced on the WRP (I refer especially of course of the miners' strike). It is dangerous to use phrases like the rhetorical question you asked (why only when the abuses struck here? etc.), reaching out to the general mistrust in the Party, instead of working to analyze what actually happened.

For you the critical example comes with your description of how the IC requested and did not get a 24-hour delay in publication of the CC statement on Healy's expulsion. You seem to think that this clinches the argument that we could be going from the frying pan into the fire. I see it very differently. I do not accept that the relations between IC members in London on the one hand and WRP CC members in London on the other are more decisive historically, more important, than the actual issues on which Healy was expelled. We had been forced to recognize that an ultra-right cancerous tendency had set out to destroy us. High Court writs were in operation. In addition, you ignored the position inside our own ranks. The exposure of Healy had exploded so violently in the membership that a real rebellion had erupted, including the occupation and shutdown of our print shops. That was entirely justified and understandable, and you endorsed it specifically in your opening sentences. But you ignore its implications, the first of which, rightly, was "Get Healy!" You seem to want a perfect set of "internationalist" rules of procedure guiding every step of the real movement. It was not like that and could not be. There was behind this the other difference to which we have referred. You were in fact still looking for a discussion framework with the then minority, just as, earlier, you were not for the expulsion but for the suspension of Healy. This was a legitimate and important difference between us, and the issue was not simply one of delaying a statement until the IC could meet. In any case, as I have already pointed out, you had been until then not for an IC meeting but only for discussions. We finally arrived at a proposal for a meeting on Wednesday, October 23rd. Your response was that as the statement had now appeared, the meeting could wait until Friday, 25th. That did not stop some comrades, who think it useful to champion the IC against the WRP leadership, from asserting that the IC comrades were kept waiting the whole week in London. I may also remind you that until Wednesday, October 23rd, we were still trying to bring the Spanish and Greek sections to a meeting. Here it is relevant to mention once again that we wanted an IC meeting before the Special Congress of October 26th, in order to have the IC lay down the political conditions for a reregistration to the British section of the IC, and to exclude the supporters of Healy on political grounds. This would have had more content than a general affirmation of subordination of national sections to the IC.

You make a point of attacking what I am said to have said about "neo-fascist tendencies" in the WRP minority. This you say sounds very left, but has no content, being used as substitute for a real analysis. I have already discussed this in the context of Healy's "morality" as well as the question of the Iraqi executions. The "justifications" for these gross acts was of the most right-wing, amoral character, ideally suited to the requirements of capital. At a report from the Central Committee to comrades "lobbying" on October 12th I opposed those comrades who called some members of the Healyite minority "fascists." Fascists are organized into bodies of men to do violence to the working class and Marxism. What I spoke about (see my remarks at the London Aggregate) was the right-wing, "near-fascist" ideology involved. It had a close and directly relevant parallel in Paris, where several very "radical" leaders of the 1968 movement are now editing ultra-right-wing journals. It will not be correct to characterize the Healy clique and its apologists as only "nationalists." They are close to every fascist position on the rights of human individuals, rights which for them are reduced to nothing by the requirements of the party.

Now I would like to come back to an area where we appear to have easy agreement, but this proves decidedly not so. You say "...really there's not a single comrade here who can seriously believe that we have come and assembled to decide whether rape is a legitimate question [?] inside the working class movement." And you go on, "that's a settled

question in this movement." We do have a difference. It is dangerous to stop at the level: "we were of course horrified" in reference to Healy's sexual abuses. We heard members of the expelled minority of splitters say almost identical things. Once again, it tends to put these abuses into a "non-political" category secondary to some other more "real," "political" issues. They are basic political questions. It is **not at all true** that "that's a settled question." We are not confronting a debate about this "settled question" but about the actual systematic crimes of leadership in destroying comrades, against this "settled question" for decades. And we must plumb that degeneration, a political degeneration, to its depths. These **were** "split" questions and they did produce the split. It is flying in the face of reality to suggest that we cannot say a split took place on the question of rape.

We are all aware, of course, of what you pointed out to the Congress, that Stalinism began with a revision of the Marxist position on world revolution, embracing instead "socialism in one country." But we also are aware that the material conditions for the development and victory of this revisionism were contained in the backwardness of the isolated Russian economy and culture, which nurtured bureaucratic privilege and repression. Thus backwardness and bureaucratic reaction, combined with the international defeats of the proletariat resulting primarily from the errors of Stalin's faction in the leadership of the 3rd International, formed the noose which tightened around the neck of the Left Opposition, says Trotsky. He certainly could not have been satisfied with an abstract assertion of the principles of internationalism.

You say the split has come on decisive categorical grounds. Yes, but it is, I repeat **not** just a question of the WRP's relation with the IC. Subordination of national sections in the IC is the necessary form of internationalist revolutionary practice. The content of this internationalism reaches down to the fundamental questions on which we have expelled Healy and his followers. It is the decisive work on these questions that will be most important. I cannot accept your assertion (it is no more than that) that the work of the IC "smoked out" the Greek leadership. Their definitive split from the IC is the consequence of the work of Healyism in the IC for two decades, and we must face up to the fact that we were unable to prevent it, despite your visit to Greece early in September. The work to expose the real questions before the membership of the Greek/Spanish sections remains still to be done.

As you can see I disagree with the whole emphasis of your statement. Your final round of applause was won by calling on the WRP membership to make clear to the WRP leadership that they must subordinate themselves to the IC. Why do you counterpose the WRP members to the WRP leaders in this way? Why not counterpose the members **to the** IC, which after all is the international leadership that carried out Healy's program and policy? But really it should not be a matter of counterposing anyone to anyone else; rather, we should be making clear that we are prepared to work and fight together to clarify ruthlessly the theoretical questions involved in order to rebuild the movement as the foundation of the development of Marxist theory.

I have said that I think that your "standpoint of the unity of the Party" in the week between Healy's expulsion and our Special Congress profoundly mistaken, because we had gone through intensive experiences in exposing the then minority. Because you did not share or study the implications of those struggles you draw the false conclusion that your search for an "objective" demonstration of the correctness of the majority's position was finally successful in the October 25th resolution agreeing subordination of the WRP to the IC. This is not true. The WRP delegates would of course have agreed to such a formulation at any time, just as any other section would. Such a declaration does not and cannot "objectively" decide anything whatsoever. I believe that you persisted in a dangerously over-formal line of "let the differences come out and be clearly seen" long after the minority had actually gone to the State and **had** split. This formalism led you to give little importance to the really basic class questions of the split, so that you could seriously propose, as late as 25th October, that Redgrave withdraw from the court action and resume her minority rights! Only afterwards, when the discussion had exposed this argument, did you assure us that you had meant it only to have a tactical role (defense of assets etc.). It was actually part of "your starting from the standpoint of the unity of the Party." That was never a possibility after Healy had been charged and this minority voted against charges. I know that you will consider seriously what I am saying here: that you dangerously underestimated the real questions involved in the expulsion of Healy, and that you are presenting internationalism in a formal way which obscures these issues. We shall find (I am sure the Australian section provides examples) many in the movement who will state or revert to the expelled minority's position, that the sexual abuses are an unpleasant, even "horrifying" incident but they are secondary and should be put aside. To encourage that in any way would be to ignore the gigantic force of reaction that is expressed by Healy's practices and by the position of those who justify his practice and ideas. If that is allowed to happen we cannot do what you as well as I want most of all to do: to drive out Healyism as well as Healy.

Yours fraternally,

Cliff

"Revolutionary Morality and the Split in the WRP"

News Line Report

November 29, 1985

Many old and new faces were at the well-attended Workers Revolutionary Party public meeting held on Tuesday in the Friends Meeting House at Euston, London.

• OPENING the meeting, Dany Sylveire said: "I am proud to have been asked to chair this meeting. It is the first public meeting in the London district on revolutionary morality and the split in the WRP.

"It is an historic meeting because our party can stand and hold its head high, having broken with the corrupt bureaucratic clique which has dominated for so long. Only this way can we build a truly Trotskyist party, British section of the International Committee of the Fourth International."

• RICHARD GOLDSTEIN, speaking in a personal capacity as AUEW convenor at Gestetners, said: "I am proud to call myself a member of the WRP and particularly' proud to have participated with my comrades in the fight to have taken on Healy and his reactionary clique and defeated them."

Goldstein, a member of the WRP London district committee, explained: "Like a number of my generation I joined the Socialist Labour League (predecessor of the WRP) in the 1960s out of a rejection of the reformist bureaucracy led by Harold Wilson in the Labour Party, and John Gollan in the Communist Party.

"I joined the CP when I was 16 years old and gradually became disillusioned with its completely pacifist, cowardly and non-revolutionary line. The Trotskyist movement provided the only analysis of reformism and Stalinism from a revolutionary point of view."

Referring to the struggles against the anti-union laws in the 1960s, the 1968 struggle in France, the Vietnamese defeat of the US, and other developments of that period, Goldstein went on:

"This was the movement we chose to give our lives to. But we only had half the picture. We were half ignorant. We had read Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky — but activism prevented us from real study.

"It was not a revolutionary situation. But according to Healy it was red alert all the time.

"Comrades were prepared to accept almost anything in the name of revolution. Such is the background that Healy took advantage of, and sexually and physically abused comrades."

It was not just Healy, he stressed. Former assistant secretary Sheila Torrance, now expelled, was "Healy's parrot — incapable of independent political thought. She carried out Healy's dirty work."

It was the miners' strike and the way it ended, Goldstein told the meeting, that created the political crisis within the WRP which eventually broke the stranglehold.

"We took up the questions of Livingstone on the GLC, the fight against state-funded secret ballots, opportunism towards Labour and trade union bureaucrats.

"Once we knew about Healy's real practices, we knew we couldn't build a movement whose leadership sexually abused women. We owe it to the working class to absolutely expose Healy and his clique and drive them out of the workers' movement for good."

• JOHN SIMMANCE, AUEW convenor at Charing Cross hospital, speaking in a personal capacity, told the meeting: "The split in our party took place over revolutionary morality — the opposition to this systematic abuse of comrades and whether leaders are answerable and accountable to the party."

He said the Healy clique still insisted that we are living in a revolutionary situation. In dealing with this question Simmance, who is WRP Paddington branch secretary, vividly recounted his trade union experiences.

November 26, he stated, held special memories for him. It was the date in 1979 when the strike by fewer than 40 workers at Charing Cross hospital came to a head.

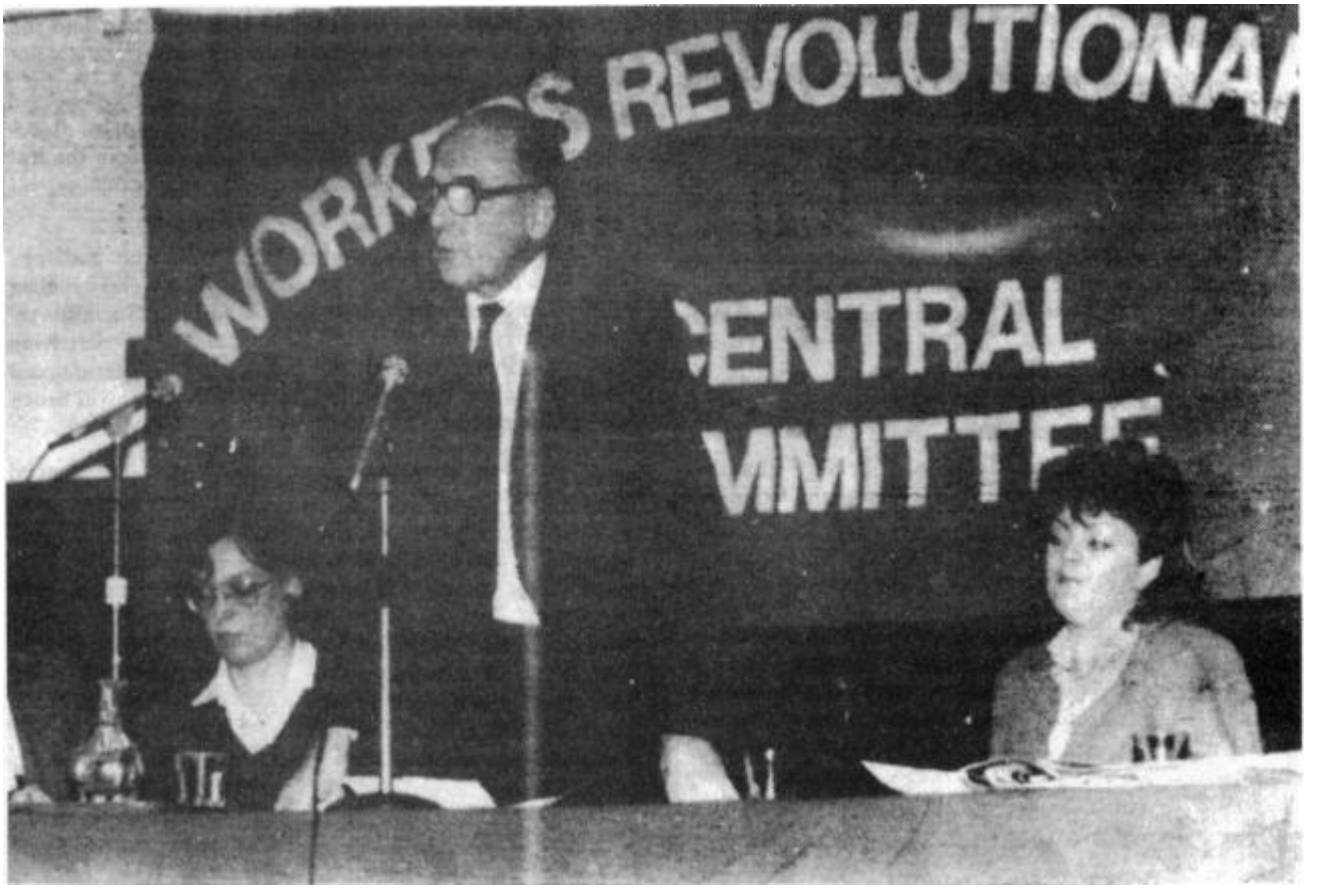
"We had already been out on strike for six weeks. We were picketing 24 hours and in hospital. The press came in droves to witch-hunt us. Duffey (AUEW leader at the time) wanted to break the strike, and a counter-demonstration against us was organized from inside the hospital. We stood our ground.

"We refused to let an oil tanker through the pickets. The hospital already had oil. That night, Thatcher stood up in parliament and said, for the first time I believe, if we didn't allow the oil through she would call in the army. And there were 35 of us!"

This happened six months after the Tories won the 1979 election. In the six years since then we had seen the biggest changes since World War II.

But, Simmance pointed out, a revolutionary situation depended not just on economic prerequisites, but on the achievement of a definite state of consciousness within the working class.

"The Healyites have got problems on their hands," he continued. "Not only are they unable to distinguish between a



Cliff Slaughter speaking on the platform of the WRP public meeting of November 26,1985 at Friends Hall

revolutionary situation and a pre-revolutionary situation, but they cannot count. They are calling themselves the WRP, even though the vote on the Central Committee for charging Healy in order to expel him was 25 votes to 11."

• JULIE HYLAND, Young Socialists national secretary, told how the YS had taken up the fight to expose Healy and his supporters and drive them out of the movement.

When a meeting of the YS London Youth Committee had passed a resolution on October 7 demanding a control commission into Healy's practices, Claire Dixon — then a WRP Central Committee member, who has since gone with Healy — claimed the meeting was unconstitutional and threatened to bring disciplinary charges against Hyland for allowing the vote to go through.

"But the youth in London and all over the country stood absolutely firm against this and other examples of intimidation," said Julie.

The abuse was just one of Healy's crimes, she emphasized. While Healy and Torrance still led the WRP, the youth were unable to develop policies for the YS.

"We were stopped from actually participating in the struggles of the youth. A prime instance being when Torrance told us we could not take part in organizing school strikes — because, she told us, the youth would get victimized! Yet at the same time as this, over 60 miners had been jailed and youth were at the forefront of the fight against the South African regime.

"Youth in the YS would not accept that we had no right to fight for rights. Thatcher and the right wing of the Labour and trade union leadership had not been able to hold back, to subjugate the youth — and neither was Healy.

"With Healy, the YS had no real political life. But now, for the first time, we are discovering the historical basis of the YS and know we can set out to build and train a YS like never before."

Comrade Hyland quoted from Trotsky's *Revolution Betrayed* and the Transitional Program of the Fourth International.

• CLIFF SLAUGHTER, WRP Central Committee member, began by saying that like everyone else on the platform he considered the expulsion of Healy to have been the most positive thing they could have done, adding: "Many here will say we should have done it a long time ago."

He went on: "I have written many things; many things I am very proud of, others of which I am ashamed. The best thing I've written was the charge against Healy that led to his expulsion."

Slaughter, who joined the Trotskyist movement after expulsion from the Communist Party in 1957, emphasized though that separation from Healy could not simply be carried out by expulsion.

What had been done so far since the expulsions could only be a start, he stated, and warned: "Anyone who tries to give a simple account of what had taken place — it just was not like that.

"Healy and his clique were expelled because the WRP and its paper were brought to the brink of ruin. I don't exag-

gerate. Above all, we had a party turned into a sect, a propaganda, opportunist sect.

"Healy did things without referring to any committee. He referred only to one or two closest to him."

The sexual abuse of female comrades and physical abuse of male comrades — especially the youth inside our party — was a direct manifestation of the most decadent form of bourgeois ideology.

Corin Redgrave, the meeting was told, had very recently visited a WRP member and told him: "The mistake Gerry Healy made was that three of the girls he had were daughters of party members."

In other words, said Slaughter, it would have been alright if Healy had not been caught. "Sexual abuse. Yes it took that to wake up this party to take action.

"No one should underestimate the damage that has been done. And no one should underestimate the moral side of it. It is political," he said.

"But it was entirely positive that this party did find the reserves to make a turn. We made that turn — Healy is not coming back."

Slaughter pledged: "We are at the beginning of an objective analysis, and all those who wish to really learn the lessons can certainly participate. We will examine all questions, as Trotskyists."

• QUESTIONS and contributions from the audience then took place, and among those who spoke were: expelled WRP member Alan Thornett, Connie Kirkby ("Socialist Action"); Harry Vince (Socialist Labour Group); Stuart King ("Workers Power"); Bob Pennington (formerly International Marxist Group); Monty Johnstone (CPGB); and David Bruce (WRP Central Committee).

An excellent collection for the WRP £60,000 Special Fund raised £572.38.

Letter from Peter Schwarz to the Central Committee of the Workers Revolutionary Party

December 2, 1985

Dear Comrades!

Having attended the London meeting on the expulsion of G. Healy on November 26 I am writing to you, because I am deeply disturbed by the contribution Comrade Slaughter made on that meeting. In my opinion it amounts to nothing less but a complete rejection of the history and traditions of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

Made in front of the entire coterie of British revisionism by the secretary of the ICFI, I cannot help but take this speech as a clear indication that Comrade Slaughter wants to split with the ICFI altogether and rejoin the revisionist and Stalinist swamp.

Comrade Slaughter was present at the 1971 Youth Rally in Essen, when the OCI rejected an amendment proposed by the SLL and publicly sided with organisations hostile to the ICFI. This led directly to the split with the OCI. But this looks now like a minor incident compared to Comrade Slaughter's speech on November 26, which questioned the entire history of our movement in front of an assembly of its worst enemies.

I urgently ask the Central Committee of the WRP to demand that Comrade Slaughter states where he is going. Is he saying, that the ICFI, and the ICFI only, no longer represents the historical continuity of Trotskyism because of Healy's degeneration? Is he going to break with Trotskyism?

25 years ago, on January 2, 1961, Comrade Slaughter wrote: "It is because of the magnitude of the opportunities opening up before Trotskyism, and therefore the necessity for political and theoretical clarity, that we urgently require a drawing of the lines against revisionism in all its forms. **It is time to draw to a close the period in which Pabloite revisionism was regarded as a trend within Trotskyism.** Unless this is done we cannot prepare for the revolutionary struggles now beginning." (*Trotskyism vs. Revisionism,* Vol. 3, p. 49) Does he now, after one quarter of a century has passed, say that these conclusions were wrong?

Everything he said on the November 26 meeting certainly points in that direction.

He put publicly a question mark on the investigation "Security and the Fourth International." He has no right whatsoever to do this. If he has any doubts on it, the only place to raise them is the ICFI itself.

In fact, Comrade Slaughter is acquainted with every bit of evidence produced during that investigation and has himself written extensively on it. Now he claims that we have only produced circumstantial evidence. But he knows full well that circumstantial evidence is not less powerful than direct evidence. Or did he expect Hansen to leave a letter behind, admitting that he was an agent?

Where is Comrade Slaughter going? Does he intend to side with those who defend Hansen's meetings with the FBI, who cover up for the GPU agent Sylvia Franklin, who refused to condemn the murder of Comrade Tom Henehan and in fact were accomplices to it? Is he going to join those, who despite their empty talk about "workers democracy" refused to answer one single item of the enormous amount of evidence we produced during the last ten years?

Even as recently as on its last meeting on November 5 Comrade Slaughter has not even hinted to the ICFI that he had any doubts on the validity of the findings on "Security and the Fourth International." But now he does it publicly at the very same venue where the revisionists had their shameful meeting on January 14, 1977.

I was deeply troubled to hear that before the meeting Comrade Slaughter shook hands with Monty Johnstone, a completely discredited Stalinist, who then, when he was allowed to speak to the meeting, promptly expressed his "great respect for Comrade Cliff." Comrade Slaughter, who broke with Stalinism in 1957, knows the implications of these actions very well. What separates us from Stalinism are not just some political or historical differences, it is a river of blood.

I cannot find a friendlier expression than to say that Comrade Slaughter spit in Friends Meeting House on our entire history. He explained that the founding of the ICFI in 1953 was a "right decision taken for accidental reasons," and I was ashamed that I had then to listen to an OCI-related group pointing out to him that the split with Pabloism was correct.

His final remark was that the split with the OCI has again to be investigated. This as well cannot be accepted. While it is certainly true that not all the necessary lessons were drawn for the training of our cadre when we split and that the opportunity to build a section in France was missed, there can be no doubt that the OCI represents a completely degenerated revisionist group. Having read the latest issues of their paper *Information Ouvrieres,* I can assure you that their present political line is so right wing, that even the line of the POUM during the Spanish civil war looks positively revolutionary compared to it.

Also Comrade Slaughter's repeated remarks that there was "no virtue" to stay in the party while it degenerated under Healy's leadership must be completely rejected. This is

an attack on all those who despite Healy's degeneration defended the historical, political and organisational gains of the **ICFI** and is an open invitation to every renegade to rejoin in order to liquidate these gains.

I entirely reject Comrade Slaughter's remark, when speaking on Healy's corrupt practices, that "these practices went on in any other section of the IC." This is a foul slander with no foundation whatsoever.

I was also alarmed to see that Comrade Dany Sylveire, who was chairing the meeting, did not call on WRP members who wanted to speak, while welcoming every revisionist.

The kind of meeting held in Friends Meeting House has a definite political character. Comrade Slaughter is not new to politics and knows the class nature of this meeting and its political implications very well. What would the reaction of the WRP be, if any other section of the ICFI publicly discussed with revisionists, Stalinists or members of the Green movement?

Having closely watched Comrade Slaughter's actions during the last six weeks I am more and more convinced, that he follows his own political course, which he does not intend to discuss with anybody, thereby using the political confusion prevailing in the WRP after the expulsion of the Healy group to break it up.

It is a course of liquidating the WRP into a "broad left," which would become indispensable for the bourgeoisie to control the working class, should a Labour or Labour coalition government come to power. In this way the conditions for a popular front type formation emerge.

This is not a repudiation of the political degeneration that took place under Healy's leadership, but a continuation in another form. As before, none of these things are discussed in the ICFI. The WRP establishes its own relationships and presents them to the IC after the fact.

I therefore call urgently on the CC of the WRP to instruct Comrade Slaughter to put his political position openly before the next ICFI meeting, scheduled for December 16, 17. I also call on you to repudiate the positions put forward on the meeting on November 26 and to confirm your agreement with our history of struggle against revisionism, as contained in the seven volumes of *Trotskyism vs. Revisionism.*

I would like to remind you of the ICFI resolution of October 25, which was adopted unanimously by the Central Committee of the WRP and which said: "Involved in the struggle against the anti-party Healyite renegades are all the achievements made in the decades-long struggle to build the Trotskyist movement in Britain and internationally. None of these gains would have been made without the protracted and difficult struggle against Stalinism and Pabloite revisionism in which the leadership of the WRP and its predecessor the Socialist Labour League played the decisive role. All the sections of the ICFI were formed as a result of the struggle by the British comrades against the attempt of Pabloite revisionism to liquidate Trotskyism."

The defence of the ICFI, its history and principles is — despite many differences on minor questions which undoubtedly exist — the most fundamental question of all and the only basis on which the present crisis can be overcome.

The ICFI statement on the expulsion of Healy stated: "In expelling Healy the ICFI has no intention of denying the political contributions which he made in the past, particularly in the struggle against Pabloite revisionism in the 1950s and the 1960s. In fact, the expulsion is the end product of his rejection of Trotskyist principles upon which these past struggles were based and his descent into the most vulgar forms of opportunism."

And we warned: "Those like Healy who abandon the principles on which they once fought and who refuse to subordinate themselves to the ICFI in the building of its national sections must inevitably degenerate under the pressure of the class enemy. There can be no exception to this historical law."

After having expelled Healy and the Pabloite degeneration he represents, we certainly don't intend to liquidate the struggle against Pabloism and all the revisionist sects ourselves.

I am writing this letter to you as an IC delegate. I have discussed it in the Central Committee of our section, which fully approves its content.

Yours fraternally,

Peter Schwarz

cc: to all IC delegates

"Nothing to hide...or fear"

News Line Comment by Geoff Pilling

December 6, 1985

The bogus *News Line* put out by the Healy-Redgrave rump group carries an editorial in its issue of Wednesday, December 4 dealing with the public meeting held by the Workers Revolutionary Party at Friends Meeting House on Tuesday, November 26.

The WRP called this meeting to explain the circumstances in which Gerry Healy, the former leader of the Party, had been expelled from the movement.

Healy was expelled for systematic sexual abuse of female comrades in the Party, for the use of physical violence against Party members and for slander against David North, leader of the American Workers League, a sympathizing section of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

Healy had accused North of being a CIA agent. This accusation was later withdrawn unreservedly by the Political Committee of the Workers Revolutionary Party.

Some members of the rump claim that these charges against Healy were lies, despite the fact that neither they nor anybody else in the Party denied them before the split and despite the fact that Healy himself gave a written undertaking to the Political Committee that he would cease these practices. This undertaking was subsequently broken.

Other of Healy's apologists maintain that his sexual abuse and resort to violence were "personal" matters, the result of some eccentricity on Healy's part.

They were nothing of the sort. Morals just as much as politics are an expression of the class struggle.

These gross abuses by Healy of his position of leadership and authority in the movement were symptomatic of a deep political degeneration in the party.

These matters are of concern not just for the Workers Revolutionary Party. They are issues vital to the future of the whole working class in Britain and internationally.

The Transitional Program — the founding document of our movement written by Trotsky in 1938 — states that "The world political situation as a whole is characterized by a historical crisis of leadership of the proletariat."

Healy's degeneration cannot but be of the utmost importance for the whole of the world movement, given his position of central leadership in that movement over several decades.

The Workers Revolutionary Party now has a historical responsibility to the working class as a whole to reveal all aspects of the party's crisis and to begin to make an honest objective assessment of its material roots. It is a responsibility we intend to discharge.

So when comrade Cliff Slaughter said at the meeting "We are at the beginning of an objective analysis, and all those who wish to really learn the lessons can certainly participate" that is precisely the point we are at.

It is no accident that Mitchell should take such exception to this statement.

Since he was charged, Healy has disappeared. He not only refuses to face the Workers Revolutionary Party. He cannot appear in public. He cannot make a public statement answering the charges made against him. He is not even available to his own rump organization.

This is because he knows that the charges are true in every particular.

Mitchell claims to be outraged at Alan Thornett's presence at our meeting. Thornett was expelled from the Workers Revolutionary Party in 1974.

Like many before and since, he was framed by Healy and expelled bureaucratically.

His "crime" was to raise a series of political differences with Healy inside the Party. These differences were never honestly discussed and evaluated in the movement and no real political capital was accumulated from the experience. (See the letter in the *News Line* December 3 from comrade Cyril Smith who was chairman of the fraudulent control commission which engineered Thornett's expulsion.)

Thornett, like Robin Blick and Mark Jenkins and all those who were victims of Healy's arbitrary and anti-communist methods, has every right to take part in the public discussion of the history of the movement which we are now organizing.

This in no way implies that we have political agreement with any of those concerned. It is a cheap slur, typical of the Healy method, that Mitchell should imply that this is the case.

Monty Johnstone was also present at the meeting. Johnstone is a notorious Stalinist, in the past an enthusiastic defender of the Moscow Trials and the methods of Stalin. In telling us this Mitchell tells us nothing new.

But what he fails to mention is that the Communist Party is a part of the working-class movement. It was established in 1920-1921 as a member of the Third International. Its subsequent degeneration into a counter-revolutionary instrument was part of the crisis which eventually destroyed the International as a revolutionary force.

Trotsky stood always for the fullest discussion in public about the unfolding struggle against Stalinism. The question

of Stalinism, like that of every form of revisionist attack against Marxism, is the property not just of Trotskyism but of the whole working class.

We have absolutely nothing to fear from the most open and wide-ranging discussion with Stalinism. Indeed we have everything to gain. For it is only on the basis of such a discussion of all the political and historical questions involved that we can really educate the movement and clarify the best elements coming forward in the struggle for socialism.

This was not Healy's method. He always prided himself on having led the struggle against revisionism. Like most of his other claims this was a sham. Spying, frame-ups, expulsion and slander increasingly replaced any principled struggle or discussion within the working class movement. These methods virtually reduced the party to an opportunist sect. Healy's methods also explain why the theoretical and political level of the party fell to its present abysmally low level.

Two days after our meeting the Healy-Mitchell renegades held their own meeting at the Conway hall. On their platform was Lambeth Labour councillor Bill Bowring.

Until he went into hiding, Healy was by no means averse to such appearances and in the recent past shared many platforms with Labour Party members such as Ken Livingstone and Ted Knight.

Healy also spoke at the June 30 rally at Alexandra Pavilion with Mike Power of SOGAT, a prominent Communist Party member in the printing industry.

Not only this. It was Healy, enthusiastically backed by Mitchell, who defended the right of the Euro-Stalinists to maintain control of the *Morning Star*.

Since August 1914 social democracy has been a consistently counter-revolutionary force in the working class movement. It has been responsible for the death of countless revolutionary fighters and for the defeat of the working class in struggles in many parts of the world.

It has willingly collaborated with Stalinism in inflicting such defeats.

In the light of his comments on Johnstone how does Mitchell explain Bowring's appearance? Or Healy's past appearances? Of course he can have no consistent explanation.

The Workers Revolutionary Party is in no way in principle against participation on common platforms with either social democrats or Stalinists.

These are tactical matters, part of the struggle of the revolutionary party to find a road to the masses under conditions when they still remain tied to their old leaderships.

So we retract nothing about our public meeting. We intend to carry out a systematic investigation of every aspect of the movement's history, from the time of Trotsky's death onwards.

We believe that this will strengthen the whole movement immeasurably and lay the basis for repairing the great damage inflicted on the party by Healy's methods. We again repeat: any comrade who wishes honestly and truthfully to take part in this discussion is invited to do so either in writing or by other means.

Unlike Healy and his clique, we have nothing to hide and nothing to fear.

Letter from the Workers League Political Committee to the Workers Revolutionary Party Central Committee

December 11, 1985

Dear Comrades:

The Political Committee of the Workers League has received Comrade Cliff Slaughter's eight-page type-set letter, dated November 26, 1985, to Comrade David North. We believe that this letter constitutes an unprincipled attack on the Workers League and the International Committee, and — when viewed within the context of other recent developments inside the British section — makes it all too clear that the long and protracted political degeneration within the Workers Revolutionary Party which produced the explosion in October has not been ended with the expulsion of Healy and the organizational split with his supporters.

During the past three months, the Workers League has stated repeatedly that the political crisis within the Workers Revolutionary Party can be overcome only through the closest collaboration of the British section with its international comrades. Unfortunately, after years of systematic miseducation under Healy there are many comrades within the leadership of the WRP who view the International Committee with contempt, and consider the appeals of the IC for genuine collaboration and consultation as an unwarranted intrusion into the life of the British section. References to the "subordination of the WRP to the International Committee" evoke a hostile response from some comrades. Of course, we are not dealing with the subjective weaknesses of individual members. The existence of powerful nationalist tendencies within the WRP is a political reflection of the historical development of the working class in the world's oldest imperialist country. Insofar as they are recognized and consciously fought these tendencies can be overcome, and the responsibility for waging this struggle falls upon the leadership of the Workers Revolutionary Party.

The great danger that we now confront is that anti-internationalism is being encouraged by the leadership. The national autonomy of the Workers Revolutionary Party is being counterposed to the authority of the International Committee as the leading body of the World Party of Socialist Revolution. This is the real meaning of Comrade Slaughter's assertion, in his letter to North, that "Internationalism consists precisely of laying down ... class lines and fighting them through." But by what process are these "class lines" determined? Does it require the existence of the Fourth International? Comrade Slaughter's definition suggests — and this is the explicit content of his entire letter — that any national organization can rise to the level of internationalism by establishing, on its own, the "class lines and fighting them through." In another passage Comrade Slaughter refers to the subordination of the national sections to the IC as "the necessary form of internationalist practice" while "The content of this internationalism reaches down to the fundamental questions on which we have expelled Healy and his followers." It may at first appear that this formulation is more orthodox, but, in fact, it reproduces the fundamental error of the first quotation. In the first quotation, internationalism consists in laying down class lines; in the second, it consists of reaching down to fundamental questions. The organizational structure of internationalism — the Fourth International and its International Committee — is presented as merely an empty form which imposes no definite obligations upon any national section once it "reaches down" and determines the "class lines."

This separation of the forms of internationalism (the International Committee) from its supposed content (the class line) is stated most explicitly by Comrade Slaughter when he declares: "The split, is **not** only over internationalism defined as subordination to the IC, but over the whole programmatic base of Trotskyism and the Marxism of Marx and Lenin which preceded it. At the very center is the theory of permanent revolution and the Transitional Program." This is an utterly abstract and ahistorical conception of the development of Marxism. The International Committee of the Fourth International is the historical embodiment of the "whole programmatic base of Trotskyism and the Marxism of Marx and Lenin." The subordination of national sections to the IC is the organized expression of their agreement with and defense of that program. Those parties which uphold Trotskyism as the contemporary development of Marxist principles and program are organized in the Fourth International and accept the authority of the International Committee. To base one's definition of internationalism on the separation of the program from its organizational expression is to adopt the standpoint of all those revisionist and centrist opponents of Trotskyism who deny the continuity of Marxism, embodied in the ICFI, in order to retain freedom of action within their national theater of operations.

Compare Comrade Slaughter's definition of internationalism ("laying down class lines and fighting them through") with that of Trotsky: "Internationalism is no abstract principle but a theoretical and political reflection of the character of the world economy, of the world development of productive forces and the world scale of the class struggle." *{Permanent Revolution,* New Park, p.9) Herein lies the foundation of proletarian internationalism and the necessity of its organized expression in the World Party of

Socialist Revolution. No national organization, no matter how loudly it proclaims its allegiance to Marxism, can develop and maintain a revolutionary perspective except through constant contact and collaboration with international co-thinkers. Democratic centralist discipline is an essential component of that collaboration. The statutes of the Communist International, far from being mere "forms," were indissolubly connected with the transition from free-competition capitalism to imperialism, the historical development of the proletariat and the international struggle against the social-democratic and reformist agents of imperialism within the workers' movement. They established the forms through which ideological and programmatic homogeneity of the revolutionary movement was to be sustained. This has been incorporated into the Statutes of the Fourth International. Those who rail against the subordination of national sections to the international movement upon which these statutes insist ignore the fact that the price of "independence" is subordination to the pressures of the national bourgeoisie and world imperialism.

This is no small danger in Britain. The defense of national autonomy against the discipline of the Fourth International has a long history within the British labor movement. It should hardly be necessary for the Workers League to call to the attention of the WRP the arguments advanced by Trotsky against the anti-internationalism of the ILP and the bogus internationalism of its London Bureau, led by Fenner Brockway. In opposition to the ILP, Trotsky wrote: "The International is not at all a 'form' as flows from the utterly false formulation of the ILP. The International is first of all a *program,* and a system of *strategic, tactical and organizational* methods that flow from it.... Without a Marxist International, national organizations, even the most advanced, are doomed to narrowness, vacillation and helplessness; the advanced workers are forced to feed upon surrogates for internationalism." *(Ibid.,* pp. 112-13)

No less relevant to the present crisis in the WRP and the International Committee is Trotsky's admonition to the Lee group in Britain (with which Healy was then associated) on the eve of the Founding Conference of the Fourth International. He was calling upon the Workers Internationalist League to accept the proposal of the International Secretariat for the unification of all Trotskyist groups in Britain. He explained that:

"The present conference signifies a conclusive *delimitation* between those who are really *in* the Fourth International and fighting every day under its revolutionary banner, and those who are merely *'for'* the Fourth International, i.e., the dubious elements who have sought to keep one foot in our camp and one foot in the camp of our enemies."

Replying to the refusal of the Lee group to accept the authority of the International Secretariat and end its independent existence, Trotsky warned:

"Under these circumstances it is necessary to warn the comrades associated with the Lee group that they are being led on a path of unprincipled clique politics which can only land them in the mire. It is possible to maintain and develop a revolutionary political grouping of serious importance only on the basis of great principles. The Fourth International alone embodies and represents these principles. It is possible for a national group to maintain a constant revolutionary course only if it is firmly connected in one

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organization with co-thinkers throughout the world and maintains a constant political and theoretical collaboration with them. The Fourth International alone is such an organization. All purely national groupings, all those who reject international organization, control, and discipline, are in their essence reactionary." *(Documents of the Fourth International,* Pathfinder, p. 270)

The fact that these fundamental conceptions are opposed by a substantial majority on the Central Committee reveals how little progress has been made in comprehending the social forces and political methods which underlie the degeneration of the Workers Revolutionary Party. Comrades have not yet made real advances in analyzing the process through which the WRP succumbed to the pressure of British imperialism and alien class forces, and turned its back on the conquests of the struggle against Pabloite revisionism. An increasingly one-sided preoccupation with finding immediate practical solutions to the political problems of the British section provided fertile ground for the development of increasingly opportunist practices and policies. Fundamental questions of principle came to be judged on the basis of their immediate "use value" for the work of the British section. In so far as practical gains could be derived from relations with the Arab bourgeoisie, the programmatic foundations of Trotskyism — such as the theory of Permanent Revolution — were looked upon with growing skepticism as old propagandist crotchets with no immediate relevance to the pragmatically-defined concrete tasks of "party-building."

The politics of the leadership grouped around Healy became that of a petty-bourgeois nationalist clique. The gradual revisions in the political line — the accumulation of almost imperceptible shifts in tactics, ever-so slight softening of criticisms, unexplained omissions in the party

press, unexpected faces on the platforms of our public meetings, etc. — assumed a systematic form, expressing a distinct turn by the WRP away from the struggle to establish the political independence of the working class on the basis of Trotskyism, the Marxism of today.

The organizational forms of this political deterioration were the inevitable expression of the change in the party's class line. A revisionist line could not be imposed "peacefully" upon a Marxist party. In one way or another the cadre — the leaven of past struggles — resisted the turn to the right. Hence the need for the degenerating leadership, conscious of the contradiction between the principles to which it still formally adhered and the opportunism of its practice, to subvert and destroy democratic centralism. Frightened by the political implications of any criticism, organizational measures against the membership replaced political discussion. A sort of subterranean civil war defined the relations between the petty-bourgeois clique and the party membership. Leadership was transformed into an almost institutionalized abuse of authority.

Within the International Committee, the political authority of the WRP and its leadership rested on their historical role in the struggle against Pabloite revisionism. The changes in the way that authority was exercised — at first serving as a means of educating inexperienced cadre in different countries and later on, with ever increasing arrogance and cynicism, becoming a means of subordinating the IC as a whole to the practical needs of the WRP — reflected the process of degeneration toward nationalist opportunism. Healy's contempt for the small sections of the International Committee — to which he referred not infrequently as "Trotskyite groupos" — expressed his growing disdain for the traditions of the Trotskyist movement.

Within the International Committee the British leadership sought to protect itself against political criticism through dishonest and vile organizational methods. It functioned as a law unto itself. While Comrade Slaughter "looked after" the interests of the WRP within the IC and maintained the facade of internationalism, the real foreign policy of the British section was conducted by Healy and Mitchell. Political alliances with bourgeois states were formed behind the back of the International Committee. Healy maintained an extensive correspondence with bourgeois nationalists within the Middle East which was never shown to the delegates of the IC. The financial aspects of the private wheeling and dealing were likewise kept secret from the international movement.

This was all part of a reactionary method of work through which the details of the political and organizational life of the Workers Revolutionary Party were systematically misrepresented to the sections of the IC. In so far as the WRP leadership provided information on its work within Britain, it was only to report astonishing achievements. These were counterposed, at virtually every meeting of the International Committee, to the pressing problems of the sections. From the WRP delegates the IC received glowing reports of a daily circulation of 17,000 copies of *News Line*, a dues-paying membership of nearly 10,000, apparently growing by the hour, expanding influence within the trade unions and labor movement, and immense financial resources. Not once did a single delegate from the WRP suggest to the International Committee that the internal life of the British section and its apparent gains differed in any way with the reports provided by Healy. There was, according to Healy, nothing the WRP had to learn from the sections of the International Committee, which had neither daily papers, thousands of members, nor impressive bank accounts.

And yet, without suspecting that the WRP leadership was lying about its organizational gains, questions about the political line and theoretical method of the British section began to be raised within the International Committee. These differences reflected the struggle of class forces within the Fourth International. The issues raised by the Workers League expressed the opposition within the International Committee to the pressures of imperialism on the Fourth International manifested in the political line of the Workers Revolutionary Party. It was an opposition to the British section's ever-more explicit abandonment of the Trotskyist movement's strategical orientation to the international working class as the gravedigger of capitalism and the builder of a socialist society.

The bitter reaction of the WRP leadership to those criticisms, its attempts to suppress them, did not simply arise from the subjective motivations of Healy. The political line that had been developed over previous years had already become anchored in definite class interests. The drift toward centrism was objectively connected with developments within the class struggle internationally and sharp changes within the British labor movement. The intervention of the International Committee between 1982 and 1984 cut across these new relations, of a politically-centrist character, which were being developed by the WRP, not only with the Arab bourgeoisie but with the left-talking reformists in the Labour Party and TUC. That is why Healy could only respond to the proposals for discussion of differences by threatening to split with the Workers League. The fact that not one leader of the WRP was prepared to support the Workers League's call for a discussion must be interpreted politically as an expression of the enormous class pressures bearing down upon the WRP at that time. The nature of these class pressures may be grasped in a more concrete form when we consider that the IC meeting at which the WRP leadership suppressed discussion of the Workers League's criticisms came just one month before the start of the national miners' strike.

It is this class approach to political questions that Comrade Slaughter now wishes to avoid. He does not want to talk about objective class forces — especially where the issue of his own role in the leadership of the WRP and the International Committee is involved. He is all for accepting "responsibility" as long as it is shared equally by everyone else on the International Committee — thereby divesting this "responsibility" of any real content. In the end, there is only the maniacal Healy imposing his "will" on everyone.

In the aftermath of the split with Healy, Comrade Slaughter should be in the forefront of the struggle to reestablish internationalism in the British section. Unfortunately, he is working in the opposite direction, seeking to build up a "case" against the International Committee and convince members of the WRP that they should have no confidence in the Fourth International. Slaughter is determined to prove that the International Committee and all its sections are all infected by "Healyism," that the process of political degeneration is one and the same in all sections, and that the International Committee, rather than focusing

on the errors of the WRP, should subject itself to "self-criticism." Thus, he singles out for special praise the comrade who asked at the October Special Conference what Comrade Slaughter now glorifies as the "64,000 dollar question: 'All right, we can't have unconditional confidence in the WRP leadership; why should we have confidence in the IC?'" This question, on which Comrade Slaughter, to his shame as a Marxist, places such a high value, actually reflects the anti-internationalism cultivated by Healy.

Comrade Slaughter's criticism of Comrade North's speech to the Special Conference is bound up with an attempt to discredit the International Committee Resolution of October 25, 1985 which sought to end the reactionary nationalist autonomy of the WRP, made membership in the WRP conditional upon acceptance of the authority of the ICFI, and established internationalism as the fundamental basis for the regeneration of the British section. The Resolution thus defined the fundamental historical principles at stake in the struggle within the Party.

Attacking North's speech, Slaughter writes: "I suggest to you that your long speech at the first session of the WRP Special Congress on October 26th requires a very thorough criticism and self-criticism, and that it contains dangers, because it is very one-sided and misleading. It is indeed one-sided and misleading to such an extent that it tends to guide comrades into a much too easy and simple understanding of what is involved in the degeneration of Healy and Healyism and their effects on the WRP and the IC. It gives a picture of a WRP and WRP leadership corrupted to such an extent by Healy that no one in the WRP could or would raise a criticism of Healy's anti-Marxist writings and practices, while D. North, on the other hand, had, since 1982, taken up **arms or correct positions against** Healy. If **such a** false **pic**ture is allowed to go unquestioned, we shall never understand and overcome the real process of degeneration of which Healy was the arch-representative. I propose therefore to take up your speech point by point."

We regret that it is necessary, in reply, to expose Comrade Slaughter's criticisms point by point. But as Trotsky once explained, honest information is the precondition for political discussion. The history of the communist movement has demonstrated again and again the political damage that can be done by misinformation and half-truths. The use of such unworthy methods can do real damage inside the WRP where there are many comrades who, despite their devotion to Trotskyism, have been denied the possibility of acquiring any knowledge of the political life of the World Party. He is seeking to exploit this lack of knowledge to foment hostility toward the IC. Toward this end he twists facts and employs disorienting half-truths to confuse the cadre and make them suspicious of their international comrades.

Before proceeding to the most serious distortions of the historical record, let us first deal with a few minor points in the order which they appear in Comrade Slaughter's letter. First, Comrade North has never suggested that he was the only one who opposed Healy on political questions. There certainly were comrades within the WRP, including members of its Central Committee, who were prepared to take a principled stand. We have recently learned that Comrade Brendan Martin raised many of the same political criticisms which Comrade North had raised and at about the same time, in the fall of 1982. Between the time Comrade North

A WRP public meeting.

The British Miners' Strike of '84-85

first raised these differences in October 1982 and then was compelled to withdraw them in December 1982, Comrade Martin was expelled from the WRP. It now appears that Comrade Martin's expulsion was part of Healy's preparation for the fight against the opposition within the International Committee. We do not believe that Comrade Slaughter opposed this organizational suppression of Comrade Martin's criticisms. Unfortunately, the expelled comrade did not bring his case to the attention of the International Committee. Perhaps he was not able to do so.

We have also recently learned of the case of Comrade Stuart Carter, who was physically assaulted and expelled for opposing Healy this past June. Fortunately, this comrade's membership has been reinstated. We suspect that there are many other comrades who were dealt with in a similar fashion. Therefore, the criticisms which North made at the Special Congress were by no means directed against the WRP cadre in general. When he spoke of an unprincipled clique within the Political Committee, he was referring only to those who subordinated questions of Trotskyist principles to the pragmatic needs of the practical work within the British section. Comrade Slaughter was an important part of that clique leadership.

There is another small point that must be answered: Comrade Slaughter suggests that the discussion bulletin published by the Workers League containing documents relating to the differences raised by Comrade North between 1982 and 1984 is an incomplete record. He writes that "I hope that any future publication of your letters will include Banda's and my own, since our mistakes can then be used for the movement's education."

Allow us to point out that North's letter of January 23, 1984 to Comrade Banda was not a reply to any letter written by the latter. We had received none. As for the letter of December 27, 1983 to Comrade Slaughter, this was a reply to a letter from him which Dave North had received earlier that month. Since his letter quoted Comrade Slaughter's letter so extensively, we thought that the reproduction of the latter in the discussion bulletin would be superfluous. Comrade Slaughter visited our print shop in Detroit just prior to publication and North showed him the printed galleys and the table of contents. He indicated complete satisfaction with the arrangement of the material.

At any rate, if Comrade Slaughter believes that the documents which we included in the Workers League discussion bulletin comprise an incomplete record, he need only to publish Dave North's notes and the whole correspondence, which he has had in his possession since 1984, in the *News Line.* However, we have noticed that the *News Line* editorial board has chosen to publish all the documents relating to the struggle against Healy — including one written by Sheila Torrance — except those which are contained in the Workers League discussion bulletin. Thus, the only substantial critique of Healy's policies and anti-Marxist method has not been made available to the readers of the party's press. The leadership of the WRP prefers that the

role of the International Committee in the struggle against Healy not be known.

Now let us concentrate on that portion of the letter that constitutes Comrade Slaughter's principal and most consciously dishonest attack on Comrade North and the International Committee: that they were reluctant to carry through the struggle against Healy, that they failed to understand the real issues at stake in the fight within the British section, and that behind the formal slogan of internationalism they obscured the class lines being drawn by Comrades Banda and Slaughter against the minority.

Comrade Slaughter writes: "We must correct the impression that by October 19th or thereabouts you and other IC comrades were for a resolute break with the Healy anti-party group and that the WRP majority leadership was somehow resisting a truly internationalist understanding and treatment of the problem. As you know, as late as October 25th, the very eve of the Healyite rump's calling of a split conference, supported by leaders of the Greek and Spanish sections of the IC, you, together with comrades from Sri Lanka and Australia called for an approach which started from the perspective of uniting the Party."

He then goes on to stress that while Vanessa Redgrave had already resorted to legal actions, the resolution put forward by the International Committee (with the agreement of, the Peruvian and West German delegates, whom Slaughter fails to mention) stated that "All actions involving the use of bourgeois state agencies by members of the WRP against other members must be withdrawn immediately. All disputes are internal to the WRP and the ICFI and must remain so."

Comrade Slaughter then writes the following:

"As you know, WRP delegates on the IC (C. Slaughter, P. Jones, M. Banda) spoke out strongly against this clause. Our opinion (developed below) was that resort to the bourgeois state put an **unbridgeable** gulf between Redgrave & Co. and the WRP. That is a **class** line, and it is fundamentally wrong to ask that such actions be 'withdrawn' and 'discussion' for 'unity' resumed.... My position, as I clearly stated it, was that the IC should declare that such actions, together with those of Healy which brought his expulsion, and also crimes carried out through collaboration with the Iraqi regime and what lay behind them politically, should be **split** questions, and that the IC should issue an immediate statement to the WRP Special Conference to that effect, accepting as members of the IC section in Britain only those who accepted our line on this question. We voted for the IC Resolution because that was all we could get agreement on. I consider the resolution inadequate.... Because IC comrades were still toying with the possibility of 'the standpoint of the unity of the party' they restricted the conception of internationalism to the formula of subordination to the IC."

To answer this thoroughly dishonest account, it is necessary to reconstruct the events leading up to the Special Conference and split of October 26th.

On July 1, 1985, the WRP Political Committee was confronted with the Aileen Jennings letter which accused Healy of sexual relations with at least 26 female members of the WRP and international sections. With the support of Comrade Banda, the Political Committee began a cover-up that was to last for another three months. Though he claims not to have seen the letter, Comrade Slaughter was informed of the allegations upon his return to London from the United States on July 2nd. A meeting of the International Committee had been scheduled for the second weekend in July, immediately prior to Comrade Slaughter's scheduled departure to Greece for his summer holidays. This meeting was cancelled in order to conceal the scandal within the WRP leadership from the International Committee. However, the eruption of the financial crisis led Healy to summon the IC delegates to London in order to milk the sections for money. At a meeting chaired by Comrade Banda, false reports were given to the IC by Comrade Dot Gibson, Corin Redgrave and Healy. Pledges of 82,000 pounds sterling were obtained — nearly the entire financial reserves of all the IC sections. Not a word was said about the sexual scandal.

As it covered up the scandal from both the WRP membership and the International Committee, the internal relations within the Political Committee began to resemble that of an Italian court in the days of the Borgias. For Comrade Slaughter to suggest that the split took place under conditions where the political issues had been fought out within the WRP ("You should," he writes to North, "actually analyze and learn from the clarification already going on in the WRP **before** October 25.") is a grotesque mockery of Marxism. When Comrade North traveled to London during the weekend of September 14-15, there was no talk whatsoever of a split within the WRP leadership. In fact, Healy had been permitted to prepare "lectures" for an international school despite his supposed retirement. He made use of the opportunity to organize a split within the International Committee. Moreover, when Comrade North arrived in London and learned for the first time of the Jennings allegations, Comrade Banda was still opposed to a control commission. Moreover, he was then in an alliance with Sheila Torrance.

Even as late as the weekend of October 5-6th, when Comrade Slaughter came to the United States to meet with the Central Committee of the Workers League, it was still not clear that the WRP leadership intended to move for the expulsion of Healy. Precisely because there was no indication that further organizational measures were contemplated within the WRP, the Workers League did not press for an immediate meeting of the International Committee at that point. We believed that it would be possible to wait until early November, and agreed with Comrade Slaughter's suggestion that Comrade North should undertake to contact different sections and report to them on the crisis within the WRP. The purpose of such reports was not to line up support for any faction within the WRP; but to help prepare a meeting of the International Committee in which all sections could send delegations that would be prepared for the most exhaustive discussion. Indeed, there was still no official division between a majority and minority within the leadership of the British section and Comrade Slaughter specifically stated that he was visiting the Workers League not as a representative of the Workers Revolutionary Party but as the secretary of the International Committee. He even stated that he did not believe that a majority of the Central Committee would have endorsed his trip to the United States, so strong were the anti-internationalist tendencies within the party. In fact, the Workers League paid for his trans-Atlantic fare.

It was only during the days that followed Comrade Slaughter's return from the United States that the factional

struggle within the WRP exploded. The now famous "walk-out" — which gave Healy's supporters on the Political Committee the full run of the center and enabled Vanessa Redgrave to steal the documents that she then used to launch her court suit — occurred on October 10th. It was on that afternoon that Comrades North and Rippert, who had just arrived in London, learned that Mike Banda intended to move a motion at the upcoming Central Committee for the expulsion of Healy. They were also told by Comrade Banda that he intended to move the expulsion of all those who opposed this resolution.

Both Comrade North and Comrade Rippert were totally opposed to such an organizational settlement with supporters of Healy on the Central Committee and immediately contacted Comrade Slaughter to protest this course of action. As Comrade Slaughter hopefully will recall, he expressed agreement with their opposition and accepted their proposal for an immediate discussion in Leeds. In the course of their discussions with Comrade Slaughter, which began at 4:30 AM on the morning of October 11th and lasted throughout the day, an agreement was arrived at: Comrade Slaughter would oppose any resolution for the expulsion of Torrance and other supporters of Healy on the Central Committee and would demand that they be given minority rights. The basis of this agreement was the recognition that involved in Healy's abuse of cadre, which fully justified a motion for his expulsion, was an enormous political degeneration of the Workers Revolutionary Party and the greatest crisis in the International Committee since the split with the SWP in 1963.

In the course of the day, the discussions between Comrades North, Rippert and Slaughter were joined by Comrades Dave Hyland and Dave Temple. At every point the international implications of the struggle within the WRP were stressed. Comrade Slaughter emphatically agreed with the comrades from the IC. Indeed, Comrade Slaughter opposed Comrade Banda's plans for mass expulsions and prevailed upon him to accept the establishment of minority rights. On the morning of October 12th, prior to the scheduled meeting of the Central Committee, Comrade North — at the request of Comrade Slaughter and Comrade Banda — spoke to rank and file WRP members to explain why the struggle for political clarification required that the conditions be created for the fullest discussion within the party and that organizational measures be avoided. This was understood and accepted by virtually all the Party cadre who attended the two meetings at which these issues were discussed. Thus, at the Central Committee that was held that afternoon and into the following day, Healy was correctly charged and his supporters were guaranteed minority rights.

At no time during that weekend did Comrade Slaughter suggest that the international comrades were evincing political weakness toward Healy and his supporters. He gave the appearance of agreeing with the proposition that by granting the minority the rights specified by the constitution, the conditions would be created for the rapid exposure of Healy's supporters and a real clarification of the political issues. This approach was vindicated in subsequent developments. Unwilling and unable to discuss their real politics in front of the membership, the minority escalated its provocative actions against the WRP. It boycotted the Central Committee meeting of October 19, 1985 at which Healy refused to attend to answer the charges against him and was rightly expelled.

As Comrade Slaughter claimed to understand, the struggle within the WRP had international ramifications. So rapidly had the inner-party crisis developed in mid-October that the motion for the expulsion of Healy had been voted prior to any formal meeting of the IC. Let us state for the record that the Workers Revolutionary Party Central Committee had the right to move and carry through the expulsion without the explicit authorization of the International Committee. But it must be bluntly said that these conditions were the direct product of the squalid behavior within the WRP Political Committee during the previous three months: the cover-up of Healy's abuses, the intimidation of members who demanded a control commission investigation, the lies to the International Committee, etc. However justified Healy's expulsion — on this score we don't need to be lectured by Comrade Slaughter — it took place under conditions in which there had been no discussion whatsoever of the underlying political issues within the Party leadership, let alone within the WRP branches.

Moreover, the expulsion created a serious crisis within the International Committee. The fact that the WRP leadership was blind to the political consequences of the expulsion beyond the English Channel and the Irish Sea was itself a demonstration of its nationalist myopia. Without any information or political explanation, IC sections were suddenly confronted with the expulsion of the most well-known international leader.

This is why preparations were immediately begun, following the vote on October 12th, to summon a meeting of the International Committee on the crisis in the British section as quickly as possible. Comrade Beams of the Australian section and Comrade Balasuriya of the Sri Lankan section traveled to London during that week. The leaders of the Peruvian, Spanish and Greek sections were contacted and urged to come to London. Complicating the situation, however, was the fact that Savas Michael, the secretary of the Workers Internationalist League in Greece, was by now collaborating secretly with Healy to split the International Committee and working to block a meeting of IC leaders. Both the Spanish and Peruvian leaders were contacted by the WIL secretary, given false information, and urged not to attend any meeting of the International Committee not called by Gerry Healy.

On Sunday, October 20th, in the midst of these efforts to organize an IC meeting, Comrade North, who was then in Detroit, was informed by Comrade Banda over the telephone that the *News Line* — which had not been published for more than one week — would reappear the next day carrying a statement on the expulsion of Gerry Healy. This course of action was opposed by the Workers League Political Committee and by the IC delegates from Sri Lanka and Australia who were already in London. With an IC meeting only a few days away, it was felt that the WRP majority was obligated to consult with its international comrades prior to making the expulsion public. This opinion was communicated to Comrade Banda by Comrades Balasuriya and Beams. Comrade Banda then informed North that the statement would not be published until the IC met. That evening Comrade North flew to London.

On Monday afternoon, the 21st of October, the international delegates who were present in London were invited

by comrades at the center — all members of the majority — to attend a meeting at which a report would be made on the situation at the print shop in Runcorn. The delegates agreed, of course, to hear the report. In the discussion that followed the report, WRP comrades began to discuss the preparations for a split with the minority. It was at that point that Comrade North, with the agreement of all the international leaders, requested permission to withdraw from the meeting. He explained that the upcoming meeting of the IC had been called to hear a report from the British section, not to provide a stamp of approval for any faction; and that the IC was determined to have an objective discussion of the political crisis within the WRP. It was on this principled basis that Comrade North stated that the International Committee stood for the unity of the British section.

This marked a turning point in the relations between the WRP majority and the International Committee. It now became clear to Comrade Banda and others in the WRP majority that the IC was not going to be a rubber stamp for the decisions of any faction within the British section, and the domination of the IC by the WRP was being ended for once and for all. Moreover, the standpoint of the IC delegates — to maintain, if at all possible, the unity of the WRP and avoid a split — was totally correct. It has always been the tradition of the Marxist movement to oppose premature splits, i.e., those which precede clarification of the underlying differences on matters of political principle. Such a clarification had certainly not taken place within the WRP, regardless of the most recent alignment of forces on the Political Committee.

Above all, it was not at all clear that on the most decisive question of all — its attitude toward the International Committee — the position of the majority was different from that of the minority. When Slaughter speaks of "the Healy anti-party group," his standpoint is simply that of a national leader. Our starting point, however, is that of the World Party of Socialist Revolution. Those who refuse to uphold its authority, who place the immediate practical needs of a national section above those of the international working class and the world revolution, whose conscious leadership is embodied in the Fourth International, are anti-party. For the International Committee, the problem it confronted was not whether it was prepared for a resolute break with Healy and his supporters. Rather, it was whether such a break would enable the IC to maintain fraternal relations with any section of the Workers Revolutionary Party. That was our "64,000 dollar question."

Let us speak directly about the experience of the Workers League. Our party emerged directly out of the struggle against the abandonment of proletarian internationalism by the Socialist Workers Party. A small minority waged the struggle for the perspectives of the International Committee inside the SWP for nearly four years. In the interest of the international clarification of the Trotskyist movement, it resisted enormous pressures to either adapt to the Hansen leadership or split prematurely in response to bureaucratic persecutions. The IC faction led by Tim Wohlforth remained inside the SWP even after the 1963 reunification with the Pabloites, in order to continue the fight for internationalism. When the supporters of the IC were finally expelled, in June 1964, the break came not over a domestic issue but over the refusal of the SWP to tolerate discussion on the entry of the Ceylonese Pabloites into the Bandaranaike


Unanimous vote by WRP Central Committee

The News Line

G. HEALY EXPELLED

FRYSTON CHARGES DROPPED

NE pits to close

The *News Line* with the public statement on Healy's expulsion

coalition government — a world historical betrayal of Trotskyism. Later, prior to the formation of the Workers League, the American Committee for the Fourth International broke with Robertson's Spartacist tendency over the refusal of the latter to accept the authority of the International Committee. Robertson saw the Fourth International merely as an adjunct to his national activity. We continue to believe — though we are not sure that Comrade Slaughter does — that the break with the Spartacist League over this issue was absolutely principled and made it possible for the Workers League to break politically with the bankrupt milieu of petty-bourgeois American radicalism and to begin to develop as a revolutionary proletarian party.

In 1974 every single member of the Workers League stood with the International Committee against Wohlforth's rejection of Trotskyist principles. Permit us to remind our British comrades that Wohlforth's resignation on September 29th of that year was made in opposition to the intervention of the International Committee in the affairs of the Workers League. In answering Wohlforth's statement that the suspension of Nancy Fields was carried on the Workers League's Central Committee "only because of the intervention of the IC," Comrade Slaughter replied (in a later dated October 6, 1974):

"As a comrade who has had to fight against the anti-internationalism of Cannon and Hansen, then Robertson, you must surely pull up sharp when you re-read these words. With this phrase you lower yourself to the level of that narrow American pragmatism, which sees the International only as an appendage to your own immediate purposes. With such an appeal, you deny your own past struggles and appeal to the worst elements around the movement, and particularly to hostile groups waiting to attack and destroy it. Every rotten petty-bourgeois revisionist concentrates his attack on the alleged authoritarianism of the IC and defends

his national independence." *[Trotskyism versus Revisionism,* Vol. 7, p. 262]

How well Comrade Slaughter wrote 11 years ago! But, unfortunately, it is easier to condemn the nationalism of another section than it is to fight such a tendency within one's own.

We will now return to our narrative. The immediate response of the WRP majority leadership to the refusal of the International Committee to rubber stamp its decisions was one of unconcealed hostility. Delegates representing four sections of the International Committee were thrown out of Comrade Banda's house on the evening of the 21st, and they had to obtain hotel accommodations in London at considerable expense. The WRP majority then decided to go ahead with the publication of its statement on the expulsion of Healy prior to any meeting of the International Committee. On Tuesday, October 22nd, IC delegates representing these four sections wrote the following letter to Comrades Slaughter and Banda:

"A meeting of the International Committee of the Fourth International is scheduled to meet tomorrow morning in London. It has been summoned by the Secretary of the International Committee on an emergency basis to hear a report from the British section on the expulsion of Healy by the Central Committee of the WRP last Saturday, October 19, 1985.

"All the sections of the International Committee have been duly and properly informed of the scheduled meeting and adequate time has been given to permit all section delegates to attend the meeting. The North American section has made available to the Peruvian delegate a pre-paid air ticket.

"Delegates representing an absolute majority of the sections (those of Sri Lanka, Germany, North America, Australia and Britain) are already assembled in London. The International Committee meeting must go forward as scheduled, at 10:00 a.m., October 23, 1985, in London.

"As this emergency meeting of the IC is now less than 24 hours away, the undersigned delegates request that the Workers Revolutionary Party postpone a public announcement of the expulsion of Healy for one additional day, until the IC hears the report from the British section."

This request, which was read over the telephone to the WRP at 11 in the morning and presented in writing two hours later (giving the *News Line* staff plenty of time to prepare another lead story), was simply ignored. The delegates did not even receive a formal reply. When this letter was read over the phone to Comrade Slaughter in Leeds, he claimed that it might not be possible to stop publication because the Runcorn Occupation Committee would not tolerate any delay. In fact, members of the Committee later told IC delegates that they would have certainly responded favorably to an appeal from the International Committee.

The statement actually published by the Workers Revolutionary Party was devoid of any serious political content. Aside from announcing the expulsion, it provided no clarification of the issues underlying the crisis in the WRP. Its statement on the political questions was confined to the declaration that "The Central Committee will continue to investigate the circumstances and a fuller explanation will be given." The statement then added that: "We have a duty to the International Committee of the Fourth International, to the Trotskyist movement and the working class to expose and explain this situation, and give them the full benefit of this investigation." This last declaration would have carried greater weight if the publication of the expulsion statement had been held until after the International Committee met with the British section.

Without the participation of the British section, the remaining IC delegations (including the Peruvian delegate, who had arrived early on Wednesday morning, October 23rd) drafted a statement on the expulsion of Healy from the WRP. In contrast to the statement of the British section, it provided, however limited, an analysis of the political and social roots of Healy's degeneration. It explained:

"In expelling Healy the ICFI has no intention of denying the political contributions which he made in the past, particularly in the struggle against Pabloite revisionism in the 1950s and 1960s. In fact, this expulsion is the end product of his rejection of the Trotskyist principles upon which these past struggles were based and his descent into the most vulgar forms of opportunism.

"The political and personal degeneration of Healy can be clearly traced to his ever more explicit separation of the practical and organizational gains of the Trotskyist movement in Britain from the historically and internationally grounded struggles against Stalinism and revisionism from which these achievements arose.

"The increasing subordination of questions of principle to immediate practical needs centered on securing the growth of the Party apparatus degenerated into political opportunism which steadily eroded his own political and moral defenses against the pressures of imperialism in the oldest capitalist country in the world.

"Under these conditions, his serious subjective weaknesses played an increasingly dangerous political role."

In another passage the statement warned: "Those like Healy who abandon the principles on which they once fought and who refuse to subordinate themselves to the ICFI in the building of its national sections must inevitably degenerate under the pressure of the class enemy.

"There can be no exception to this historical law."

The contrast between the two statements simply underscores the importance of the intervention by the International Committee. Despite Comrade Slaughter's insinuations, the International Committee understood the significance of Healy's actions and recognized that the overwhelming majority of healthy forces within the WRP, especially its vital proletarian core, supported the expulsion. Nor was it indifferent to what Comrade Slaughter refers to as "The position inside our own ranks. The exposure of Healy had exploded so violently in the membership that a real rebellion had erupted, including the occupation and shutdown of our print shops."

What Comrade Slaughter fails to mention is that this situation was the product of the unprincipled cover-up in which Comrade Banda and other leaders of the WRP majority had participated throughout the summer. The form of the explosion within the WRP was determined by the absence of any struggle for a Marxist program by any section of the leadership over many years. This is why the IC felt that its fundamental responsibility was to fight for political clarity within the WRP. This could not be achieved by simply sanctioning a split.

The IC finally met on Friday, October 25th, in Bradford. There were six sections present. (Of course, the Workers League is a "section" only in the sense that it is in political solidarity with the IC and functions within the world movement within the legal limits established by the reactionary Voorhis Act.) The Greek and the Spanish leaderships refused to attend despite direct appeals from all the other delegations. In his report to the International Committee, Comrade Slaughter offered no political analysis of how this degeneration had developed within the WRP. His position was that the split was simply over the question of Healy's sexual abuses. When Comrade Banda was asked to offer an explanation, he refused with the words: "Don't preempt me; I'm still thinking." With the Special Conference little more than 24 hours away, the WRP leaders had nothing to say on the political questions underlying the explosion in the WRP and did not even have a single programmatic statement to present to the International Committee.

The delegates from the five other sections insisted that the crisis within the WRP had exposed the degeneration of its entire leadership, and that the survival of this organization as a section of the International Committee was now at stake. The International Committee rejected the claim by three of the four WRP representatives that the immediate factional line-up within the British section could be accepted at face-value as a decisive demonstration of principled differences. (It should be noted that Comrade Slaughter refers only to himself, Comrades Jones and Banda as the delegates from the British section. He neglects to mention Comrade D. Hyland, the fourth WRP delegate, who spoke strongly against the report given by Slaughter.) To claim, as Banda and Slaughter did, that the issue before the IC was "for or against rape" was to insult the whole world Trotskyist movement, including the membership of the WRP. The international delegates insisted that the crisis within the WRP was the outcome of a nationalist opportunism which rejected the struggle for the World Party of Socialist Revolution and used the Fourth International as a means of satisfying the needs of the British section. The IC pointed out that the behavior of the WRP majority during the previous week — its refusal to consult with the IC and its unconcealed hostility toward its delegates — indicated that the majority shared the same anti-internationalism of those supporting Healy.

As for Comrade Slaughter's claim that the IC refused to recognize that "collaboration with the Iraqi regime" should be the basis of a split, the delegates replied that it would be politically dishonest to single out members of the minority for a policy that had been carried out by the entire leadership. After all, when the Workers League had raised the issue of the execution of Iraqi communists on the International Committee in February 1984, Comrade North was opposed by Comrade Slaughter. If the policies of the WRP in relation to Iraq were to be made issues upon which a split was to be immediately carried out, the IC would have been obliged to break not only with Mitchell but with Slaughter and Banda as well. Moreover, the execution of Iraqi communists was not the only instance of a gross betrayal of Trotskyist principles. At the IC meeting of February 1984, the Workers League was specifically denounced for having published a lengthy statement condemning the persecution of Tudeh party members in Iran. We believe as well that the line laid down by the WRP on the Iran-Iraq War has implicated the entire IC in a terrible betrayal of the Iranian and Iraqi working class. We might also speak about the uncritical coverage of the Lancaster House talks, which led to the betrayal of the Zimbabwean masses. The IC insisted that the correction of these errors required a serious and objective analysis, not organizational scapegoating by those anxious to cover up their own tracks.

The IC delegates made it absolutely clear that they were not going to provide unprincipled backing for Comrades Slaughter and Banda; and that the precondition for further collaboration between the Fourth International and the WRP would be the explicit acceptance of the authority of the International Committee. The IC was prepared to collaborate loyally with all those within the WRP who accepted this internationalist standpoint — both majority and minority — and work for the unity of the British section on the basis of a principled discussion of all political differences. The IC emphasized that acceptance of this proposal would itself be a crucial test of the political character of both factions and their leaders. The international delegates then produced the two resolutions which had been prepared prior to the meeting. The first announced the endorsement of Healy's expulsion from the WRP. The second resolution analyzed the crisis in the British section and put forward concrete proposals for overcoming it and avoiding, if possible, a split.

Let us quote several passages:

"At the root of the present crisis which erupted with the exposure of the corrupt practices of G. Healy and the attempt of the WRP Political Committee to cover them up, is the prolonged drift of the WRP leadership away from the strategical task of the building of the world party of socialist revolution towards an increasingly nationalist perspective and practice...

"In the past the WRP has correctly urged its international comrades to always begin from the needs of the world party and not from narrow national considerations.

"Now the ICFI calls on all leaders and members of the WRP, whatever their legitimate differences on perspective and program, to subordinate themselves to the discipline of our international movement and uphold its authority.

"If this is not done, there is the imminent danger of a split without clarity on issues of principle and programme. Such a split would severely weaken the Party and create the conditions for provocations against the WRP and other sections of the ICFI.

"Certainly the section which has played the leading role in exposing the activities of the agencies of imperialism and Stalinism in the Trotskyist movement cannot be unmindful of the dangers inherent in the present situation.

"Political differences should be neither suppressed nor concealed. They exist and must be openly and fully discussed in a Party united under the leadership of the ICFI and the Central Committee of the WRP. In this way the cadre of the WRP and the entire international movement can be educated and the present crisis overcome in a way which will bring gains for the ICFI as a whole."

One month later, Comrade Slaughter demagogically attacks this resolution, thus exposing the fact that his participation in the IC meeting and his support for the Resolution was simply an unprincipled maneuver. His claim that "We (i.e., himself, Banda, and Jones) voted for the IC

Resolution because that was all we could get agreement on" is a political non-sequitur, because the Resolution made no concessions whatsoever to the position put forward by Slaughter, Banda and Jones at the start of the meeting: that the IC should rubber stamp a split with the minority. The IC Resolution instructed the WRP majority to prepare for the 8th Congress "starting with the circulation of documents by both the Majority and Minority tendencies."

As for Slaughter's argument that the Resolution was "fundamentally wrong" because Redgrave had already initiated a lawsuit against the WRP, this has no political weight whatsoever. First, as Slaughter must certainly recall, he began to shift his position in the course of the discussion of point 3 of the IC proposal: that "All actions involving the use of bourgeois state agencies by members of the WRP against other members must be withdrawn immediately. All disputes are internal to the WRP and the ICFI and must remain so." Though he now specifically attacks this proposal, claiming that it is impermissible "to ask that such actions be 'withdrawn' and 'discussion' for 'unity' resumed," — a position which we consider absurd — it was Slaughter himself who agreed, and then urged Banda to recognize, that an attempt should be made to see whether it would be possible to prevail on Redgrave, through the intervention of the leaders of the minority faction, to call off her legal action against the WRP. After the British delegates accepted the IC proposal, Slaughter and Banda contacted the *News Line* editorial office and instructed them to remove from the front page an article that had been prepared on the legal suit filed by Redgrave. With a substantial portion of the party's assets threatened, only a fool or worse would accept Slaughter's claim that, as a matter of principle, the IC should not have demanded the withdrawal of a legal action against the WRP.

At any rate, the issue is a cynical diversion. Anyone who reads the Resolution will understand that had the minority accepted its provisions, it would have been compelled to demand that Redgrave call off her attack on the Party. If she had refused, the minority would have had to support her expulsion from the WRP and then collaborate loyally with the majority to repulse her attack. Who in his right mind can claim that the IC Resolution, and specifically provision 3, failed to recognize class lines?

All this aside, the question of Redgrave was entirely secondary. The attempt of the IC to establish the conditions for a principled discussion within the WRP and to avoid a split if possible was absolutely correct. If Trotsky was correct to oppose a split with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union even after Stalin was driving his secretaries to suicide and arresting and shooting his supporters, and if he was correct to oppose a precipitous split with Burnham, Abern and Shachtman even after they rejected the defense of the USSR, the IC was correct to strive to establish a principled line of struggle within its British section without being unduly distracted by the actions of Redgrave. The International Committee was not, as Comrade Slaughter suggests, "toying" with unity. It was fighting for the political clarification of the British section and the entire world movement.

The llth-hour decision of the British section to accept the terms of the Resolution was warmly welcomed by the International Committee. It was seen as an important first step toward breaking with the anti-internationalism of Healy and toward genuine collaboration with the Fourth International. It was agreed that Comrade North should contact a representative of the minority faction the following morning, October 26th, and put the agreement before them. If they were prepared to discuss the proposal, a further meeting was to be held between representatives of both factions under the auspices of the International Committee.

As arranged, Comrade North contacted Ben Rudder of the minority faction at 7:45 AM. He informed Rudder that the majority had agreed to an IC proposal that would guarantee the constitutional rights of the minority and allow the discussion to proceed within the Party. He stated that the International Committee would be on the premises of the London center from 10 AM on, prepared to meet with representatives of the minority to discuss the Resolution in detail. In conclusion, Comrade North said to Rudder: "We are assuming that you still consider yourselves members and accept the authority of the International Committee of the Fourth International." Rudder's reply was: "You shouldn't assume anything." That remark, and the events of the next few hours, demonstrated that the International Committee had correctly identified the fundamental issue within the WRP: **For or against the Fourth International!** The minority refused to meet with representatives of the International Committee. Here they exposed Healy's real line: rejection of the Fourth International. He and his coterie of petty-bourgeois nationalists will not accept the authority of an international proletarian party which they cannot control. Like all revisionists, they see in the program and principles of the Fourth International an obstacle to their centrist orientation to one or another section of the existing trade union, social-democratic and Stalinist bureaucracies.

The pro-Healy rump split from the WRP on the basis of a

Vanessa Redgrave

break with the Fourth International. Alex Mitchell showed up outside the London center not to meet with the International Committee, but rather to circulate the "communique" of the Greek and Spanish organizations which had refused to attend the IC meeting and fight for their positions within the Fourth International.

It is significant that Comrade Slaughter has comparatively little to say about this important part of the struggle within the International Committee. This is because a careful analysis of the issues raised with the Greeks and Spanish cuts completely across his attempts to belittle the issue of internationalism, a word and concept that Slaughter misses no opportunity to denigrate. It is too "formal" and "abstract." For example, Comrade Slaughter writes: "I do not accept that the relations between IC members in London on the one hand and the WRP CC members in London on the other are more decisive historically, more important, than the actual issues on which Healy was expelled." But raised in the question of relations between the IC and the WRP is the historical necessity of the Fourth International. Slaughter counterposes so-called "actual issues" to the principles upon which the Trotskyist movement is based. In doing so, he ignores the real political content of these "actual issues" and thus defends the anti-internationalism that characterized the degeneration of the WRP and ultimately produced the abominable organizational regime. The challenge confronting Marxists at every point in the class struggle — which finds its most complex though concealed reflection within the inner-party struggle — is to disclose the historical questions of principle that lie at the core of the so-called "actual issues."

While Comrade Slaughter is not prepared to accept that relations between the WRP Central Committee and the International Committee are not "more important" than the "actual issues" of rape and physical abuse, he holds a different position on relations between the International Committee and the WIL Central Committee in Athens.

Informing the Greek section of its suspension from the International Committee, Comrade Slaughter makes clear that the sole reason for this action was the refusal of the WIL to accept the authority of the International Committee, and not its opposition to the expulsion of Healy. Writing to the Greek section on November 11, 1985, Comrade Slaughter stressed that the WIL may "of course disagree" with the decision to expel G. Healy "and fight for your position within the ICFI." In other words, in relation to the Greek section, Slaughter places the central emphasis not on the "actual issues" of sexual abuse but on the fundamental issue of internationalism.

"The anti-internationalism which led to the refusal to attend the October 25 IC meeting must be rejected," wrote Comrade Slaughter. "If not, the WIL faces destruction as a Trotskyist party. The WIL is on the brink of announcing the 'transformation of the League into the revolutionary party.' Comrade Savas and the CC know that there are gigantic destructive dangers in founding a party on the unprincipled foundation of a break with internationalism. The very best interpretation which can be placed on Comrade Savas and the Greek CC's break with the IC is that they fear disruption of their work for the transformation into a party. Such a position, politically, means that internationalism, **the foundation of our movement in every country, is rejected in favor of immediate national concerns as perceived by the** WIL **leadership.** (Emphasis added)

"A party formed on this basis could never be a section of the World Party of Socialist Revolution, the Fourth International. It would attract all those petty bourgeois elements who reject our internationalist foundations. We urge you with all the force at our command to turn back from the path upon which you have embarked, to return immediately to the IC, and to conduct the work of founding the revolutionary party in Greece on this, the only principled basis."

This is the advice that Comrade Slaughter gives to the Greek section, whose leaders find common ground with Healy on the basis of opposition to internationalism. S. Michael is cynically exploiting the crisis within the British section to free the WIL from any international control and meet the demands of imperialism for a new "Hellenic" centrist party, tailored to the needs of the Greek petty-bourgeoisie, to bolster the crisis-ridden PASOK of Papandreou and block the development of Trotskyist leadership in the working class. For S. Michael, "subordination" to the International Committee means submitting the program of his organization to the scrutiny of Trotskyists. Slaughter correctly condemns this rejection of the Fourth International. As he has for many years, Comrade Slaughter is prepared to defend internationalism with all the strength he can summon ... outside of Britain and as long as it does not run counter to the immediate practical needs of the Workers Revolutionary Party.

Permit us to quote still one more passage from Comrade Slaughter's letter on the question of the events leading up to the split. He tells Comrade North: "I have said that I think your 'standpoint of the unity of the Party' in the week between Healy's expulsion and our Special Congress profoundly mistaken, because we had gone through intensive experiences in exposing the then minority. Because you did not share or study the implications of those struggles you draw the false conclusion that your search for an 'objective' demonstration of the correctness of the majority's position was finally successful in the October 25th resolution

Alex Mitchell

agreeing subordination of the WRP to the IC. This is not true. The WRP delegates would of course have agreed to such a formulation at any time, just as any other section would. Such a declaration does not and cannot 'objectively' decide anything whatsoever. I believe that you persisted in a dangerously over-formal line of 'let the differences come out and be clearly seen' long after the minority had actually gone to the State and had split. This formalism led you to give little importance to the really basic class questions of the split, so that you could seriously propose, as late as 25th October, that Redgrave withdraw from the court action and resume her minority rights! Only afterwards, when the discussion had exposed this argument, did you assure us that you meant it only to have a tactical role (defense of assets etc.)."

Far from this position being "exposed," it was supported by every IC delegate except Comrades Slaughter, Banda and Jones. Nor was the Resolution merely a "tactical" measure, though it is now clear that Comrade Slaughter's belated acceptance of the Resolution was simply a tactical maneuver in relation to the IC. But since the Special Conference opened on October 26th, he has been trying to undermine and discredit the Resolution. Why? Because he does not agree with the principled relation between the WRP and the International Committee defined by that Resolution.

Comrade Slaughter makes the claim that the International Committee and Comrade North "dangerously underestimated the real issues involved in the expulsion of Healy" and therefore present internationalism "in a formal way that obscures these issues." This is nothing but a demagogic attack on the refusal of the IC delegates to accept the claim that Healy's sexual practices are the fundamental issue involved in the split or the characterization of the Torrance-Mitchell-Redgrave faction as "near-fascist" or "neo-fascist."

It was not the International Committee that suppressed the investigation into the sexual abuse of cadre by Healy but the leadership of the WRP. The fact that an overwhelming majority of the Political Committee endorsed the suppression of the Jennings letter and that it was concealed for months from both the WRP Central Committee and International Committee demonstrates that neither the political nor moral implications of these practices were understood, and it tarnishes later claims that the split occurred over moral corruption. If the split was simply over rape, then how is it possible that it took such a long time to move against Healy on this issue? Why was Healy permitted to close the rally last August 18th which commemorated the 45th anniversary of Trotsky's assassination — six weeks after the Jennings letter came into the possession of the Political Committee? Why was he permitted to lecture at the International school, with IC delegates present, in late September — 10 weeks after the Jennings letter? Shortly before the school was to begin, just a few days after Comrade North had been informed by Comrade Banda of Healy's forced retirement (without the actual reason being given), the WRP general secretary called the States to find out how many Americans would be attending! The Political Committee refused to send anyone.

The Workers League maintains that the sexual abuse of cadre was a manifestation of the political degeneration of Healy and the Workers Revolutionary Party. The former was a derivative of the latter. No one is denying that the sexual practices are of political significance and that such abuses cannot be tolerated. As a matter of fact, Comrade Slaughter may recall that it was during his conversations with Comrade North in the United States in early October that the latter first defined these practices politically as an attack on the historically-assembled cadre of the Trotskyist movement. But to place all the emphasis on the "sex" question serves only to distract attention from the more essential issues of program, principles and method. The danger of such an approach is revealed in the December 3rd issue of *News Line*, which carries an article entitled "The deadly price of CORRUPTION." A series of disconnected incidents are pasted together, connecting such diverse figures as Maurice Thorez, Georges Marchais, Ernest Thaelmann, Walter Dauge and Raymond Molinier. In reference to Thaelmann, the article mentions a 1928 scandal involving the theft of party funds which was covered up by the leader of the German CP. In turn, Thaelmann's cover-up of his brother-in-law was sanctioned by Stalin. No doubt these unprincipled maneuvers were a reflection of the political degeneration of the Communist International. But what conclusions are drawn by the "special correspondent" who wrote the article? The victory of Hitler, he writes, "was the price that the German working class paid for the cover-up of Thaelmann in 1928. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that from a little corruption arose a massive defeat." As far as we are concerned, this conclusion is a grotesque exaggeration. The defeat of the German working class did not arise from "a little corruption" but from the growth of bureaucracy in the Soviet Union, based on the post-World War I defeats of the European working class which isolated economically backward Russia, the subsequent degeneration of the CPSU and the Comintern, and the disastrous policies imposed upon the German working class by Stalin. It appears that a new conception of history is being unveiled.

On the same page, immediately below this article on corruption, the *News Line* carries an interview with Tyrone Sullivan, a Labour Party member in South Wales. The article informs us that "Sullivan's feelings are that sexual abuse is the most fascinating and important topic in the working class movement and presents a greater danger of corruption — even more so than drug abuse — which is something which is affecting the whole movement." This interview is entitled "Morality and the Miners." Given the fact that Sullivan, a member of the Labour Party, is not asked about the present conditions facing the miners in the aftermath of the strike nor about his views on the policies of Kinnock, we find the title ironic. (By this we imply no criticism of Tyrone Sullivan, who is not responsible for the questions he was asked.)

As for Comrade Slaughter's continuing efforts to justify his characterization of Healy's supporters as representatives of a "neo-fascist tendency," we find this a truly deplorable departure from the Marxist method and the teachings of Trotsky. The method that describes Mitchell as a "near-fascist" is by no means superior to that which characterizes Thatcher as a "Bonapartist dictator." If, indeed, the Workers Revolutionary Party turns out to have been the breeding ground for a sizeable number of fascists — including one-third of its Central Committee up until mid-October — the International Committee could have nothing to do with such an organization. Moreover, if Comrade

Slaughter states, for once correctly, that "Healy and the WRP were a long way down a political path which has been well-trodden before: the path of Pabloite revisionism," how is this to be reconciled with the claims that the supporters of Healy adhere to "the very ideology which inspired Mussolini"?

The danger of replacing concrete analysis with factional hyperbole is revealed when he states: "They are close to every fascist position on the rights of human individuals, rights which for them are reduced to nothing by the requirements of the party." If Comrade Slaughter re-reads this passage carefully, he will notice its strong similarities with the anti-communist rhetoric of bourgeois liberals. What does he mean by the "rights of human individuals"? The confused non-class terminology demonstrates — and here we are being generous — that he has not thought his analysis through to the end and is working on the level of superficial comparisons and analogies. Moreover, the political logic of labelling Healy and his supporters fascists is to end all analysis of this tendency and the roots of its development within both the party and the working class. On this false basis, the real nature of Healy's political betrayal cannot be understood.

Comrade Slaughter's attempt to portray the IC as befuddled and indecisive, incapable of recognizing the essential issues, is directly contradicted by the statement made by Mike Banda to the Central Committee, in the presence of Comrade Slaughter, when he presented the IC Resolution to the WRP leadership and urged its unanimous ratification. Standing before the majority members of the CC on October 26th, Comrade Banda stated:

"I just want to make a few remarks. Comrade Dave North tried to contact all of the sections. The Greeks refused to come. The Spanish comrades took their phone off the hook. After discussing throughout yesterday we had a lot of disagreements, which were really misunderstandings which can be understood in dealing with the enormity of the crisis that we face. The IC sent a letter to me asking for a delay in publishing the statement on Healy's expulsion. We refused to consider it. But this did not prejudice the IC. The meeting yesterday discussed these questions. There, we concluded, after much discussion, that essentially due to the previous practice, the WRP looked upon the IC as an advisory body to rubber stamp decisions of the WRP. We had to reevaluate and reexamine the whole position of the WRP to the IC. We were holding the position of Healy which led to his destruction.

"For the first time we had to break free from these concepts which were bureaucratic, nationalist, and centrist, to subordinate ourselves to the decisions of the IC. From now on we intend to make it the construction of the IC and not just the WRP. If you look at the statement of the (pro-Healy) minority, it says nothing about the IC. It is a nationalist conception.

"I must pay a special tribute to comrades in the IC, we nearly came to blows at one point. This was the old conception when Healy said he was the IC and replaced the IC with himself. This was the reason for the expulsion of Mulgrew (from the Australian section) and the accusation that North is a CIA agent. The practice of the Greek and Spanish sections is a product of this degeneration.

"The exposure of this began in 1982. The critique of Healy's philosophy and the WRP's politics by the Workers League became the basis of the regeneration and rearming of the International. There was an objective logic to this process. Despite the suppression nothing could stop it. This includes the differences that arose over the Middle East, the Malvinas and Grenada. It was an international phenomenon. This is what led me to call Dave North and say 'Renew the Alliance.' It was not, in fact, an alliance. It involves the whole struggle of the world party. The development of dialectical materialism cannot be fought out on a nationalist basis.

"Before the IC meeting, we originally conceived of the conference today as being simply against the minority and its morals. But now I see that the decisive question is the International and how it functions. The International is not the summation of its parts. It is a body in itself. This is the fight of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky. We embody that. The rump group, however, does not recognize the foundations of the Fourth International.

"I want to commend Comrade Dave North and the American section. We could not have done this without their fight."

The resolution was carried unanimously by the Central Committee and then presented, in a slightly amended form which acknowledged the split which had occurred on Saturday, October 26th, to the Special Conference which passed it by an overwhelming vote.

Comrade Slaughter's Attack on the Workers League

In attempting to discredit the International Committee in the eyes of the WRP cadre, it is necessary for Comrade Slaughter to argue that an undifferentiated process of degeneration took place within each of the sections of the World Party. The claim that the degeneration of the IC sections paralleled and duplicated the processes within the WRP enables him to advise WRP members that it is "appropriate to ask, as one comrade did, is not mistrust in the IC equally justified?" As part of his dishonest efforts to undermine the internationalism of the WRP cadre, he singles out the Workers League for criticism and claims that Comrade North has failed to give a true account of his own degeneration and that of the American section.

We consider Comrade Slaughter's insinuations to be nothing less than a slander against the Workers League and the International Committee. Let us state as bluntly as possible that the practices and methods of work which have existed for years inside the WRP are unknown and unheard of inside the Workers League. When the Workers League removed Tim Wohlforth as national secretary in 1974, it put an end to the domination of arbitrary and subjective methods within its leadership. Neither Comrade North nor anyone else in the leadership of the Workers League is looked upon as infallible or omniscient. There is not a single leader who has not made his share of mistakes, and these are openly discussed within the appropriate committees of the Party, and, when necessary, in front of the entire membership. The constitutional rights of all members are respected. Since Wohlforth's resignation from the party, not a single member of the Workers League has been expelled or driven out of the movement because he or she expressed political differences with the Party leadership. Until recently, we believed that in upholding democratic centralism within the Workers League, we were simply following in the footsteps of the Workers Revolutionary Party. We had no way of

knowing — and this was a major point made by Comrade North in his speech to the WRP Special Conference — that a nationalist clique leadership within the British section was systematically covering up for Healy's organizational abuses. We had no way of knowing that Comrade Slaughter and others worked might and main for many years to present a false picture of what was actually taking place within the WRP. So for Comrade Slaughter to claim that North has been an "executor" of Healy's "policies and methods" is an abominable libel against the political integrity of the Workers League.

Comrade Slaughter refers to the decision of the Workers League to withdraw its differences in February 1984 under conditions in which, as Comrade Slaughter now admits, North was "presented with threats and ultimatums and the immediate danger of split. You said yourself that you then withdrew (February 1984) 'influenced' by these threats and by the fact that you still were influenced by the fact that you had always seen the US section as loyal to the WRP and the IC. You added that Mike Banda pointed out that if these criticisms were true then you would have to conclude that the WRP had degenerated into a full-blown revisionism, and so you pulled back."

As Comrade North explained at the Special Conference, Banda's remarks had an impact upon him precisely because the Workers League did not know what was taking place within the WRP and did not suspect that Banda and Slaughter were consciously misleading the International Committee. There should be no doubt about it: had either Comrades Slaughter, Banda or Geoff Pilling (who was part of the WRP delegation to the IC meeting of February 1984 and especially vitriolic in his attack on the Workers League) indicated the actual state of affairs within the WRP to Comrade North — not to mention stating that they agreed with his political report — the withdrawal of criticisms would never have been contemplated.

Comrade Slaughter continues: "My only point here — a major one, I think — is that this process that you went through has been true of many of us who have worked in the WRP and IC leadership. Opposition on any question brought bitter and ruthless attacks, and if comrades did not at a certain point agree to be wrong, or to put aside their criticisms, they faced only the prospect of isolation, expulsion, as you did. I do not believe that you were any less the victim of this than I, for example, was, and if I had persisted, on earlier occasions, with my criticism on perspectives or on philosophy you could until 1982 have joined in the attack mobilized by Healy."

We entirely reject the arguments presented above as both dishonest and cowardly. Let us point out to Comrade Slaughter that North did not withdraw his criticisms in 1984 to avoid "bitter and ruthless attacks" or out of fear of personal "isolation" or "expulsion." A "leader" who conceals his differences because of fear is not a communist. In terms of his personal position within the IC and his relations with Healy, North crossed the Rubicon when he put down his criticisms in writing and confronted Healy and the Political Committee of the WRP in October 1982. In February 1984, when the decision to withdraw the criticisms were made, North was acting in his capacity as the leader of the movement in the United States, responsible for the political future of the Workers League as well as the International Committee. The threat was not simply against North. Comrades Banda, Slaughter and Pilling made it clear that fraternal relations between the International Committee and the Workers League were about to be broken. A meeting of the Central Committee of the WRP had been called on Monday, February 13th, to authorize such an action.

The decision made by the American delegation to withdraw its criticisms may be legitimately criticized. But, in reply, let us note that there was not a single delegate from the other IC sections (the Australians, Sri Lankans and Peruvians were not present) who voiced agreement with even a single point made by North and the other comrades from the Workers League. The American delegates discussed at length amongst themselves the implications of a split, with the Workers League in a minority of one. Under these conditions, they decided against it. There have been other important occasions in the history of the communist movement when similar retreats were made to avoid a premature split. To those who argued categorically against the admissibility of such a retreat, Trotsky was wont to quote the Latin aphorism, "Long live justice, let the world perish!" But if the Workers League had known about the real situation within the WRP, there would have been no question of withdrawing any criticisms. Nor, we should add, would the Workers League have been a minority of one on the International Committee.

We must stress, however, that there is a fundamental difference between those who, on the basis of principled considerations, withdrew criticisms which had been put down in writing and forthrightly presented, and leaders such as Comrade Slaughter for whom concealing their own differences and denouncing criticisms made by others became a way of life. Comrade Slaughter claims that he faced the same situation which Comrade North confronted. We ask Comrade Slaughter to provide us with the record, if there is one, of his struggle against Healy within the WRP Central Committee during the last 15 years? We are not asking for private correspondence of which no one was told. Within the International Committee, for at least the last decade, there is absolutely no record of even the slightest disagreement between Slaughter and Healy. He suggests that Comrade North, prior to 1982, would "have joined in the attack mobilized by Healy" had you raised differences. Come, come, Comrade Slaughter. You have been viewed by every member of the International Committee for more than 20 years as the most erudite Marxist theoretician in the world movement. Had you simply gotten up at any meeting of the International Committee and said that you had serious disagreements with Healy's conception of dialectics, the floodgates would have been opened up. At the very least, comrades in every section — not to mention your own — would have been alerted and encouraged to examine Healy's method with a critical eye.

At the last meeting of the IC on November 5th, Comrade Slaughter indicated that his own role between 1982 and 1984 was not raised by Comrade North in his speech to the Special Conference. That oversight should now be corrected, for the role played by Comrade Slaughter in defending Healy and suppressing the criticisms raised by the Workers League was absolutely decisive.

In October 1982, when Comrade North informed Slaughter of his differences with Healy's *Studies in Dialectical Materialism* and asked him for his opinion, Slaughter replied, "I'm very suspicious of things I don't understand."

North outlined the content of his differences and asked Slaughter if he thought they were correct and whether they should be pursued. He replied that they were entirely legitimate differences, that he had long been concerned with the separation of the question of dialectical method from the development of historical materialism, and that these issues must be discussed within the International Committee. Slaughter did warn that he was not prepared to indicate the precise form that his intervention in the discussion would take. This last remark caused Comrade North to ask whether he would have Slaughter's support in raising these issues on the International Committee. Comrade Slaughter's reply was unequivocal. "Dave," he said, "I'm 55 years old and I've never pulled away from a fight."

But the next time Comrade North visited England, he encountered a very different Cliff Slaughter. Healy did not have the courage to personally defend his *Studies.* That task was assigned to the rest of the WRP Political Committee, whose members were joined by Slaughter and Pilling. Healy did not attend a single session of the two-day discussion. Slaughter intervened on the second day. He declared that he had been misled by North and that now, having had the opportunity to study the written notes, he wanted to correct the impression that he had any agreement with his criticisms. He warned Comrade North that the theoretical positions which were advanced in his critique of the *Studies* resembled those of Sidney Hook, the American pragmatist and leading Cold War anti-communist. Thus, it was Comrade Slaughter who took the lead in mounting the defense of Healy against North's criticisms.

Slaughter's collaboration with Healy against the Workers League did not end with that meeting. Throughout the next year, Comrade Slaughter intervened repeatedly to build up a case that the Workers League was abandoning the struggle for dialectical materialism. The central theme of his attack was that the Workers League was underestimating the importance of Hegel in the development of Marxism. This criticism was intended to reply to North's correct statement that Healy was "Hegelianizing" Marxism, i.e., that he was mystifying the dialectical method and reverting to subjective idealism.

In April 1983, for the first time in several years, Slaughter wrote a letter to Comrade North criticizing an editorial which had appeared in the *Bulletin* on the occasion of the centenary of Marx's death. This editorial, in praising Marx's contribution, had failed to mention the role of German idealism in the development of dialectical materialism. The Political Committee was surprised by the tone of the letter as it seemed that the slight mistake did not warrant such a major response. At any rate, with Slaughter's criticisms in mind, Comrade North spoke at length on the origins of Marxism at the May Day rally held in Detroit the next month. No written reply was sent to Comrade Slaughter as North expected to see him soon in Britain and intended to discuss the matter there. For various reasons, the scheduled meeting with Slaughter did not take place. But in meetings with Healy during the next few months, the subject of Slaughter's criticism never came up.

It was, therefore, with some astonishment that Comrade North reported to the Political Committee that he had received another letter from Slaughter, dated July 13, 1983, which stated:

"You will recall that I sent you a short letter, drawing your attention to certain sentences in a *Bulletin* editorial. This editorial wrote about Marx's theoretical contribution without the essential content of the dialectical method achieved by the 'negation' of Hegel's philosophy. Do I take it that you received this letter and that a reply can be expected?"

Comrade North responded to Comrade Slaughter, in a letter dated July 21, 1983, acknowledging the omission of reference to Hegel's role in the March editorial and thanking him for calling this to our attention. There was no further letter on this matter from Comrade Slaughter.

The next intervention by Comrade Slaughter was made at the IC meeting held in late October 1983. After Comrade North had spoken at length on the political situation in the United States, and explained in detail the reasons for the Party's decision to intervene for the first time in the US Presidential election with its own candidate, Slaughter attacked the report for failing to concentrate on the issue of cadre training on the basis of the dialectical method. This was followed by a denunciation by Comrade Banda of the position which the Workers League had taken on the US invasion of Grenada. On the basis of a casual glance at the headline of a single issue of the *Bulletin,* Banda claimed that the Workers League had failed to take a revolutionary defeatist position. Following the meeting, after taking the time to review the entire issue of the *Bulletin,* page by page, Comrade Banda retracted his criticism and offered to apologize to North in front of the International Committee.

Several weeks later, a letter from Comrade Slaughter arrived in the United States, reviving the false claim that the Workers League had abandoned the position of revolutionary defeatism. However, the most important aspect of this letter (to which Comrade North replied at length on December 27, 1983), was Slaughter's escalation of the factionally-motivated attack on the Workers League's supposed abandonment of the fight for dialectical materialism.

Once again recalling the editorial in the *Bulletin,* he claimed that the Workers League "had Marxist philosophy presented in a manner doctored to meet the requirements of American pragmatism." He accused North of concentrating "on matters of program to the exclusion of an explicit treatment of the struggle for the dialectical method in the day-to-day fight with the party cadre, and that this can only bring dangerous letting up in the conscious struggle against propagandism."

Slaughter asserted that North's "heavy emphasis of the 'political independence of the working class,' backed by a quotation from *In Defense of Marxism,* will become a weapon in the hands of all those who retain the mark of pragmatism, because it will be treasured by them as something more 'concrete' than the explicit struggle to develop and comprehend the categories of dialectics as a method for that life-and-death matter of grasping the rapid and all-sided developments thrown up by the world crisis." From there Slaughter proceeded to attack the position taken by the Workers League on Grenada and claim that it flowed from the rejection of dialectical materialism. Slaughter's arguments, as North explained in his reply of December 27, 1983, were right-wing and Pabloite in character.

Upon studying Slaughter's letter, it became clear that the differences between the Workers League and the Workers Revolutionary Party were of a fundamental character. What

was involved was not merely a different appreciation of Hegel's contribution to the development of Marxism — the position of the Workers League on this question had been, at any rate, shamelessly distorted by Healy and Comrade Slaughter — but a clash on the most fundamental issue of revolutionary strategy: the leading role of the proletariat in the socialist revolution. As North wrote to Slaughter: "I must admit that I am disturbed by the very suggestion that an emphasis on the 'political independence of the working class' could be characterized as 'very heavy' within the International Committee — especially in relation to the report from a sympathizing section in a country in which the working class has not yet broken politically from the liberals. All the organizational, political and theoretical tasks of a Marxist party — above all, in the United States — are directed precisely toward the achievement of this political independence."North pointed out that "the concept of the political independence of the working class... is under relentless attack by Stalinists and revisionists all over the world today."

Following a discussion on the Central Committee, at which Slaughter's criticisms were rejected, it was agreed that there had to be a discussion in the International Committee on the political line of the WRP and the world movement as a whole. That is why Comrade North drafted a letter to Comrade Banda calling for a discussion on the perspectives of the International Committee. This letter, dated January 23, 1984, stated:

"We feel that the basic problem is that the International Committee has not yet drawn up a real balance sheet on its work over the last eight years. Surely we cannot simply go from alliance to alliance without making an analysis of each concrete experience through which the International Committee has passed. Without such an analysis we will face greater and greater confusion which inevitably, if not corrected, will produce political disasters in the sections."

Two weeks later, Comrade North presented a comprehensive report, which had been prepared with the collaboration of the entire Workers League Political Committee, to the International Committee. This report, which at least some WRP members have now read thanks to the efforts of the comrades who participated in the Runcorn occupation, was rejected. By the time Comrade North formally presented his differences to the International Committee on February 11, 1984, a great deal of factional spade work had already been done by Comrade Slaughter. Further discussion on the IC and within the national sections was suppressed.

On February 14, 1984, just one day after the conclusion of this International Committee meeting, at which the Workers League was threatened with an immediate split unless it withdrew its criticisms of the political line and theoretical method of the Workers Revolutionary Party leadership, Gerry Healy wrote a letter to Cliff Slaughter, in which he congratulated the IC Secretary for the "good political job" that "was done last weekend ..." Though Healy had not attended the meeting, he boasted that "we are strong enough to ideologically rout our most important and powerful imperialist opponents."

Having identified the Workers League with US imperialism, Healy concluded his page-long letter with the following analysis: "We have avoided the split which was posed by the metaphysical pragmatists and established instead this new unity and identity of opposites, of which they are still part. We look forward to this state of affairs continuing, also if necessary, with no holds barred."

It is a measure of Healy's degeneration that he could speak of the "ideological rout" of an opponent whose criticisms could neither be objectively discussed nor answered in writing.

Two days later, on February 16, 1984, Comrade Slaughter replied [We quote the text in full]:

Dear Gerry

Thank you for your letter of February 14. I believe that what you say does penetrate more deeply to the essential content of what took place at the IC of Feb 11/12. The attack from the US Section has as its content the need of the imperialists to destroy the IC. To defeat this attack means that the dialectical materialist training of the cadre in the last period has indeed been in line with the needs created by the most fundamental processes of revolutionary change in the objective world. The objective necessity at the heart of this interconnection could not have been grasped so clearly and made consciously, the content of our response without the systematic work on Vol 14 and well as Vol 38.

Not only that: we have to understand as your letter says in conclusion, that the newly established unity and conflict of opposites is not a completed and self-contained process but develops always anew in interconnection with the world revolution of which it is a part. Hence we go forward 'also if necessary with no holds barred.'

Fraternally, Cliff

Exposed in Healy's letter to Slaughter and the IC Secretary's sycophantic reply is the political cynicism and total disregard for principles which characterized the WRP leadership's attitude toward the International Committee. When Healy crudely identified the Workers League with "our most powerful imperialist opponents," Slaughter neither protested against this slander nor did he point out the absurdity of maintaining a "unity and identity of opposites" with an organization so defined. He did not even suggest that the disputed issues expressed a legitimate difference within the Trotskyist movement. Instead, he fortified Healy's slander — which finally blossomed 16 months later into the allegation that Comrade North is a CIA agent — with the observation that "The attack from the US Section has as its content the need of the imperialists to destroy the IC." No one forced Comrade Slaughter to write those words, which he knew even then to be grossly untrue. But in the struggle against the International Committee, the operative principle was, as both Comrade Slaughter and Healy agreed, "No holds barred."

Knowing his own role in fighting against the development of Marxism in the Workers League and the International Committee, one would have expected that Comrade Slaughter would be reluctant to return so quickly to the factional war path against the ICFI. It is distressing to see how quickly Comrade Slaughter has reverted to the old methods of baiting the International. As if nothing at all had happened within the IC, he writes to Comrade North:

"Now, I maintain that the one-sidedness and partial, selective nature of the account you gave to our Congress was disturbing and dangerous, and conflicts with the urgent necessity of facing up to and analyzing our responsibilities. You **omitted** several important political questions which have emerged in the last four years. To analyze these is es-

sential to any clarification of the split. For example, you will recall that the Workers League leadership came to the point of abandoning the long-time perspective of the Fourth International towards a Labour party in the United States. Discussion on the International Committee corrected that. We all know that differences on basic perspective do appear in sections and in the IC itself, and the IC and its sections fight to correct those. But in giving an account of how you challenged Healy's and the WRP's positions and failed to get support in the WRP, it is entirely wrong to ignore this question, in which I think you will agree the IC and WRP comrades were right against you and whoever supported your position (which you corrected) in the Workers League."

We must confess that every member of the Political Committee rubbed their eyes in amazement upon reading these lines. Has Comrade Slaughter already forgotten that it was he who explicitly attacked the Workers League's central emphasis on the Labor Party? In his above-quoted letter to the Workers League in November 1983, Slaughter wrote:

"It is correct **in general** to insist, as your resolution's concluding section does, that 'The central issue facing the American working class is the necessity to establish its political independence through the formation of a Labor Party, and the struggle for a workers' government committed to abolishing the capitalist system and establishing socialism.'

"Yes, but the road right now, to 'establishing the political independence of the American working class' is by recognizing that the 'central issue' is to fight for the defeat of the US imperialist invasion of Grenada and its coming attack in Nicaragua."

In reply, Comrade North warned that Slaughter's approach, "which explicitly separates the fight for the defeat of the US invasion of Grenada from the struggle to establish the political independence of the working class, is identical to that of every revisionist and Stalinist group in the United States.

"Wasn't it against this invidious distinction that the Workers League and the IC based their struggle against the opportunist Pabloite conception of the 'anti-war' movement? Do they not always claim that our 'sectarianism' consists of our principled approach to all political developments, and our refusal to abandon a strategical line worked out over many years to suit what is happening 'right now'? ...

"I do not want to write more sharply than is necessary, but the approach you suggest would lead, if accepted by the Workers League, straight toward outright opportunism ...

"Had the *Bulletin* of October 28, 1983 repeated 100 times the call for the defeat of US imperialism but left out the issue of the Labor Party as the central task facing the working class, the Political Committee statement would have represented a centrist evasion of the real concrete tasks."

Comrade Slaughter never replied to this letter in writing. But the attack on the Workers League's perspective on the Labor Party was stepped up. The Workers League was accused in February 1984 of elevating the Labor Party from a tactic to a strategy, that is, that it was liquidating the struggle for the building of the revolutionary movement in the United States in favor of exclusive concentration on the building of a labor party. The allegation was factionally motivated and false.

The Workers League made no "correction" on the campaign for a Labor Party because there was nothing to correct. Following the IC meeting of February 1984, the Party simply continued to develop the presidential campaign that it had launched one month earlier. The Election Manifesto which had been produced prior to the IC meeting was used throughout the year with great effect. The matter was never raised again on the IC. (As for our presidential election campaign, the first waged by the Workers League since its founding in 1966, it was virtually ignored by the Workers Revolutionary Party. In the course of 11 months, the *News Line* ran less than a half dozen news articles on it. So much for Healy's interest in what he liked to refer to, on holiday occasions, as "the great North American proletariat.")

It was not the Workers League which abandoned the Labor Party orientation. We defended it against the criticism of Comrade Slaughter and the WRP leadership. Our record on this question is of immense pride to our entire membership.

Comrade Slaughter is not finished with his criticisms of North and the Workers League. He continues: "Later, in 1985, you followed with a lapse into an analysis of the trade union bureaucracy in the US which we challenged as being completely non-Marxist in its method and conclusions, and you eventually agreed. Nobody made you write that analysis, and you have presumably made some critical analysis of how you came to proceed in a thoroughly undialectical, completely empiricist and 'objectivist' way, in the manner of bourgeois sociology, concluding that the 'material base' of the American trade union bureaucracy was its vast empire of wealth, privilege and bureaucratic organization. But you did not incorporate any such invaluable self-criticism in your account of the developments in the IC since 1982. Yet surely there are social forces behind such a prostration before the accomplished fact, just as there are social forces behind Healyism (see the 'Political Letter No. 1' issued to Workers League members by yourself on behalf of the Political Committee on July 8 this year).

"Finally I must refer to the Workers League Conference of **June 30/July 1** this year, which is the subject of your Political Letter to which I have referred. You presented to the Workers League 12th Congress a perspectives document which was nothing short of total disorientation. When I began to discuss this document with you (you will recall that I had arrived in Detroit on the eve of your Congress, and until then, like the delegates, had not seen the document), I came very soon to the conclusion that the various formulations I found to be wrong or confused were in fact part of a perspective which could only be called Pabloite. You had reacted to the US government and presidential statements and preparations threatening war, and your conclusion was that the perspective for the Workers League was one of preparing a revolutionary defeatist struggle against the US imperialists when they went to war. This is the old Pabloite 'war-revolution' thesis of over 30 years ago. You corrected this position even before the Congress began, and you did the right thing in announcing to the delegates that the perspectives were revisionist through and through, representing an abandonment of Trotskyist program and Marxist method."

First, let us make a minor correction. Comrade Slaughter refers to the error on the trade union bureaucracy and the 12th Congress as if there were two different episodes in 1985. In fact, the incorrect formulation on the bureaucracy

was part of the same resolution that was discussed at the 12th Congress. As for the substance of his criticism, we have no difficulty acknowledging that the Workers League, like every other revolutionary party, makes mistakes.

But Comrade Slaughter should feel somewhat ashamed of the way he raises this in his letter to Comrade North. Given the conditions which existed within the International Committee in the aftermath of February 1984, it was inescapable that serious political problems would arise within the Workers League and every other section of the International Committee. Our party has never operated with the delusion that a correct national orientation can be sustained without a scientific international perspective developed by the Fourth International. The Workers League, like every other section, paid a price for the impressionist international perspective that was written by Comrade Slaughter, in collaboration with Healy, and then imposed on the Internationa] Committee. The mistakes within the Workers League perspective flowed directly from the 10th International Congress Resolution.

The fundamental thesis of this international perspective was "the struggle for power is on the agenda in every country," that the crisis is not "building up," but rather that "Every single day is a movement of the revolutionary flux of developments." It insisted that **"the decisive revolutionary battles are already engaged."**

When Comrade Slaughter introduced this resolution in a speech to the 7th Congress of the Workers Revolutionary Party just one year ago, he placed great emphasis on this thesis: "All the unevenness and variations in tempo and form until now, even so now, are levelled out."

As for the situation in America, the resolution stated that **"The proletariat of the United States, undefeated, enters struggles of a revolutionary nature simultaneously with those of the rest of the world."** Under conditions in which strike activity within the United States had fallen for three successive years, in the aftermath of the destruction of the Professional Air Traffic Controllers' Organization (PATCO), to record lows, the international perspective of imminent revolution inevitably had a disorienting effect. It was for this reason that exaggerated weight was placed on the war preparations of the Reagan Administration as the catalyst of the struggle for power which the IC declared to be on the agenda. We might add that the Workers League was also working under the burden of the allegation made by Comrade Slaughter and the WRP during the previous 18 months that it had abandoned the principle of revolutionary defeatism. These distortions had a definite impact on the Party cadre and this led to a situation in which the Political Committee believed that it had to make explicit its attitude toward imperialist war. As for the error on the trade union bureaucracy, it is true that the Workers League Resolution incorrectly placed too great an emphasis on the enormous financial income of the personnel of the AFL-CIO bureaucracy, which totals in the billions of dollars. But this was a minor and easily corrected mistake. Nowhere did the resolution evince a programmatic retreat from the League's implacable struggle against the trade union bureaucracy.

In the written statement to the membership of the Workers League, dated October 6, 1985, Comrade Slaughter specifically declared that the 10th International Congress Resolution "was the real cause of the incorrect perspective which you withdrew at your 12th Congress." In his letter of November 26th, he writes no less emphatically: "I am convinced, as you are, that such a gross revision of our basic perspectives resulted from the disorientation created by our own IC 10th Congress's false perspectives, and we must not in any way hold against you the development of these wrong positions in the Workers League." But, of course, Comrade Slaughter attempts to do precisely that.

Comrade Slaughter writes: "Comrades will read your own Political Letter, attached here, on the Workers League Congress which met on the same weekend as Comrade Aileen Jennings' letter was sent, and ask themselves if it could have been written by the same comrade who addressed them on October 26th. Among the works you recommended for reading by every comrade in July, was, among others, Healy's *Studies in Dialectical Materialism.* I don't ask you to explain why — we both know why."

We certainly do, and for the benefit of the membership of the WRP and International Committee sections we shall explain why. **The political line of this letter was set down by Comrade Slaughter himself, who told the Political Committee upon the conclusion of the 12th Congress, that the source of the mistakes in the party's perspectives was Comrade North's opposition to the dialectical materialist method being championed by Healy. He insisted that North had failed to correct the "mistakes" he had made between 1982 and 1984 in criticizing Healy and the WRP. At one point, during a meeting of the Political Committee, Comrade Slaughter made a motion demanding that a quote from Lenin's Volume 38 be written down on a placard and posted in a prominent place in the room where the PC meets.**

Despite the temporary disorientation the problems were eventually overcome as the Political Committee established that the source of the mistakes of the 12th Congress Resolution was the false international perspective. It was on the basis of these discussions within the Workers League PC that North brought to the attention of Comrades Banda and Slaughter in September the Pabloite formulations in the 10th Congress Resolution.

What emerges from this not too pretty record of Slaughter's role between 1982 and 1985 is that he was by no means some sort of passive victim of Healy's abuses. Rather, when the political and theoretical conceptions underlying these abuses were challenged by a section of the International (as well as by individual members within the WRP, such as B. Martin), Slaughter closed ranks with Healy. Whatever his private disagreements with Healy's conception of dialectics, Slaughter vigorously defended Healy's "infallibility" against opponents within the International Committee **and** the Workers Revolutionary Party. Even the extent of those "private" disagreements can be properly called into question. Aside from the above quoted letter following the IC meeting of February 1984, there is another "Dear Gerry" hand-written letter which sheds considerable light on the nature of Comrade Slaughter's extremely unprincipled relations with Healy:

"I would just like to say," Slaughter writes, **"that I consider your report (and the discussion which it produced) the most irrevocable proof of the correctness of the struggle for theory and practice which you have led. Here** *is* **the 'concrete' produced through the work of abstraction, on which living perception has been posited. This concreteness — the road to the dictatorship of the proletariat in England came**

***not* from 'concrete issues' & 'action' but from the qualitative fights for dialectical practice of cognition. Like 1917 it is the party that starts with dialectical materialism that makes the revolution & not the 'get in the streets' men. Like Dora Kaplan, they will find themselves now, without reservation, on the other side.**

Best wishes, Cliff"

This letter does not only stroke Healy's ego; it explicitly warns him that those who are resisting his emphasis on the dialectical practice of cognition are counter-revolutionists who are prepared to use physical violence to defeat his leadership. What else can the reference to Dora Kaplan — the Socialist Revolutionary who attempted to assassinate Lenin in August 1918 — mean? This correspondence, by an experienced leader with decades in the Trotskyist movement, does not mesh with Comrade Slaughter's present account of his role in the Party under Healy. At one moment he's congratulating Healy for defeating an attack from the Workers League which Slaughter characterized as an attempt by US imperialism to destroy the IC. At another moment he's advising Healy that his struggle for dialectics is being waged against the Dora Kaplans of the WRP! This, we suspect, is all part of fighting "with no holds barred."

Let us emphasize again: the conflict within the IC was not between North and Healy. It was between the Workers League and the Workers Revolutionary Party. It was not a clash of personalities but of program and perspective. That is why Comrade Slaughter's present distortions, his attacks on Comrade North and the Workers League, and his attempt to reduce everything to the small coin of "personal" mistakes are so dangerous. It leads him to completely misrepresent the actual relations within the International Committee during the 1980s. He writes:

"Positive and theoretical work done by others (such as C. Slaughter, M. Banda, D. North and many others) became more and more separated from the actual conduct of the work of the IC, the WRP and the News Line, which was directly governed by G. Healy from his London office and through the Parwich school...

"There is not the slightest doubt that every one of these leading comrades at more than one point in their political development found themselves faced with criticism and attack for raising criticisms and decided that they would not accept the (at the time) inevitable expulsion and isolation from the movement. The inevitable political compromise which resulted of course deepened the disorientation and degeneration, and it is only by the skin of its teeth that the world movement can now regenerate itself with any contribution from these comrades. This real contradiction, rather than attribution of blame and guilt, is what must be grasped.

"It is this real contradiction and its analysis that is missing from your presentation, which left the definite impression of a history of lone protest and declaration of opposition by yourself against the degeneration. That is false, and dangerous."

The Workers League rejects this account completely. According to Slaughter, there was no political struggle by the Workers League against the revisionist degeneration of the Workers Revolutionary Party. There were only individuals and their misgivings, doubts, reservations and, ultimately, capitulation to the all-powerful Healy.

We would like to know, what "positive and theoretical work" done by Slaughter and Banda is being referred to here? **We** know **from** the examination of **Slaughter**'s role in 1982-85 that he was working, not as an armchair theoretician, as he seems to imply, "separated from the actual conduct of the work of the IC," but as Healy's principal defender in the ICFI. Far from being "all-powerful", Healy retreated in front of the challenge which he faced within the International Committee. In the two years prior to North's criticisms of Healy's distortions of dialectical materialism, Healy wrote more than 25 lengthy articles in the pages of the *News Line.* These came to an abrupt end after October 1982. From then on, he did not attempt another article on philosophy. As for the fight against his "most powerful" imperialist opponent, that, as we have seen, was left to Comrade Slaughter.

Slaughter makes an equation between this role and the theoretical work done by Dave North, which was also not "separated from the actual conduct of the work of the IC," but was part of a struggle against the political degeneration of the WRP and through it of the IC.

Theoretical work is not the activity of the isolated individual contemplating the universe. It is inseparable from revolutionary practice. The driving force of the "positive and theoretical work" done by Dave North and the Workers League was the struggle against revisionism, about which Slaughter says precisely nothing, a struggle which was carried out both against the Socialist Workers Party, and against revisionism within the IC and WRP.

This struggle began first with the analysis of Larry Siegle's attack on Trotsky and Permanent Revolution in 1981-82, then continued with the critique of Healy's "Studies in Dialectical Materialism," and then the analysis of Barnes's repudiation of Permanent Revolution in his speech of December 31, 1982.

The fact that Dave North criticized the gross idealist distortion and vulgarization of dialectics by Healy and the increasingly right-wing political line of the WRP, cannot be explained as a "personal" question. This is demonstrated by the fact that when he made these differences known to comrades on the Political Committee, there was not only general agreement, but a reaction that many comrades had begun to have serious questions about the political and theoretical line of the WRP.

This incidentally gives the lie to Slaughter's claim that he could not raise his supposed differences with Healy because up until 1982 the Workers League would "have joined in the attack mobilized by Healy."

The struggle against revisionism was being conducted by the Workers League, not in a political vacuum, but as part of the struggle to penetrate the working class. Beginning in 1978-79, following the assassination of Tom Henehan, the Workers League decided on and carried out the transfer of its political center from Manhattan, the East Coast mecca of middle class radicalism, to Detroit, one of the great centers of the industrial labor movement. The bulk of the work of the party was concentrated in the industrial Midwest. This was an enormous advance in the struggle to implement the "proletarian orientation" that had been fought for by Trotsky in 1939-40 during the fight against the petty-bourgeois opposition inside the SWP.

At a time when the Workers Revolutionary Party was turning to the national bourgeoisie of Libya, Iraq, and the Gulf,

and later to Labour "lefts" such as Knight and Livingstone, the Workers League was engaged in a tenacious and protracted struggle to turn to the working class.

The correctness of this struggle was vindicated in the battles which erupted after the installation of the Reagan Administration in 1980, above all the PATCO strike of 1981, the Phelps Dodge and Greyhound strikes in 1983, and the struggles over concessions, plant closings and unionbusting throughout this period. In every struggle in which the party intervened, not without mistakes and difficulties, but with a serious effort to overcome then, it made real gains, in terms of new relations with important sections of the working class, the political tempering and education of our own cadres, and, even if initially few in number, the recruitment and training of new cadres in the working class. It should be known to every member of the WRP that between February 1978 and May 1984 — the entire period of these crucial experiences of the Trotskyist movement in the United States — not a single member of the Workers Revolutionary Party leadership came to the United States, the center of world imperialism, to attend as much as one Central Committee meeting. During the same period, countless trips were made to Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Libya. This says everything about the real perspectives of the WRP.

The struggles of the Workers League inside the American working class were conducted simultaneously with an unprecedented level of international work. The investigation into **Security and the Fourth International,** culminating in the Gelfand case, produced a wealth of historical knowledge for the world Trotskyist movement and the international working class about the joint conspiracies of Stalinism and imperialism against the revolutionary movement. This struggle continues to this day.

The political differences raised by the Workers League with the WRP in 1983-84 were directly associated with our section's decision to run for the first time in the presidential elections. This was the product above all of the struggle against revisionism, both the analysis of Barnes's rejection of Permanent Revolution and the assessment of the SWP's actions in the Gelfand case, when it proved the correctness of **Security and the Fourth International** by coming openly to the defense of the GPU agents Zborowski and Sylvia Franklin.

Despite the enormous difficulties created by the refusal of the WRP leadership to allow any political discussion at the **IC** meeting of February, 1984, the Workers League continued its presidential election campaign, and won ballot status in six major industrial states with a population of over 50 million. The Workers League overcame direct opposition from the capitalist parties, involving the arrests of members and attempts (all unsuccessful) to deny the Party a place on the ballot. We conducted the broadest campaign for Trotskyist principles in our movement's history. This development, as we have said before, was virtually ignored in the press of the British section.

We have gone to some length in presenting the political record of the Workers League, and the relation of this record to the crisis which has erupted within the International Committee. If we are unable at this stage in the discussion to present an equally detailed account of the work of other sections, it is not because this work was less important, but because it would be presumptuous to write on it without the necessary knowledge. The nationalist clique in the WRP leadership prevented the **IC** sections from learning from each other's experiences. However, from the little we know about it, we believe that every section of the International Committee could learn many valuable lessons from the way our comrades in the Revolutionary Communist League in Sri Lanka stood up for the right of the Tamil nation to self-determination in the midst of murderous pogroms in Colombo.

We are convinced that the Workers League's record of principled political struggle is not exceptional in the International Committee. We categorically reject Slaughter's groundless assertion that the same process of degeneration was taking place in every section that most assuredly did take place within the WRP.

The proof of this is the way in which the majority of the sections of the International Committee quickly came to a common understanding and worked together on the basis of a principled agreement to deal with the crisis within the WRP.

Slaughter's amalgam ("this process that you went through has been true of many many of us who have worked in the WRP and **IC** leadership") breaks down as soon as one examines the actual consequences of the February 1984 **IC** meeting. For the Workers League, the retreat forced upon our delegates to the **IC** meeting was confusing, damaging, but ultimately overcome.

For the Workers Revolutionary Party, on the other hand, the February 1984 **IC** meeting was a milestone on the road to political disaster. Even at that late date, had the WRP accepted the need for an objective international discussion, it would have been possible to come to grips with the political disorientation of the leadership, create the conditions for exposing and correcting the organizational abuses, and rearm the entire party. Instead, the eruption of the miners' strike just one month later pitched the WRP membership into a historic development of the class struggle with a radically false political orientation.

The political implications of the party's abandonment of the struggle against revisionism were brought out into the open. 1) The WRP developed an entirely false conception of the nature of the Thatcher regime, which it proclaimed to be a Bonapartist dictatorship. 2) Following the Mansfield demonstration of May 1984, it abandoned all criticism of the Scargill leadership and covered up for the NUM leadership's refusal to demand that the TUC call a general strike. 3) The WRP avoided issuing any political demands upon the Labour Party in relation to the miners' strike. Not once did it call for the bringing down of the Tory government to return a Labour government, as a means of mobilizing the working class and exposing the reformists. The abstract slogan of a "Workers Revolutionary Government" simply avoided a real struggle against the Labourites and enabled the WRP to maintain its unprincipled alliance with Livingstone and Scargill. 4) Behind the superficial euphoria about the revolutionary situation in Britain, the WRP was pessimistic and demoralized about the prospects for the working class. Prior to the end of the strike, a defeat of the strike was identified with fascism and the il¬legalization of the Party. Following the strike, the defeat of the miners was bombastically denied and a concrete analysis of the situation confronting the NUM avoided. 5) While maintaining the slogan of the general strike after the defeat of the miners, the longstanding adaptation to the trade

union "lefts" found its consummation in the elevation of the United Front tactic into the real centerpiece of the WRP's **program - the classic form of centrist downsliding.**

When the necessary detailed analysis of the WRP's position on the miners' strike is finally made — hopefully we have not long to wait — it will demonstrate that the movement of the working class exposed the political bankruptcy of the Healy regime and exploded the unprincipled relations that had been built up within the party's leadership over many years. But since the split, for all Comrade Slaughter's talk about the political clarification taking place inside the WRP, we have yet to read a single document in which the political degeneration of the party's line is analyzed. The series of documents on the United Front testify to the confusion which exists on virtually all basic questions.

The absence of documents analyzing the fundamental political questions confronting the WRP means that the real political positions held by those in the leadership of the WRP are being concealed from the international movement and from the WRP membership. This has extremely serious implications. It is becoming increasingly obvious that at least a section of the majority leadership — specifically, that section which takes its lead from Comrade Slaughter — are working consciously to break with the International Committee and the historical principles and traditions of the Fourth International which it represents.

Despite the indignant response of many Central Committee members to the criticisms made of the recent meeting in Friends Hall by Comrade P. Schwarz, an IC delegate and member of the German section, we believe his warning to be entirely justified and correct. The depth of the on-going crisis within the WRP is demonstrated by the very fact that a majority of the Central Committee do not even seem to recognize the grave implications of the statements made by Comrade Slaughter at that public meeting on the expulsion of Healy. Without any prior discussion on the International Committee, Comrade Slaughter publicly calls into question the charges made over many years by our movement against Joseph Hansen in the course of the decade-long campaign on **Security and the Fourth International.** He even raises questions about the legitimacy of the 1953 split with the Pabloites. The chairman of the meeting then gives the floor to Stalinist Monty Johnstone, who has already shaken hands with Comrade Slaughter.

These shameful proceedings, like everything else which takes place in the WRP, are defended on the grounds of the immediate practical needs of the struggle in Britain against Healy. It is more or less assumed, if it is even thought of at all, that the actions decided upon by the WRP to solve "its own" problems serve the interests of the International Committee.

We are appalled by the fact that Stalinist scum like Johnstone are welcomed at a meeting called by a founding section of the International Committee. Is there anyone who believes that the Trotskyist movement has anything to learn about "revolutionary morality" from Johnstone? Does Comrade Slaughter believe that Healy's opportunist degeneration and Stalin's physical annihilation of the Bolshevik Party are historical phenomena of equal magnitude? For Slaughter to wax indignant about the International Committee's supposed inability to recognize Redgrave's crossing of class lines while he shakes hands with a political representative of counter-revolution exposes the truly reactionary implications of his attack on the International Committee.

We are no less disgusted by the welcome given to reprobates like Pennington, who represent the dregs of the Pabloite movement. We have absolutely nothing to learn from him and the international tendency he represents, which now openly condemns the theory of Permanent Revolution. As for the "revolutionary morality" of the Pabloites, the practices for which Healy was expelled wouldn't raise an eyebrow within their petty-bourgeois outfits. We are also indignant over Slaughter's statement that those who remained inside the Party are neither politically superior nor better equipped to deal with the present crisis in the WRP than those who left the movement. How disgraceful it is that Comrade Slaughter debases the party and its self-sacrificing members in front of the mortal enemies of the Trotskyist movement.

On the question of the **Security and the Fourth International** investigation, it should be noted that Comrade Slaughter is intimately familiar with the entire development of this campaign. He has written on it more than once. On not a single occasion has he suggested that the exposure of the SWP was not founded on powerful documentary evidence. More than one decade ago, on October 23, 1975, Slaughter wrote to Joseph Hansen:

"Security is not only an organizational question, but above all a fundamental political question of the struggle of the world party of socialist revolution against the capitalist state, against the intelligence and repressive agencies of the imperialist powers, and against the Stalinist bureaucracy, the main counter-revolutionary force in the world arena, dedicated since its inception to the liquidation of the Fourth International.

"The training of revolutionary cadres for the revolutionary struggles of today cannot be carried out without a relentless fight to establish the historical continuity of Trotsky's life and death battle against the Stalinist bureaucracy.

"When Hansen lyingly accuses the Workers Revolutionary Party of being led by police agents and provocateurs, but then rejects a security investigation which would hit decisively at the Stalinists and their agents in our movement, what role is he playing? Why has he hitherto insisted on covering up the great historical questions concerning the murder of the founder of the Fourth International and his closest collaborators? What is the responsibility of those, like Hansen, who have criminally neglected these question and now refuse to take them up?"

Further on, after referring to Hansen's trips to the US Embassy in Mexico City and his secret meetings with the GPU agent "John," Slaughter wrote:

"Comrade Hansen, you have written many articles and memoirs claiming to give a full picture of the circumstances surrounding Trotsky's assassination. You even wrote a detailed supplementation of the facts as given by Isaac Deutscher, in your introduction to Trotsky's *My Life.* Yet at no time did you mention the GPU's attempt to recruit you. Nor did it enter into the political preparation of the comrades responsible for guarding Trotsky either before or after the Siqueiros raid. The international movement has *never* been

informed, and we have the extraordinary position where the US State Department has known of your 'operation' of playing along the GPU, according to you with Trotsky's agreement, but our own movement has been kept in ignorance...

"These are not, we repeat, dead historical questions. The Cointelpro documents reveal the extensive infiltration of the FBI against the SWP. No one can doubt the implications of the billions of dollars spent on the CIA. And the Stalinist bureaucracy, in crisis equally with imperialism, will always strive to liquidate our movement."

During the past decade, the investigation conducted by the International Committee has assembled thousands of pieces of evidence to substantiate all its charges against Hansen. When Comrade Slaughter wrote the lines quoted above, we did not yet have the official correspondence which noted Hansen's request for a contact within the FBI "to whom information can be imparted with impunity." We did not have the sworn testimony of SWP leaders from the 1940s establishing that nothing was known within the Party leadership about Hansen's contacts with the FBI and GPU. We did not have a copy of the private letter to Hansen from his close friend, V.T. O'Brien, recalling the secret identification of Hansen as a GPU agent by Louis Budenz. We did not have the June 1958 grand jury testimony of Sylvia Franklin, in which she acknowledged her role as an agent of the Communist Party inside the SWP and thus exploded the decades-long cover-up by Hansen and his Pabloite associates. Nor did we have knowledge of the fact that the entire central leadership of the SWP was recruited from the same small Midwestern college in Minnesota. Comrade Slaughter also knows that during the Gelfand case, the Socialist Workers Party collaborated with Mark Zborowski — the GPU assassin of Trotsky's son, Leon Sedov — to prevent his deposition from being taken. Eventually, the deposition was barred by the US Federal Court on the grounds that the identification by Zborowski of agents inside the SWP would be in violation of the 1982 Intelligence Identities Protection Act.

Joseph Hansen

And yet he now **publicly** questions the allegations against Hansen — thus providing encouragement to the Socialist Workers Party, which wrote in the December 2, 1985 issue of *Intercontinental Press* that "it's possible that the fallout over the next few months from the party's breakup will produce a few bits and pieces about the slander campaign against the SWP and other organizations."

What took place at Friends Hall was not a meeting; it was a perspective. What was revealed at that meeting is a move toward what the SWP once called "regroupment" — that is, the abandonment of Trotskyism in favor of unprincipled alliances with radicals, revisionists and Stalinists of all description. This right-wing orientation is explicitly advanced in the December 6, 1985 issue of *News Line,* in which Pilling writes: "We have absolutely nothing to fear from the most open and wide-ranging discussion with Stalinism." And what is it that Pilling and Slaughter want to discuss with the Stalinists? The crisis inside the Workers Revolutionary Party. It is one thing for Trotskyists to approach rank-and-file Stalinist workers and seek to break them from the counter-revolutionary policies of the Soviet bureaucracy. It is quite another to "discuss" the internal problems of the WRP with what Pilling himself refers to as a "notorious Stalinist." Such discussion can have only one aim: to explore the possibilities for joint work and future amalgamation. It would be one of the greater ironies of history if the program of the regroupment of which at least some WRP leaders are privately thinking was to be written under the heading, "Revolutionary Morality."

Pilling adds: "So we retract nothing about our public meeting. We intend to carry out a systematic investigation of every aspect of the movement's history, from the time of Trotsky's death onwards." What does this mean? Does the WRP intend to reconsider the split with the right-wing Goldman-Morrow faction in 1946? Reappraise the refusal of the Fourth International to reunify with the Shachtmanites? Reexamine the split with the Pabloites in 1953? Re-evaluate the rejection of reunification and the break with Hansen in 1963 (The precondition for such a re-evaluation would be the repudiation of **Security and the Fourth International)?** Re-investigate the split with the OCI in 1971 ?

And why stop there? Why should 1940 be "arbitrarily" selected as the starting point of the "systematic investigation" proposed by Pilling? By just pushing back two years further we could reconsider the founding conference of the Fourth International. This would remove all the old "dogmas" and Trotskyist "shibboleths" which stand in the way of a regroupment of the left. In place of the Fourth International, it would be possible to create a new "Mass Leninist International" along the lines which the SWP Pabloites propose. This is the objective logic of Pilling's statement which, in our opinion, is nothing less than a formula to justify theoretical and political renegacy. There is a political consistency in the development of Pilling and Slaughter which deserves again to be noted: from having played critical roles in defending Healy against criticisms within the International Committee and blocking a discussion of the WRP's abandonment of a Trotskyist program, they are now the most fervent proponents of calling the entire history of the Fourth International into question.

We note, by the way, that the same issue of *News Line* car-

ries an editorial in which there is a reference to the "former International Committee." At the risk of dampening the author's enthusiasm, allow us to assure him that the IC is more active today than it has ever been.

In the early 1960s, the drive of the SWP to break with the International Committee was bound up with its abandonment of the proletarian orientation and the Transitional Program. As the role of the SWP during the Vietnam War demonstrated, this break with Trotskyism served the most vital needs of imperialism. The SWP was to become the chief medium through which imperialism was able to prevent the linking up of the mass anti-war movement and the ghetto insurrections with the powerful movement of the American industrial proletariat during the late 1960s and early 1970s.

In the present situation, the WRP leadership's resentment of the efforts of the International Committee to establish international collaboration on the basis of democratic centralism expresses a desire to break free of the political restraints imposed upon the British section by membership in the World Party of Socialist Revolution. In the aftermath of the miners strike, which has driven the Labour Party and TUC to the right, exposing their perfidy before ever-larger sections of the working class, the creation of new centrist movements is a desperate historical necessity for the British bourgeoisie. The break-up of the old Stalinist organizations has greatly weakened that appendage of the Labour-TUC bureaucracies upon which the ruling class could formerly rely. With the Thatcher government in deep crisis — and the threat by OPEC to lower prices will destroy what little remains of her economic program — it knows very well that the return of a Labour government will be associated with an enormous political radicalization of the working class. Purges by Kinnock within the Labour Party will not halt this process.

The great danger which the bourgeoisie must avoid at all costs is the existence of a revolutionary Trotskyist party that will provide an alternative to the inevitable betrayals of the social-democrats, Stalinists, and trade union lefts like Scargill. Under these conditions, any retreat from Trotskyist principles by the WRP, that is, a turn toward POUM-style centrism, would constitute a massive historical crime against the working class.

This is why we look with great concern at every expression of indifference and hostility toward the International Committee. At each point in the present situation Marxists are obliged to examine the class forces that are working through comrades — whether they recognize them or not. We are greatly disturbed to hear that Comrade Tony Banda declared at a recent meeting of the Central Committee that the WRP should break with the Socialist Labour League of Australia rather than listen to its criticisms. We are even more disturbed by the fact that he was not called to order and sharply rebuked by the secretary of the International Committee. While WRP leaders talk about getting rid of IC sections, they seek to ingratiate themselves with revisionists and Stalinists. They are pleased to discuss with these enemies of Trotskyism but refuse to make available to the WRP members the critical documents produced by sections of the International Committee. We refer specifically to the fact that the letter of the Workers League Central Committee, dated November 21st and which was received in Clapham on November 25th, has still not been made available to the membership. It has not been published in the most recent WRP discussion bulletin, which instead carries Comrade Slaughter's letter of November 26th as well as the Workers League Political Committee letter of July 8th, whose real origins we have already explained. The sole purpose of this deceitful arrangement and presentation of documents is to disorient the WRP membership. Before the members have a chance to read any of the documents of the International Committee, their attitude toward the IC is to be poisoned — or that is, at least, what Slaughter intends. We think he underestimates the WRP cadre. We know very well the significance of such dishonest methods in the conduct of a political discussion. As we have explained throughout this letter, Comrade Slaughter and others are "building a case" against the IC for political reasons which are becoming more evident every day.

It would be worth while for the members of the WRP Central Committee to ask themselves how it is possible — little more than a month after expelling Healy — that leaders within the British section react no differently to criticism from the international movement than Healy did between 1982 and 1984.

We still hope that it will be possible to establish truly internationalist relations with the Workers Revolutionary Party. We are prepared to provide you with all the political assistance we can. It is not too late to begin to assimilate the lessons of the past period and open up a new chapter in the struggle for Trotskyism. But we warn you in advance that we will not take the road of capitulation and betrayal.

In closing, we formally request, again, that this letter be distributed to every member of the Workers Revolutionary Party.

Fraternally,

The Political Committee of the Workers League

Resolution of the International Committee of the Fourth International on the Suspension of the Workers Revolutionary Party

December 16, 1985

The interim report of the International Control Commission has revealed that the WRP has carried out an historic betrayal of the ICFI and the international working class.

This betrayal consisted of the complete abandonment of the theory of permanent revolution, resulting in the pursuit of unprincipled relations with sections of the colonial bourgeoisie in return for money.

These unprincipled relations were concealed from the ICFI which was consistently lied to for almost a decade.

The interim report of the Control Commission has revealed the following:

(1) That two months prior to any discussion of work in the Middle East leaders of the WRP signed a secret agreement with the Libyan Jamahiriya which was never reported to the ICFI.

(2) That more than 1 million pounds was raised from reactionary and non-proletarian forces which was not reported to the ICFI.

(3) That the WRP supported the execution of 21 members of the Iraqi Communist Party in 1979.

The principal architect of these betrayals was G. Healy, aided by A. Mitchell and V. Redgrave.

However, the political responsibility for the nationalist degeneration which allowed these practices to be carried out rests with the entire leadership of the WRP.

WRP leaders blocked discussion of differences on the party's political line both in the British section and in the International Committee.

The ICFI does not seek to blame any individual leader but holds the entire leadership responsible.

In order to defend its principles and integrity, the ICFI therefore suspends the WRP as the British section until the calling of an emergency Congress of the ICFI no later than March 1, following the 8th Congress of the WRP.

That emergency ICFI Congress upon hearing the full report of the Control Commission on all the facts concerning these unprincipled relationships, will determine the relationship between the ICFI and the WRP.

In the meantime the ICFI calls on all leaders and members of the WRP to loyally collaborate with the **IC** Control Commission, to make available all files and records so that it can complete its report, and to defend all the principles of the ICFI in accordance with its democratic centralist practice.

Revolutionary Communist League of Sri Lanka
Socialist Labour League of Australia
Liga Comunista of Peru
Bund Sozialistischer Arbeiter of West Germany
Workers League of North America

Statement of the International Committee of the Fourth International

December 17, 1985

1. In expelling G. Healy, the International Committee repulsed and defeated the most serious attack on the program and principles of Trotskyism since the 1953 struggle against Pablo and successfully defended the historic continuity of the Fourth International as the World Party of Socialist Revolution.

2. Contained in this struggle is the reassertion of the programmatic foundations of Trotskyism, embodied in the International Committee as the sole historically-established leadership of the World Party of Socialist Revolution founded by Leon Trotsky in 1938. These foundations are: the decisions of the First Four Congresses of the Communist International (1919-1922); the Platform of the Left Opposition (1927); the Transitional Program (1938); the Open Letter (1953); and the documents of the struggle against the bogus SWP-Pabloite reunification 1961-63).

3. G. Healy and his clique failed to destroy the ICFI. The struggle initiated within the IC between 1982 and 1984 against Healy's subjective idealist distortions of Marxism and his repudiation of the Theory of Permanent Revolution has been vindicated by the rebellion within the ranks of the WRP against Healy's abuse of authority which led ultimately to his expulsion on October 19, 1985 from the WRP. The objective source of Healy's degeneration and class betrayals was his capitulation to the pressure of British imperialism, which found its most naked expression in his rejection of proletarian internationalism. His rejection of revolutionary defeatism during the Malvinas War, his cowardly and unprincipled refusal to defend the IRA, his support for the execution of Iraqi and Iranian communists were inseparably bound up with his treacherous abuse of the International Committee and its sections.

4. In the aftermath of Healy's expulsion and of the renegades who supported him, led by A. Mitchell and S. Torrance, the ICFI and the WRP pledge to re-educate and re-arm all the cadres of the world movement on the principles and program of Trotskyism. We re-affirm our implacable hatred of Stalinism, from which our movement is separated by a river of blood. Alongside the social-democratic bureaucracies, Stalinism is the principal agency of imperialism within the international workers' movement, "counter-revolutionary through and through."

5. We stand for the political revolution against the degenerated and deformed Stalinist bureaucracies as a component part of the World Socialist Revolution. The Political Revolution is inseparably bound up with the unconditional defense of the USSR, China, Vietnam and the deformed workers' states of E. Europe against imperialism.

6. While defending the semi-colonial masses against the onslaught of imperialism, we stand at all times for the independent revolutionary mobilization of the proletariat, based on the strategy of Permanent Revolution, through the construction of new sections of the ICFI. While preserving the right to enter into tactical agreements, strictly defined, with representatives of semi-colonial bourgeois regimes and national liberation movements for the purpose of advancing the struggle against imperialism, we defend at all times the independence of the proletarian party and its strategy.

7. The ICFI and the WRP reaffirm the historical correctness of the struggle against Pabloite revisionism upon which the continuity of the Fourth International, preserved and embodied in the International Committee, is based. As the national committee of the Socialist Labour League stated in 1961, Pabloite revisionism does not represent and cannot be regarded "as a trend within Trotskyism." In its origins Pabloism represented a capitulation to the pressures of world imperialism upon the Trotskyist movement. The full historical significance of its counter-revolutionary role was established in 1964, with the entrance of the Sri Lankan LSSP into the bourgeois coalition government of M. Bandaranaike. Moreover, the public repudiation of the Theory of Permanent Revolution by the US SWP and its defense of the Stalinist doctrine of the two-stage revolution again vindicates the principled stand taken by the International Committee in 1963. In all parts of the world, the building of sections of the Fourth International under the leadership of the International Committee is bound up with an implacable struggle against the Pabloite enemies of Trotskyism.

8. The ICFI and the Central Committee of the WRP shall now work closely together to overcome as quickly as possible the existing problems which are the legacy of the nationalist degeneration of the WRP under Healy, to reassert the basic principles of internationalism within the WRP, and on this basis restore its full membership in the International Committee of the Fourth International. The organizational structure of this relationship shall at all times be based on the Leninist principles of democratic centralism, which are elaborated in the statutes of the Fourth International.

Resolution of the Workers League Central Committee

December 22, 1985

1. Having heard the report of our fraternal delegates to the December 16-17 meeting of the International Committee of the Fourth International, the Workers League Central Committee fully supports the decision of the ICFI to suspend the Workers Revolutionary Party from membership as the British section. We understand that this action is not aimed at "disciplining" present leaders of the WRP and that it does not call into question the Trotskyist convictions of the hundreds of loyal and self-sacrificing members of the WRP. Rather, it is an action required by the fact that an objective investigation, conducted by the International Control Commission, has exposed a betrayal of Trotskyism. This betrayal was carried out under conditions in which leaders of the WRP systematically deceived the International Committee. The exposure of this situation does not permit a "business as usual" position. New and principled relations must be established between the WRP and the International Committee. The suspension of the WRP from the ICFI is a decisive first step toward establishing such relations.

2. The unprincipled and mercenary relationship established with the semi-colonial Arab bourgeoisie, behind the back of the ICFI, is a political crime against the international working class, above all the Palestinian and Arab workers. This was expressed most foully in the decision by the WRP leadership to sanction the execution of the Iraqi Communists in 1979. These and other actions were not "simply" political mistakes. They were part of a prostitution of principles aimed at gathering large amounts of money. While this was being done, the WRP concealed from the ICFI the true extent of its relations with non-proletarian and reactionary forces. The policy of lying to the ICFI continued into August 1985 — even after the crisis within the WRP had exploded — when money was unscrupulously taken from the sections without telling them of the real situation within the party leadership.

3. In subordinating its responsibility to the ICFI, the World Party of Socialist Revolution, to this mercenary relationship with the Arab bourgeoisie, the WRP betrayed the fundamental principles of Trotskyism, abandoned the theory of Permanent Revolution and the struggle for the independent, leading role of the working class, and broke with proletarian internationalism.

4. The Workers League Central Committee totally rejects the claims by leaders of the WRP that there was an "equal degeneration" of all sections of the ICFI, or that all sections are equally responsible for the degeneration of the WRP, and therefore cannot criticize or conduct any struggle against this degeneration. We point out to the WRP Central Committee that the "alliances" signed by Healy were between the Arab bourgeoisie and the Workers Revolutionary Party, not the International Committee of the Fourth International or the Workers League. The ICFI and the Workers League never sold out their Trotskyist principles. The ICFI has every right, in fact a duty, to act as it did in suspending the WRP. Those who claim otherwise are simply minimizing the seriousness of what the WRP leadership did, inculcating an attitude of political cynicism within the party ranks, and fanning the flames of reactionary nationalism.

5. We reject the claim that this degeneration was solely the responsibility of Healy and that it has ended with his expulsion and the split by the pro-Healy renegades. The political degeneration of the WRP towards Pabloite revisionism was both bound up with and facilitated by the domination of the party by a nationalist clique leadership. That clique required and used Healy's personal authority as its shield against political criticism, whether from the International Committee or the rank-and-file membership of the WRP. As the interim report of the Control Commission has established, a large section of the WRP leadership — including those now taking credit for having resorted to a conspiracy to remove him — worked from 1982 on to conceal the catastrophic financial crisis from the Party membership. This enabled Healy, with the political support of other leaders inside the WRP, to block political discussion inside the International Committee of the party's drift toward revisionism.

6. Moreover, it is entirely non-Marxist to attribute the crisis in a political party to the failings of one man. The regime within the WRP was not, as Comrade Slaughter has stated in his recent letter of November 26 to Comrade D. North, the personal creation of Healy. We remind the WRP Central Committee that the entire leadership of the WRP supported the resolution, adopted at the WRP's Fifth Congress in 1982, vesting Healy with absolute authority, an action unprecedented in the annals of the communist movement. Among those who spoke strongly in favor of this resolution was Comrade Slaughter. Attempts to explain away such positions with references to Healy's "will" and personality are theoretically worthless and serve only to cover up the real issues. The WRP leadership now has the obligation to honestly analyze the social and political roots of the inner-party relations which gave rise, independent of subjective intentions, to a regime centered on a single individual. Without such an analysis, the political

degeneration of the WRP leadership will continue and the stage will be rapidly set for even greater betrayals in the near future.

7. The Workers League Central Committee fully supports the resolution of the ICFI, adopted December 17, reaffirming the historical continuity of the struggle of Trotskyism against Stalinism and revisionism. We strongly urge the Workers Revolutionary Party to declare its agreement with these historic principles and reject all efforts to **place a** question mark over the political and theoretical conquests of the International Committee. We look forward to the resumption of full fraternal ties with the WRP within a united International Committee in the very near future.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Letter from David North to the Glasgow North-East Branch of the WRP

December 23, 1985

Dear Comrades:

Comrade Simon Pirani has brought to the attention of the International Committee the resolution passed by the Glasgow North-East branch, and I have been asked to reply to you on behalf of the ICFI.

We have not the slightest disagreement with the spirit of your resolution, which states that you intend to subordinate yourselves to the International "as revolutionary fighters, not unquestioning yes-men." In fact, the two types are mutually exclusive. Marxism, as a revolutionary doctrine, demands both fearlessness and complete intellectual and political honesty — qualities to which the "yes-men", by their very nature, never aspire. The Marxist concept of revolutionary discipline has nothing in common with spineless handraising. The disciplined criticisms of a revolutionary fighter, who is concerned about every aspect of party work and of its development within the workers' movement, is a thousand times more valuable than the compliments of a "yes-man" who, as it usually turns out, is simply using the party to feather his own nest.

As your resolution points out, both the membership of the WRP and the ICFI have this in common: we have had our fill of the rotten Healy regime which systematically denied the rights guaranteed to members under the principles of democratic centralism. This regime rejected the most fundamental conception of Leninist organization: that leadership is always under the democratic control of the Party membership. In defining party democracy, Trotsky emphasized three features: "a) **free discussion** by all party members of all the most important questions, b) constant **control by the party** over its leading bodies, and c) the **election** of responsible individuals and collective bodies, from the bottom up..." *(Challenge of the Left Opposition (1926-27),* Pathfinder, p. 64)

None of these three features of party democracy have existed inside the Workers Revolutionary Party. In place of democratic centralism, there existed a petty-bourgeois clique which subordinated to its existence all questions of principle and program. Healy was the personal axis of this clique leadership, which utilized and built up his authority in order to free itself of all control by the membership — both within the WRP and the ICFI. Hiding behind the prestige of Healy, this clique — consisting overwhelmingly of petty-bourgeois and declassed elements working full time in the Old Town center (with little direct contact with the working class) — never had to explain or justify its politics in front of the membership. The destruction of democratic centralism had a very definite class content: it subordinated the proletarian forces within the party to the unprincipled middle-class clique which ruled with and through Healy. Inseparably connected with this destruction of democratic centralist norms was the development of revisionist politics. So systematic and advanced was the destruction of workers' rights within the Party by this clique that it actually violated the WRP Constitution by voting Healy extraordinary powers to do whatever he pleased! This occurred, I believe, at the Fifth Party Congress.

In its dealings with the ICFI, the personal infallibility of Healy was upheld by the British delegates in order to block any critical examination of the policies and practices of the WRP by the international delegates. The real internal life of the WRP was concealed from the International Committee. We now know that the WRP delegates habitually lied to the International Committee about virtually every aspect of the organizational achievements of the British section: its membership figures, finances, work inside the trade unions, YS activities, etc. This served only to bolster the authority of Healy and to unscrupulously depict any criticism of the WRP as an attack on the "historic" achievements of the WRP under Healy's leadership. At the same time the WRP delegates concealed from the ICFI the real facts about the British section's relations with bourgeois regimes in the Middle East. Thus, it was impossible for the ICFI to exercise any democratic centralist control over the work of the British section. Instead, protected from criticism by this petty-bourgeois and nationalist clique, Healy could subordinate the interests of the ICFI as the World Party of Socialist Revolution to the immediate practical needs of the movement in Britain — as these needs were defined by the clique.

When the International Committee resolution calls for the "subordination" of the WRP to the decisions of the World Party, it is attempting to do nothing more than reassert the principles of democratic centralism inside the Fourth International. This requires, among other things, that delegates from the WRP provide honest reports to the International Committee about the work of the British section, that they collaborate loyally with their international co-thinkers in developing the program of the Fourth International, that they report to all WRP members the democratically-arrived at decisions of the International Committee, and that they fight to carry out these decisions within the work of the WRP.

This subordination of the WRP to the decisions of the

ICFI — the creation of what Trotsky referred to in the statutes of the Fourth International as a "single discipline" — is inseparably connected with the development of democratic centralist methods of work inside the British section. Leaders who are not strictly controlled by the membership of their own section and who are not accountable for their actions will never accept the authority of the international movement within which they work. While paying lip service to the Fourth International, their first loyalty will always remain with the nationalist clique of which they are a part. This anti-internationalism assumed especially malignant forms within the WRP, where the membership was kept totally in the dark about the work of their comrades in different countries. What little it was told was usually of a negative character. The achievements of the "big" WRP were counterposed to the problems of the "little" groups. The weekly or twice-weekly newspapers of the different sections were hardly ever distributed to the WRP branches so that the work of the international movement could be followed by the rank-and-file members in Britain. The historic banner under which we conduct our revolutionary work — "Workers of the world unite!" — became, under the leadership of the Healy clique, an abstraction devoid of real content.

This anti-internationalism had a devastating impact within the WRP itself, because the clique leadership refused to let the membership know about criticisms of Healy's work that had been made within the International Committee. Instead, working behind the back of the WRP membership, it disloyally suppressed those differences within the IC by threatening to split with those within the International Committee who had raised these criticisms. As a result, the WRP membership was deprived of its vital right to know the opinions held by its international comrades about the work of the leadership within its own country.

To more precisely define what we mean by democratic centralist methods of work, let us refer to the organizational resolution passed by the Socialist Workers Party National Convention on April 5, 1940 — in the heat of the struggle against the petty-bourgeois minority led by Burnham and Shachtman. This resolution deals with "The Responsibilities of Leadership" as follows:

"The leadership of the party must be under the control of the membership, its policies must always be open to criticism, discussion and rectification by the rank and file within properly established forms and limits, and the leading bodies themselves subject to formal recall or alteration. The membership of the party has the right to demand and expect the greatest responsibility from the leaders precisely because of the position they occupy in the movement. The selection of comrades to the positions of leadership means the conferring of an extraordinary responsibility. The warrant for this position must be proved, not once, but continuously by the leadership itself. It is under obligation to set the highest example of responsibility, devotion, sacrifice and complete identification with the party itself and its daily life and action. It must display the ability to defend its policies before the membership of the party, and to defend the line of the party and the party as a whole before the working class in general."

As for "The Responsibilities of Membership," the resolution states:

"like leadership, membership itself in the party implies certain definite rights. Party membership confers the fullest freedom of discussion, debate and criticism inside the ranks of the party, limited only by such decisions and provisions as are made by the party itself or by bodies to which it assigns this function. Affiliation to the party confers upon each member the right of being democratically represented at all policy-making assemblies of the party (from local to national and international convention), and the right of the final and decisive vote in determining the program, policies and leadership of the party.

"With party rights, the membership has also definite obligations. The theoretical and political character of the party is determined by its program, which forms the lines delimiting the revolutionary party from all other parties, groups and tendencies in the working class. The first obligation of party membership is loyal acceptance of the program of the party and regular affiliation to one of the basic units of the party. The party requires of every member the acceptance of its discipline and the carrying on of his activity in accordance with the program of the party, with the decisions adopted by its conventions, and with the policies formulated and directed by the party leadership.

"Party membership implies the obligation of one hundred per cent loyalty to the organization, the rejection of all agents of other, hostile groups in its ranks, and the intolerance of divided loyalties in general." (*The Struggle for a Proletarian Party*, by James P. Cannon, Pathfinder, pp. 229-30)

We suspect that the conception of party organization advanced in the above quotation is a very far cry from what members in the WRP have been taught for many years by the Healy clique and its long-time apologists. In freeing itself from International Trotskyist control, this clique sought to cut the WRP cadre off from the great revolutionary traditions of the Fourth International. Now, working together as comrades within a united World Party of Socialist Revolution, we must revive these traditions and make them live within each section.

In conclusion, turning to your reference to the false perspectives of the 10th Congress, it is absolutely necessary that a new document be prepared. This, however, is not simply a literary job that can be assigned to one or another comrade. We need an exhaustive discussion on international perspectives throughout the sections of the ICFI. The damage done by a decade of revisionist downsliding cannot be overcome so easily. We must reconquer the theoretical positions surrendered by Healy and his clique. We must reject and expose all that was false while opposing any form of scepticism that places a question mark over the revolutionary role of the International Committee of the Fourth International. It will be necessary to prepare and exchange drafts, submit them to mutual criticism, and arrive, on the basis of this collective work, at a scientific revolutionary perspective that will be understood by all the cadres of the Fourth International and correctly guide their work.

Again, on behalf of the ICFI, I send you our warmest revolutionary greetings,

David North

Letter from the ICFI to the Workers Revolutionary Party Central Committee

December 27, 1985

Dear Comrades:

On December 17th, the International Committee discussed the four resolutions voted by the WRP Central Committee. The following reply, which I was asked by the ICFI to prepare, summarizes the conclusions drawn from that discussion.

With regard to the first resolution, the IC noted that it contains formulations which are internally contradictory and politically wrong. It begins with the statement "That the differences within the IC be kept within the ranks of the movement. That public discussion by party members and non-members in meetings and newspapers be continued."

This means that while members of the WRP reserve the right to continue *public* discussion in meetings and newspapers with "non-members" — which, under the circumstances, must include political opponents — the differences which arise within the IC as an outcome of those public discussions are to remain internal. In other words, the WRP is to be allowed to publicly criticize policies of the International Committee, but the International Committee can only reply to those criticisms at formal party meetings. Let us give a concrete example: at a public meeting in Britain, Comrade Slaughter states that he is for a re-evaluation of the 1953 split or for a re-examination of *Security and the Fourth International.* Several days later, at a public meeting of the Workers League, a revisionist cites the statement made by Comrade Slaughter and asks the speaker to state his position. According to the resolution passed by your Central Committee, the speaker would be compelled to agree with Slaughter or refuse to answer.

This proposal is totally unacceptable. The fact that it is advanced, however, is cause for great concern. In effect, the WRP Central Committee has passed a resolution which would formally re-establish the very same unprincipled relations which existed between the WRP and the ICFI prior to the expulsion of Healy. That is, the WRP can do and say whatever it likes and establish relations with whomever it pleases, but the ICFI sections must observe international discipline and not criticize the Workers Revolutionary Party. If nothing else, the adoption of this resolution by the Central Committee exposes how deeply ingrained anti-internationalism is within the Workers Revolutionary Party.

In rejecting this resolution, the IC delegates informed the WRP representatives that they were not challenging the right of the WRP to hold public meetings, attended by representatives of opponent organizations, at which the expulsion of Healy was explained. However, it was the position of the IC that the explanation of the split must be based on the defense of the International Committee and its history of struggle against Stalinism and revisionism. The meeting at Friends Hall on November 26th, at which Comrade Slaughter shook hands with Monty Johnstone, adopted an apologetic attitude toward the enemies of Trotskyism, which politically undermined the International Committee. The International Committee stated that if meetings of that type continued, or if the WRP press continued to publish statements which cast doubt on the programmatic foundations of the World Party, then the IC and its sections would have the right to publicly state their differences with the Workers Revolutionary Party.

The first resolution continues: "That we re-affirm our position on the demand for an international commission of enquiry on state penetration of the Trotskyist movement, publicly." This position cannot be "reaffirmed" because it has never been advanced by the ICFI. The resolution of the WRP Central Committee would be enthusiastically welcomed by the Stalinists and every enemy of the Fourth International: "an international commission of enquiry on state penetration of the Trotskyist movement." This means an investigation into the ICFI and all its sections, including the Workers Revolutionary Party. Coming some 49 years after the Dewey Commission denounced the Moscow Trials as a frame-up, it comes a shock to learn that such a resolution has been passed by the Central Committee of the WRP.

The International Committee has, in the past, called for a commission of inquiry to study the evidence, assembled in the course of the *Security and the Fourth International* investigation, of state penetration of the US Socialist Workers Party. The ICFI is prepared to make available to such a commission all the documents and evidence — both direct and circumstantial — upon which the ICFI bases its claim that Hansen was an agent of the US government. This demand is very different from what is proposed in your resolution. Making no reference at all to *Security and the Fourth International,* you implicitly propose to place the Trotskyist movement on trial with an open-ended investigation being conducted by its enemies.

We suspect that you may reply to this criticism by arguing that the resolution is simply worded poorly. If that is the excuse, we would answer by noting that sloppiness on so grave a matter is itself an expression of serious political instability within the leadership of the WRP.

The resolution continues: "That publicly all IC sections defend all other sections." This is the position of the ICFI and we urge that it be implemented by the WRP.

The resolution goes on: "That contact internationally be **at CC level and national congress** level only. That all documents are circulated to the membership internationally."

This item has arisen apparently in response to the meeting of the WRP minority in Manchester that was attended by delegates of the ICFI. We learned that members of the WRP minority, including Comrade D. Hyland, a delegate to the International Committee, have been charged for inviting **IC** delegates to their meeting. We specifically asked the other members of the British delegation to cite the statutes upon which these charges are based. They referred to a statute barring contact with non-party members. If this statute is applied to cover meetings between WRP members and the ICFI, it would mean that we do not have a World Party.

We remind the WRP Central Committee that during the years when Tim Wohlforth and Fred Mazelis worked inside the SWP as a minority tendency in support of the ICFI, they communicated regularly with the leaders of the Socialist Labour League. Wohlforth was even invited to travel to London, and this was not opposed by the SWP. Only on the very eve of the reunification and split with the ICFI did the SWP attempt to make an issue of Wohlforth's contacts with Healy. On May 14, 1963, Farrell Dobbs wrote to Wohlforth and reproached him for "a factional liaison between you and the secretary of the **IC** which is being carried on behind the back of the party." (*Trotskyism vs. Revisionism,* Vol. 4, p. 145)

In a reply dated May 22, 1963, Healy protested the attack on Wohlforth and warned that it served only "to create an atmosphere of suspicion and hysteria which will sharpen the factional alliances on secondary organizational matters thus confusing and beclouding the important political issues." He added:

"We shall in no circumstances stand idly by and allow any kind of organizational measures to be taken against comrades Wohlforth, Art Fox or any other tendencies including Shane Mage or Robertson whose desire is to seriously participate in the international discussion.

"It seems strange that when comrades of all tendencies are seriously striving to organize an international discussion which would lead to agreement on world problems you should now embark on a course in relation to comrade Wohlforth and others that will not only confuse the political questions but may well lead you to take organizational measures against them." *(Ibid.,* pp. 146-51)

For the sake of the historical record, let us note that the SWP refrained from taking organizational measures against the minority — even after the split was consummated — because of contact with the International Committee. The pro-ICFI minority was not suspended until June 1964, after they issued a leaflet to the party membership demanding a discussion of the Pabloite betrayal in Ceylon.

Under Healy it was impossible for members of the WRP to establish contact with the ICFI, and vice versa. Membership in the World Party of Socialist Revolution existed only in words. These were the conditions which prevented WRP members of knowing anything at all about the criticisms which had been made of Healy by the Workers League between 1982 and 1984. The ICFI, therefore, finds it extraordinary to see how rapidly the present WRP leadership, in the aftermath of the split, strives to reimpose formally the same conditions which existed under Healy, informally. In 1982, the chief accusation which Healy made against me was that by speaking with Comrades Banda and Slaughter, I had "interfered" with his cadre. Now, a similar accusation is being made against the ICFI by the WRP majority because it met with a duly-constituted minority!

Not only is it outrageous that such a meeting should be considered a chargeable offense within the WRP. It is also grotesquely hypocritical. As Comrade Beams noted, leaders of the WRP majority, particularly Comrade Slaughter, are in constant contact with rank and file members of the Socialist Labour League in Australia. (It is doubly hypocritical for Comrade Slaughter to condemn the WRP minority for meeting with the ICFI; less than three months ago, when he feared that he was in a minority position within the WRP, he came to the United States to seek the support of the Workers League. He boasted then that he was coming without the approval of the WRP Central Committee.) The purpose of these contacts is to establish a minority within the Australian section. At a recent branch meeting in Liverpool, Comrade Tony Banda boasted that the WRP majority is working to win support within both the Australian and Sri Lankan sections. Moreover, the WRP majority discusses, in a completely undisciplined way, all the internal work of the ICFI among its supporters in the rank-and-file. Members are lined up to denounce the ICFI on the basis of information fed to them by Comrade Slaughter and others. However, the delegates of the ICFI are not to be allowed to meet with members of the minority! This is a travesty of democratic centralism and an expression of vitriolic anti-internationalism.

The first resolution concludes with the following proposal: "That all documents are circulated to the membership internationally." This, in fact, is presently the procedure followed by the sections of the International Committee. Everything which can be properly classified a document is being circulated. As for articles and statements which appear in the *News Line,* the sections may exercise discretion over what they publish in their own press. It was noted at the ICFI meeting that the WRP did not carry out the decision made at the ICFI meeting of November 5th to publish in its press the documents produced by the Workers League between 1982 and 1984. Comrade Slaughter said that this was an oversight.

Resolution 2 states "That the ICFI statement on South Africa issued earlier this year must be re-examined in the light of the split and other subsequent developments. That we call on the **IC** to consider issuing another statement on South Africa."

The **IC** delegates agreed that the present statement, which was written by the WRP and never discussed on the ICFI, is not a Trotskyist exposition of the perspectives and tasks of the ICFI in relation to the South African revolution. Another statement must be prepared which develops the theory of permanent revolution as it applies to the unfolding struggle of the South African proletariat. A decisive component of such a statement is an exhaustive critique of the position of the SWP, whose line on the struggle in South Africa is utterly counterrevolutionary. The Barnes cabal, proceeding from the repudiation of permanent revolution, explicitly 1) rejects any socialist perspective as "ultra-left sectarianism"; 2) demands unconditional subordination to the African National Congress and its reformist Freedom

Charter; 3) opposes any independent political organization of the South African proletariat and condemns any suggestion that the trade unions should consider political action against the regime; 4) insists that the major goal of the South African revolution, which it defines unconditionally as "bourgeois democratic," must be the creation of a large new class of black petty-bourgeois farmers. The SWP encourages the deproletarianization of sections of industrial workers and their transformation into farmers. This perspective conforms entirely to the views of that section of the US State Department which is attempting to develop a plan for the "democratic" evolution of South Africa, while creating a new social base for the defense of capitalist property relations and the struggle against the socialist strivings of the proletariat.

Resolution 3 states "That the ICFI make proposals on the re-establishment of the International Youth Committee of the FI and on the work of the youth international."

There was, of course, no disagreement on this proposal; but discussion on the matter was deferred, for reasons of time, to the next meeting of the ICFI. Comrade Simon was asked to prepare proposals for the consideration of the IC.

Resolution 4 consisted of several points. No. 1: "That the ICFI use their good offices to prevail upon their constituent sections to open up their press to the discussion." This point has already been dealt with in our answer to the first resolution. No. 2: "That the IC set up speaking tours of the sections by comrades from the British section, to explain the split with Healy and his supporters." The ICFI delegates replied that they are always pleased to welcome representatives of the WRP who come for the purpose of discussing political issues. The ICFI advised the British delegates that the WRP would have to cover the travel expenses.

The ICFI categorically rejected No. 3, which proposes an investigation into the Workers League by the Control Commission of the WRP. This matter relates to three ex-members of the Workers League who left the party shortly after returning from extended stays in Britain. In replying to this point, I reviewed the history of the comrades involved. In at least one case, it is indisputable that comrade "A," a highly-regarded cadre of the Workers League, was politically destroyed by his experiences in Britain. There is now strong grounds for suspecting that his experiences in Britain also contributed to the departure of Comrade "B." As for "C," it is now obvious that the conditions under which he worked while in Britain could not have helped him overcome his serious political problems. At any rate, based on the information it now possesses, it is the exclusive right of the Workers League to decide how it wishes to deal with the above-named ex-members. There is absolutely no constitutional basis for the ICFI to accept the unheard-of proposal that "the WRP control commission extend its investigation into all these, and matters relevant to WRP members in which IC members are involved."

On No. 4: "That the ICFI should immediately consider setting up a section in France," the delegates did hear a report from Comrade PS on the work now being conducted in Paris. Day-to-day responsibility for the development of the work in France was given to the Political Committee of the German section.

On No. 5: "That all approaches from the ICFI to either the majority or minority of the WRP be properly conducted through the CC of the WRP." The IC delegates explained that the problem rests with the WRP majority, not with the ICFI. How can approaches from the ICFI "be properly conducted" through the CC of the WRP when the CC defines the IC as an outside force? The hostility felt by a substantial section of the WRP Central Committee toward the IC was illustrated on Friday, December 13th, when Comrade Slaughter hung up the phone on me after I requested that the delegates of the ICFI be permitted to attend your Central Committee meeting. Had the discussion not been broken off in this manner, I could have consulted with him about the invitation we had received to attend the meeting of the minority. At any rate, once the political conditions have been created to re-establish communist relations with the WRP on the basis of democratic centralism, we are confident that the Central Committee will facilitate, rather than obstruct, principled and fraternal contact between the WRP members and the International Committee.

Yours fraternally,

David North, on behalf of the ICFI

Resolution of the Workers Revolutionary Party Central Committee

December 29, 1985

The resolution of the IC is a continuation of the coverup of the false methods that existed in the IC and the WRP before the split with the Healy clique. It is a dishonest and hypocritical document. The Pharisees of the IC declare that they are opposed to the principal architect of betrayal, G. Healy, and his assistants A. Mitchell and V. Redgrave. Strange opposition this, which disciplines the very membership and leaders of the WRP who threw Healy out. In order to carry out its coverup, the IC is now assisting the Healyite clique to complete the job they began, the smashing of the WRP. The IC's unprecedented action was taken in the middle of the WRP's battle against the vicious court actions of the clique.

Your resolution lies, comrades of the IC. The ICFI has for many years abandoned the Permanent Revolution in theory and practice. You want the membership of the sections in the IC to believe you were the Sir Galahads. If you really want to build the world movement now, based on the Permanent Revolution and the principles of Trotskyism, then you would honestly face the past, when the IC was based on Pabloite conceptions of the irreversible objective movement and the abandonment of independent leadership. Where were you comrades? If you tell us now you did not know, then what sort of leaders are you, when the Permanent Revolution could be stolen away from under your noses, and you were not aware of it. In fact you knew, as much as the leadership of the WRP. There was a degeneration, politically and theoretically, in the IC as much as in the WRP. And, if it is the entire leadership which is responsible in Britain for Healyism, so also is the IC. The entire leadership is responsible. Should we then suspend the whole ICFI and its sections? Nonsense! Face up to your duty. Rout out Healyism everywhere and build a principled movement which will thus help you and other leaders to correct the methods learned in the last ten years or more.

Your simon purity is frankly nauseating. You not only participated in the IC when it revised Trotskyism, there are a number of members of the WRP who are witnesses to the occasions when you carried out Healy's methods in relation to comrades, carried them out unquestionably and even with enthusiasm. If there are these occasions with our comrades, what happened in your own sections? Now will you answer to the charge comrades, that members of the IC ordered humiliating physical punishment on a comrade when Healy had declared that he had found water on his toilet seat? In what tradition was this, Trotskyism, the Marine Corps or the glass house? Comrades of the IC, after a near-accident, caused by Healy's striking his driver, you, on behalf of Healy, threatened the driver, a leading member of the British section, and also threatened a leading member of the American section, that if anything happened to the great leader Healy, "we will kill you." And this comrade is now suspended, without trial, under your arbitrary and collective punishment. There is the German comrade, now correctly reinstated by us. He was arbitrarily sent back to Germany by Healy. How did it happen, Comrade Peter, that you promptly followed Healy's action by expelling this comrade from the German section without proper inquiry and disciplined his girlfriend for talking to him.

You wave clean hands over financial matters. But it has been revealed that payments by you were made directly to Healy and not to our financial department. Did you not feel even a little uneasy about this? The overwhelming majority of our leaders and members did not know about this money until the expulsion of Healy. And shall we remind you that this overwhelming majority, when they moved against the Healy clique, went right to the end. Your compromise resolution on the Healy minority was simply brushed aside.

However, let us comment about this past of the degeneration of the WRP and the IC. It is not we who are looking for scapegoats in order to avoid taking the struggle to the end now. Your resolution suspending the British section and the timing of your attack squarely pins this indictment on you. It fills us with great anger that you claim to be defending the principles and integrity of world Trotskyism. You play with phrases like children playing with Christmas toys. The first test of leaders is to face reality and the consequences of their own mistakes. You are running in the face of what happened to the IC over the past decade and you will pay for that.

Defending the principles and integrity of world Trotskyism, by suspending a whole section without written and concrete charges for it to answer, and without a thorough written and verbal discussion. Nowhere in the history of the Trotskyist movement, not even in Pabloite treatment of the French section, can you find such an arbitrary bureaucratic act. You would have to return to the history of the Comintern to find a parallel, or to the British Labour Party bureaucracy, of which many, many comrades in our party have long had memories.

The Workers Revolutionary Party has ejected a most rotten clique from its leadership. The members are proud of that achievement. We have a duty to build an international carrying forward the principles of Trotsky, firmly based on the Permanent Revolution, with perspectives for building a

world party with roots in the masses. That means tearing down all that is false in the last ten years and more. If you cannot face that, then we will fight you, and we are confident that we will have the support of all those throughout the world who earnestly desire to rout revisionism out of our international movement. The membership of the WRP has already shown by its deeds that it will not stop at anything or anybody in its search for historical truth and the source of corruption. We will not be held back by anyone seeking to conceal their own role in the past. Those who want to fight for principles today will honestly assess the past. And those who fight honestly now to remedy the consequences of the past degeneration have nothing to fear and we welcome them into the struggle. But as for those who cover up, we will bring them to book before the world revolutionary movement and the international working class.

Document of the Workers Revolutionary Party 8th National Congress

January 1986

SECTION I — The first priority is to recognize:

1. The perspectives carried at the 7th Congress of the WRP were a travesty of Marxism. They were a rejection of the theory and strategy of Permanent Revolution, a rejection of the law of uneven development.

2. The fundamental basis of the revolutionary role of the working class and the leadership role of the Fourth International, to resolve the crisis of working class revolutionary leadership, was rejected in the WRP 7th Congress perspectives and those of the ICFI 10th World Congress.

3. Our analysis of the world capitalist crisis, instead of being directed at the basic social relations of production, was restricted to the **appearances** of the basic crisis in the sphere of monetary crisis.

4. The false and ultra-left international perspectives were the cover for relations in the ICFI which were the denial of internationalism. The IC sections were used as resources to be continuously bled dry by the "Central Committee Department" of the WRP.

5. Inside the WRP, the relationship of the Centre, working through a rigged Political Committee, to the ranks of the Party in the Districts and Branches, mirrored the relations in the IC: the members were regarded merely as objects to take orders and supply finances without any regard for their development as communists. As in the IC, this practice was concealed behind ultra-left sloganizing: revolutionary situation; Bonapartism going towards fascism; General Strike; Workers Revolutionary Government.

6. Political differences and genuine discussion of these perspectives was sealed off by a false system of mystified "dialectics" by G. Healy. This was used, "applied", in order to impose on all developments in the Party the arbitrary and subjective interests, and the sectarian and opportunist politics, of G. Healy.

7. The leadership elected at the 7th Congress was hand-picked and dominated by the clique closest to G. Healy. His "Central Committee Department", and his clique in the majority of the Political Committee, ran the Party.

8. At the 10th Congress of the ICFI, January 1985, these perspectives and practices deepened the disorientation of the international movement. Revolutionary situations and "perspectives" of mass parties and the immediate struggle for power were imposed everywhere. Dictatorial, arbitrary interventions were made in the work of sections. Communist relations between leading comrades on the IC were replaced by deals and plots. There came accusations of "CIA agents" and financial corruption — accusations led by Healy, centre of the greatest political and personal corruption of all.

SECTION II:

The removal of the Healy clique represented a qualitative change in the Party and the elimination of major obstacles to the turn of the world party and its British section to building a real communist movement with mass support.

That such a movement must be built on the foundation of the first four congresses of the Comintern, and the Transitional Program. Of particular importance are the resolutions of the Third Congress of the CI on the Party and on tactics.

Although a qualitative change has been made from an opportunist propaganda sect we recognize that relationships, habits, and methods which grew up in the degeneration of the Party have carried over into the present. But they are not decisive, if fought in line with an uncovering of all sources and processes of degeneration. That is above all a **theoretical** regeneration of the Party, founded as it is on **revolutionary theory.** Only on this basis will we overcome the wrong perspectives of the past and elaborate perspectives to build sections of the world party fighting for leadership in the working class.

The degeneration of the WRP was at the very same time a degeneration of the ICFI. The struggle of the IC to build the nucleus of the world party of socialist revolution was deserted and replaced by phrases. The talk of inevitable progress of revolutionary movements was reminiscent of the objectivism of Pablo and even of some aspects of the "Third Period" of the Comintern. For a decade or more the IC has not had a perspective for the building of sections of the world party. On this soil, in which the unity of theory and practice fell apart, the abstract "dialectics"; and idealism of Healy could flourish. It replaced the struggle to develop Marxism through the task of resolving the crisis of revolutionary working class leadership.

The resolution on "Tasks and Perspectives for the 9th Congress of the International Committee of the Fourth International" in 1981 is a crass example.

The resolution is centered around an "historic turning point in the development of the world revolution." The turning point? The resolution says, "The turning point is this: it is no longer possible for imperialism to wall off the anti-imperialist struggles of the masses in the former and semi-

colonial countries from the intensifying class struggle in the United States, Europe and Japan."

This is nothing but "objectivism." "No longer possible" it says and with a "squib and a phrase" as Lenin would write, the whole crisis of leadership is wiped out.

Worse still, the resolution declares:

"The 8th Congress of the International Committee voted to constitute itself as the nucleus of the World Party of Socialist Revolution. The decision was the most important since the founding of the International Committee in 1953 to defend the Fourth International against Pabloite revisionism. The material foundation for this decisive advance in the struggle to resolve the historic crisis of revolutionary leadership in the working class was the Iranian Revolution, the greatest strategic defeat for world imperialism since the 1917 October Revolution. The correctness of this decision has been further manifested in the outbreak of the political revolution in Poland ..."

Since the October Revolution? And the Chinese Revolution, which did have a small difference from the Iranian Revolution? It resulted in a workers' state. And Vietnam? Strange defense of the "Permanent Revolution" when we couldn't see a class difference. As in the old Pabloite documents, we ride on the objective waves of revolution. Leadership, the subjective factor, is forgotten. We became the "nucleus of the World Party of the Socialist Revolution" by deciding to call ourselves that!

And this voting for a phrase and talk of advancing revolution, as in the case of Pablo, became an excuse for moving away from responsibilities.

We stand for a struggle for the strategy of the Permanent Revolution in action, not in words. It is not sufficient to expose the open repudiation of the "Permanent Revolution" by Barnes and the SWP. There was a desertion from the strategy of the Permanent Revolution by the IC. It lay in the IC's failure to develop perspectives for the building of independent sections and the substitution of mystical phrases about the national liberation and political revolutions.

The Permanent Revolution also teaches us that the revolution can only be made permanent if it develops on an international plane. Quite apart from the IC's failure to tackle the very difficult questions of building sections or assembling cadres, where have we conducted a systematic campaign to bring out in theoretical work, in pamphlets, in books, in articles, in discussions, that, on a national plane there can be no solution to the revolution in Africa, in the Middle East, in Latin America etc? Or in the political revolution in the deformed and degenerated workers' states?

Re-establishing the Permanent Revolution means to tear down all the idealism expressed in the politics and practice of the International Committee which stemmed from the degeneration of the Healy clique. We must ruthlessly bring out how this degeneration undermined the strategy based on the Permanent Revolution in documents and in our practice.

That is why immediately the proposal of the WRP special conference must be implemented: the publication of all documents of the IC over the past ten years. The IC must be pressed to extend the discussion internationally.

The IC members who support the expulsion of Healy and who participated in the Committee during the past ten years should be welcomed in the struggle to uncover the degeneration in the WRP and the world party and to re-arm the movement to intervene to resolve the crisis of world imperialism.

Party organizations at all levels must actively participate in all working class and trade union struggles, and in the experiences and struggles of the youth. There will be an end to abstract propagandism about "revolutionary situations" and "Bonapartist regimes", and instead a struggle to implant our Party organizations in the working class, elaborating perspectives concentrating on the essential task: resolution of the crisis of leadership.

We stand for a paper built as a communist workers' paper of the type outlined by Zinoviev in his letter to the Communist Parties of 1923. A paper written mainly by its readers. We stand for the re-orientation of the Editorial Board and the running of the paper on these lines.

For the rousing of the Party to its responsibilities in developing worker correspondents and developing the paper as a "friend in the home" of every worker. From the development of the paper as an organizer of workers and the Party, from the growth of its authority among workers, will come the possibility of making it again a daily paper.

SECTION III:

The 7th Congress of the WRP took place after nine months of the miners' strike. The depth of the issues raised at first lent credibility to the ultra-leftism of the WRP perspectives and the regime of whipped-up activism.

But the reality was that these same basic issues, the confrontation of miners with the state, the craven betrayals of the TUC, the Labour leaders, the Stalinists and the centrists, and the burning necessity for a program of transitional demands and for a party able to relate politically to workers coming into conflict with the traditional leadership, inevitably exploded the accumulated contradictions in the WRP. The old, false discipline, was soon to collapse.

For this to happen, the objective developments in the class had to be met by a struggle within the revolutionary party itself. This development did not take a straight line.

Healy's regime [was] a mass of repressed hostilities and frustrations as well as compromises forced by repression, sheer brutality, corruption, misplaced loyalty and the threat of expulsion and isolation from the Trotskyist movement. The Healy regime of intimidation was a material reality, and the breaking of it came about by a prepared explosion in which a small group of comrades working at the Party centre, including leading youth comrades, broke with Healy.

The politics of the 7th Congress, expressed in their crudest form by Healy, had been exposed in all their bankruptcy by the Stalinists and TUC's betrayal of the miners' strike. Alongside the ultimatum of "stay on strike for a workers' government — or fascism", there was a reliance on an "understanding" with the reformist group around Livingstone — the rate-capping protest would come to the aid of the miners in a revolutionary combination.

In fact the apparatus politics of this approach to the Labour left, using the revolutionary party and paper only as political ballast, was the real politics of the WRP and soon it would become clear that internationally an even greater betrayal had taken place in the selling of the principles of the Fourth International in order to gain opportunist

political and financial advantage from national bourgeois governments in the Middle East.

This reached the depths with the WRP paper openly endorsing the Iraqi Ba'ath Socialist Party government's execution of Communist Party and trade union oppositionists in 1979.

But the political conflict building up around the ending and aftermath of the miners' strike was able to break through in 1985 only because the fight to expose Healy's corruption, arbitrary expulsions, assaults and sexual abuses began to break the grip of Healy's apparatus. Healy for some weeks was able to win the majority of the PC to suppress the Aileen Jennings letter, and to use the PC to suppress also the demands of a small number of comrades for a Control Commission to investigate Healy's practices. On August 17, the International Committee was called and used to continue this cover-up, with the real cause of the crisis concealed, and large sums fraudulently raised from the IC sections.

Only by the first week of September did Cde. M. Banda force the retirement of Healy and agree to a Control Commission, and a small minority (8) on the CC began to work for a majority against Healy and what he represented.

They sought and received the collaboration of the majority of the sections of the IC. Torrance, during September and October, made it clear by her actions that she was prepared to go back to Healy and all his practices rather than accept the necessity of ending the whole cover-up in order to initiate the re-founding of the Party. Only the demonstration of this in practice made it possible for the anti-Healy minority on the CC to become the majority.

The events of October, in which comrades working at the center, at the press, in the Party bookshops, and elsewhere, acted with the CC majority to reject and isolate Healy and his clique, are fully on record.

During the same period, September and October, the written political discussion on strategy and tactics was developed. The Healy-Redgrave-Mitchell-Torrance position, developing to their logical ultra-left conclusions the 7th Congress perspectives, was submitted to the CC by Torrance. It was rejected and answered. The documents of that discussion are before the 8th Congress, and the Central Committee endorses and submits for pre-Congress discussion, the reply to Torrance, and the basis for strategy and tactics contained in the document of Cde. S. Pirani, as the basis for developing perspectives from the 8th Congress. Also submitted are the Party pamphlet covering the split and all material in the Internal Bulletin containing the letter to Cde. D. North from Cde. Slaughter.

Thirteen members of the CC elected at the 7th Congress have been expelled from the Party. They are leading a rump of some 150, and the spearhead of their politics is the use of the capitalist courts to smash the WRP. They will not do this, and the Party will unite to repulse them.

The fundamental question is to recognize, negate and overcome the degeneration inflicted on the WRP and the ICFI by the tendency led for so many years by Healy. The documents of the Party struggle from September 6 until now are placed before Congress, in order to arm the Party for a turn to mass work which has not been possible for decades because of Healy's regime and his revisionism.

There can be no dialectical and revolutionary relation between the Party and the working class without an objective analysis of the degeneration which afflicted this Party. **The first and vital steps have been taken by expelling Healy** and his clique and exposing their opportunist politics and anti-communist methods. More is involved than political line, organizational methods, and the reduction of dialectics to mumbo-jumbo by Healy.

The revolutionary party is founded on revolutionary theory, on the scientific world outlook of Marxism, developed by Marx and Engels, Lenin and Trotsky. Bourgeois ideology inevitably dominates the working class, until the revolutionary party can win the leadership of the class, bringing political consciousness into the working class "from the outside." Marxism developed not out of the working class but "alongside it", as Lenin emphasized. It can develop only in a living connection with the revolutionary class, through the work of a communist party.

Bourgeois ideology constantly builds up new defenses, new forms of influence and corruption of the working class movement. The revolutionary party has to **develop** Marxist theory in conscious struggle against all these forms and by a turn to study every experience not only of the working class but of the relations between all the classes. The revolutionary party is not insulated from the ideological effects of the bourgeoisie in its epoch of decay. Only a conscious and continuous struggle **[f] or Marxism** can counter this influence. That struggle, carried into the working class, is the only basis for revolutionary discipline:

> *"How is the discipline of the revolutionary party of the proletariat maintained? How is it tested? How is it reinforced? First, by the class consciousness of the proletarian vanguard and by its devotion to the revolution, by its firmness, self-sacrifice and heroism. Secondly by its ability to link itself with, to keep in close touch with, and, to a certain degree, if you will, merge itself with the broadest masses of the toilers. Thirdly by the correctness of the political leadership exercised by this vanguard and by the correctness of its political strategy and tactics, provided that the broadest masses become convinced of this correctness by their own experience..."* (V.I. Lenin, *Left-Wing Communism, An Infantile Disorder)*

The extent of the damage done to the WRP can only be grasped from this theoretical standpoint. To refound the WRP means to reconquer its Marxist theoretical foundations. Outside of this perspective, all talk of "proletarian orientation" and "ending the rule of middle-class cliques" is demagogy which obscures the fundamental theoretical and political tasks. It misleads and miseducates the youth.

The politics and the practices of the Healy leadership actually produced leaders at national and international levels who were not only mistaken on matters of perspectives, program, strategy and tactics, and organizational methods. They rejected the most basic axioms of the Marxist world outlook against capitalism and capitalist ideology.

It was not only a matter of debating opposed ideological positions. The Healy leadership exploited and destroyed hundreds of cadres who joined this movement from the working class, youth and students. If these cadres had abilities useful to the Party apparatus, and in particular to Healy, they were kept in the kind of relation to the Party where they could be used without endangering or challenging the political and organizational domination of the real leadership.

In the period after the fall of the Tory government in 1974, this corrupt method of leadership predominated more and more in the WRP. 1974 marked the limit of the trade union militancy of the period of boom and full employment. This produced a crisis for the politics, program and theory of the Party. The trade union work, led above all by Healy in an opportunist way, in the Oxford area, by now was bankrupt in the new conditions.

Instead of the revolutionary strategy and tactics, the Transitional Program, which now needed to be developed, the WRP under Healy's leadership began its turn to the ultimatism of the last period. This ultra-left activism for the ranks was accompanied by a systematic turning of the Party into an apparatus around the finance to be gained from national bourgeois governments and from elements of the middle class (especially V. Redgrave), radicalized in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

This petty-bourgeois radicalization was typical of the early stages of a profound crisis, in which the working class at first moves, however militantly, only in a series of sectional struggles still taking the old form (e.g. the miners' struggle of 1973-74). Stepping over the tasks of developing Marxism and turning with transitional demands to break the working class from the bureaucratic leadership (which would have required a uniting of the Party's trade unionists, youth and writers at a higher level), Healy moved from *Workers Press* to *News Line*, representative of an apparatus, propaganda approach to bourgeois elements inside and outside the Party and the ICFI.

The years of work in which the Party's youth, students and the cadres including writers were turned into the trade unions, were thrown aside. More and more, these sections were separated, and related to each other and to the Party only through Healy himself and a small clique. With the development of program and theory stifled and suppressed, Healy himself was built up as the fountainhead of all theory and development of program.

Behind this degeneration stands the weight of anti-theory in the British labor movement. The upper layers of the working class have for generations been corrupted by social and ideological links with imperialism, a relationship institutionalized in many ways; above all in the Labour Party and parliamentarianism. Stalinism degenerated into another arm of this political and ideological corruption. The degeneration of the WRP under Healy's leadership has its own development but cannot be separated from this historical process.

The possibilities for Healy of building a bureaucratic apparatus in the 1970s, through opportunist political relations with the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois, and even open betrayals — these provided the conditions for Healy's anti-theory and activism to become dominant, and for isolation to be imposed on other leading comrades. This process had profound theoretical dangers which very rapidly showed through, opening up the WRP to the worst historical influences of bourgeois ideology and its opportunist effects in the labour movement.

It was in these conditions — which require a thorough historical analysis — that the gross sexual abuses of which Healy was guilty could happen. Only in a regime of anti-communist relations (dressed up as "iron discipline", "battles against subjectivism", etc) could these abuses have been systematically organized and concealed for so long.

Only by driving out or isolating many of the cadres recruited or trained in previous struggles could Healy's cult domination of the new, petty-bourgeois leadership be consolidated. By the 1970s, the WRP leadership became predominantly a committee of party professional workers and middle-class elements with no record of struggle, with workers in a tiny minority.

It is a gross distortion of Marxism to say that the abuses now exposed are nothing more than the "manifestation" of a political line. There is no doubt that only a party with a degenerated political line could contain such abuse on a prolonged and systematic basis. But both the political line and the "regime," this morality, etc, are manifestations (each feeding the other) of the most fundamental cause, the failure to develop Marxist theory, to make, maintain and develop the break from this ideology, the world outlook, of bourgeois society in decay, particularly in the conditions of dying British imperialism.

To rebuild on Marxist foundations means to recognize the thoroughly anti-Marxist nature of the so-called "dialectical materialism" dispensed by Healy and of the perspectives of the IC, which were a rejection of the theory of Permanent Revolution, the basis of our strategy and tactics of proletarian revolution. We have only begun to re-orientate our political line on Ireland, our work in the trade unions, and our Party educational and press work, along these lines. The 8th Congress must consolidate and develop these changes.

Letter from Tony Banda to the Workers League Central Committee

January 23, 1986

Dear Comrades of the Central Committee,

In reading your letter dated 11.12.85 in reply to Cde. Cliff Slaughter's dated 26.11.85, my attention has been drawn to a specific section of that document, namely the last paragraph on page 49.

My "*nom de guerre*" is Tony Banda, presently a member of the Central Committee of the Workers Revolutionary Party, of 35 years membership in the British Section of the Fourth International, and previous to that two years in the Ceylon Section of the FI, namely the Bolshevik Leninist Party of India (Ceylon Section) and the Bolshevik Samasamaja Party. Prior to that, I was a participant in the anti-imperialist movement in the same country for approximately three years.

You speak in the passage cited above of your "great concern at every expression of indifference and hostility towards the International Committee" and the obligation of Marxists to "examine the class forces that are working through comrades — whether they recognise them or not."

Perhaps the structure of this sentence leaves something to be desired? But I really cannot see how a Marxist can be expected to examine something he cannot "recognise" (cognise?). More words a la Healy?

You have heard — from whom you do not say — that Comrade Tony Banda declared that the WRP should break with the Socialist Labour League of Australia "rather than listen to its criticism."

Let's start with this one. (And, while you are about it, I might add that there is another version of this "incident" which is already in circulation in Britain. That is the one for the benefit of the public put out by a group of ex-Party members who seem to have had an ear in our Central Committee meeting where this statement was allegedly made by me.)

Healy will be pleased to hear, no doubt, that the IC has at last got Banda on the run. No mean achievement that, considering what he was doing round about October 10, 1985! It must be observed, however, that we have as yet not had so much as a squeak out of him concerning the inner Party struggle in the WRP. Strange, don't you think?

First, in the interests of accuracy: what Banda did in fact state, in the face of a report from the IC representative on the deliberate censorship of all discussion in the *News Line* appearing in the columns of the SLL press was, "Break, break from them, the two-faced bastards! Take them on, take them on now!" (Pardon the expletives.)

It might be that your informant feared to upset your aural sensibilities, seeing as you are the new Guru designate, but that your IC and its so-called Commission is two-faced, there can be no doubt as subsequent events have proved. But I can assure you that we — all those who have passed through the fire of the explosion that blasted Healy out of the Party — have no stomach for Healy or Healyism in any shape or form, not for him or his whelps, natural or otherwise. And we have finished with mincing our words. It's no thanks to confusion and dissimulation. **We** overthrew the tyranny of the idea incarnate in Healy and his henchmen, past and present. I want to assure you that now he's out of the way, it's safe for you to come out and play.

More than that, we have acquired the ability to sniff out a Healyite dunghill at any range — whether its [*sic*] 90 grands worth at 3,000 miles, or 25 grands worth at 10,000.

You express concern that Tony Banda was not called to order ("order" did you say?) and "rebuked" by the Secretary of the IC. That, if I might say so, comrades, is our prerogative and you might as well know who's master in this house. Healy's days and practices at our Central Committee meetings are over for **ever** and will never, ever return in any guise.

We are accused of wanting to "get rid of IC sections" whilst "seeking to ingratiate ourselves with the revisionists and Stalinists." We are "pleased," you say, "to discuss with these enemies of Trotskyism"! And then: "… but refuse to make available to the WRP members the critical documents produced by sections of the IC."

This I find extremely interesting coming from you, who through your minions, have suppressed virtually the entire discussion on Healyism — the greatest explosion within our International since its founding, and certainly unparalleled in the history of four Internationals — from the pages of your IC press. This is like the thief in the crowded bazaar crying, "Stop, thief" to distract attention from his own misdeeds. Up north Mr. Holier-Than-Thou makes his getaway with 90 grand, while his apprentice/accomplice makes off with another 25 grand down south. Is this your revolutionary morality? Is this your kind of internationalism?

Please name the documents you claim have been refused availability to our members and the circumstances of their suppression. Would you count amongst these, three very brief notes signed in your own inimitable hand and dated 26th October 1982, 7th February 1983 and 21st June 1983? I for one, look forward to anything you may care to produce,

although I must confess it's not easy to reduce hog's bristles to mince meat.

I cannot, myself, judge what Comrade Slaughter's estimation of the WRP cadre is or might be. But I can assure you that this cadre is the most experienced, and toughest and most resourceful cadre in the International and as it begins its recovery from the afflictions of Healyism, it stands ever more resolutely in the face of the cowardly revisionism that continues to grip the IC.

Comrades of the Workers League, we will examine **everything,** right back to Trotsky **and** right up to now, to Security and the Fourth International, the brainchild of G. Healy, to its very latest chapter — and there will be the strictest accounting in every sense of the word.

For too long we have had to tack an empirical, pragmatic course with Cannon, Pablo, Healy and his IC. Pablo did, after all have 21 sections or at least the nucleus of them, with very promising cadres at that, in 1950, only five years after the war. The Vietnamese section in France — emigrant workers — had no representation at the Third World Congress, although numerically they were the largest single group present. But do you know what their place was at that Congress? In the basement kitchen, as serving scullions for the conference delegates!

Well, we are now nearly 35 years on and down to six miserable sections, having recently lost no less than a quarter of our forces. Frankly, don't you think that the situation merits a little more sobriety, even humility, a little concentration of the mind on the life and death issues posed by the split in the IC?

You have already shot your bolt with the suspension (whatever that may mean) of the founding section of the **IC.** This is obviously your scenario for the next move — picking off the "ringleaders." Or is it simply that you think that now you have Tony Banda in the crosshairs of your sights you **imagine** you have three in the bag — Mike Banda, Cliff Slaughter and Tony Banda? Sorry to disappoint you, but there are plenty more of us and, as Custer observed, "they'll keeps a-coming" — every one a cadre — until they have your political scalps.

Fraternally,

Tony Banda

P.S.

I enclose for your delectation a cheap print of the celebrated painting by Ilya Repin — the reply of Zaporozhe cossacks to the Sultan. He thought he could lay claim to the suzerainty over the sturdy colonists of the southern steppe. The picture will, I hope, convey to you just how we feel about your arrogant, ignorant, strutting demand for a total Pablo-Healy subservience to the diktats of Healy's rump IC.

Resolution 1 of the WRP Central Committee

January 26, 1986

1. That the IC, under the leadership of Healy and the WRP, has undergone a political, theoretical, moral and organizational degeneration.

2. During that time, the policies and perspectives of the IC have turned further and further away from Trotskyism. The theory of Permanent Revolution and revolutionary strategy and tactics were never developed in relationship to Vietnam, the Middle East, and other national liberation struggles, the degenerated workers' states or the metropolitan capitalist countries.

3. The theoretical work of the IC, increasingly dominated by Healy's subjective idealist and mystical version of philosophy, degenerated.

4. Increasingly, Healy's decadent and anti-communist morality and anti-Bolshevik methods of organization affected both the WRP and IC. This gave rise to a bureaucratic conception of a centralized world organization under his control.

5. That the IC is neither the World Party nor even the nucleus of the World Party. That in 1966 the IC set itself the target of reorganizing and building the FI. Since then this has not been carried out.

6. That the perspectives, theory and organization of Trotskyism can only be elaborated in a fierce struggle against all aspects of Healyism.

7. That the degeneration of the IC under Healy cannot be separated from the problems suffered by the FI over the entire period of its existence. After the founding of the FI, the first devastating blow was the assassination of Trotsky. Then came the liquidation of the IEC during the war and its reconstruction under the leadership of the SWP. Under the impact of contradictory developments of the class struggle, particularly in the metropolitan capitalist countries after the war, one leadership after another capitulated: Haston, Pablo, the SWP leadership, Healy and the IC leadership.

8. This whole history of the FI must be gone over and reexamined. A discussion must take place in every section on all of these questions. Documents excluded from the seven volumes must be circulated.

9. That the IC sections, having carried out a thorough internal discussion, must as soon as possible initiate jointly a public discussion, issuing a joint statement for a discussion on the history and the tasks of the Fourth International, appealing to all those, all over the world, who are for the *Transitional Program* to take part.

10. That in line with the points made in five, the IC sections recognize that the IC cannot claim political authority as an international leadership. Neither can sections be subordinated to an international discipline determined by the IC. The task ahead is an international perspective to be elaborated in joint discussions, for the IC to lead the fight to elaborate such perspectives, in the course of a fight to establish a genuine center for building the Fourth International.

11. That since the IC has no political authority and is not a genuine international leadership, that it must acknowledge that the suspension of the British section was an organizational maneuver which it had no right to carry out, designed only to obscure the real issues arising out of the split with Healy and the class betrayal which the WRP and IC carried out under his leadership.

12. That we recognize that Security and the FI was a substitute for a real struggle against revisionism and for Trotskyist principles, that all evidence presented and conclusions drawn be reexamined together with material published by the American SWP or anybody else on this question. That such an investigation be carried out internally at this stage, including a full financial accounting.

13. That we recognize that the Gelfand case, while having revealed important facts about Sylvia Franklin, etc., has set an extremely damaging precedent in calling on the state to determine the membership of a working class political organization. That the IC strive to find a means to resolve this outside the courts, including an approach by the Workers League to the SWP.

Resolution 2 of the WRP Central Committee

January 26, 1986

On Saturday, the 26th of October, 1985, the Central Committee unanimously passed a resolution on the crisis in the British section, from the ICFI. This resolution was passed on the basis that 1. the IC was explicitly supporting the expulsion of Healy by the WRP Central Committee; 2. the WRP had to face up to its international responsibilities and reverse the national chauvinism which existed under Healy.

On this basis the resolution was put to a special conference and passed with no votes against and only a handful of abstentions. Included in this resolution was the call for reregistration of the members of the WRP on the basis of an explicit recognition of the political authority of the ICFI and the subordination of the British section to its decisions.

In hindsight the Central Committee realizes that it had no right, politically or constitutionally, to take such a decision. This reregistration amounted to a change in the Constitution of the WRP by stating that only those comrades who signed the form would be members of the party. The Central Committee and the special conference had no authority or constitutional powers to make such a change.

There is historical precedent for the reregistration and even the reorganization under different leadership of a section of the Comintern. But then they were forming a new international with the authority of having just made a successful revolution. The present ICFI has not led any struggle in the working class in any of the few countries it is organizing.

The 1958 congress of the IC stated: "6. In applying the concept of democratic centralism the leadership must act in conformity with the present stage of development of the Fourth International. The leadership's role must be primarily to give ideological guidance to the movement, rather than to be excessively preoccupied with organizing interventions. Before reorganization of the FI, launching any new political reorientation or initiating any major political action, the leadership must consult the cadres.

"7. Functions of the international center can be realistically enlarged only as the growth and experience of the movement permit the rise of representative executive bodies with earned authority. These international bodies must arise from among the leading elements in the national parties. They must be composed of leaders tested in struggle, known and trusted by the membership. Selection must take place in normal, natural and voluntary fashion."

The Third Congress of the IC in 1966 stated: "16. At this stage the decisions of the International Committee will be based on the unanimity rule. The International Committee does not at this stage declare itself centralized organs of the Fourth International. This centralized organization remains to be constructed."

The recalled 8th Congress of the IC passed a resolution "Elements of Dialectics" signed by G. Healy which was the main plank of this Congress. It declared: "The crisis within the recalled 8th Congress of the IC is to be resolved as follows. 1. The author of this statement proposes that the IC as at present constituted considers itself the nucleus of the World Party of the Socialist Revolution and not a sum total of national sections meeting under the auspices of the IC as a coordinating body."

We reject this arbitrary decision which was not based on any real development of the IC in building revolutionary leadership in the international working class. This was a manifestation of Healy's subjective idealism in which he asserted that the IC was the nucleus of the World Party of the Socialist Revolution.

We call on the IC to reject the subjective idealism contained in the decisions of the 8th Congress and face the real task of building the Fourth International. The CC endorsed the IC resolution on the 25th as a weapon against the Healyites. However, it was not used against them. Healy's supporters were properly charged and expelled under the constitution. Now the reregistration has been used as a weapon against the opponents of Healy. It has been turned into its opposite and the Central Committee resolves to discard it.

We therefore withdraw the registration form of 11-8-85 issued in the name of the general secretary. We call on the IC delegates to endorse this decision and repudiate the decisions of the 8th Congress of the IC. The CC therefore instructs branches to submit full lists of membership by February 2 to the center. These lists must be the basis for the election of delegates to the 8th Congress of the WRP in accordance with our constitution.

A Letter to All Sections of the International Committee of the Fourth International and to the Members of the Workers Revolutionary Party

Resolution of the Workers League Central Committee

January 27, 1986

Dear Comrades:

1. The two resolutions passed on January 26, 1986 by the Central Committee of the Workers Revolutionary Party are a declaration of split with the International Committee of the Fourth International and an open renunciation of the history and principles of the Trotskyist movement. The twelve members of the Central Committee who voted for this resolution, along with Michael Banda who deserted his post in the midst of the crisis within his own organization, are renegades from Marxism who have capitulated to the pressures of British imperialism and are placing themselves in the service of the class enemy.

2. Exactly three months have passed since the expulsion of G. Healy and the split inside the WRP. During those three months, the International Committee has sought to overcome the national chauvinism that underlay the degeneration of the British leadership and establish a principled basis for maintaining fraternal relations with the Workers Revolutionary Party.

Events have now proven that it is impossible to establish such relations. It is now indisputable that the Healy-Slaughter-Banda regime was a political incubator for the development of the most opportunist and even anti-communist elements within the leadership and ranks of the WRP.

In the aftermath of the split between the two right-wing tendencies — one led by Healy and the other by Slaughter-Banda — the degeneration of both factions continues.

3. On October 25-26, 1985, the IC presented one condition to the then majority and minority (pro-Healy) factions within the WRP as the basis for maintaining fraternal relations: recognition of the authority of the International Committee as the leadership of the World Party of Socialist Revolution. This condition was presented in a resolution dated October 25, 1985. After a lengthy struggle, the majority declared its support for this resolution. The pro-Healy minority refused to consider it and split from the International Committee.

Healy, Banda and Slaughter together on the platform of a WRP meeting in 1983

This resolution was decisive, for it defined the fundamental political and class issues raised by the crisis within the WRP — that is, the disloyal role played by the leadership of the British section within the International Committee, operating as a nationalist clique and systematically subordinating the real interests of the world movement to the pragmatically-defined needs of the WRP. The refusal of the Healy minority to accept this resolution confirmed that it would never work inside an international organization that it could not control and use for its own nationalist ends.

In accepting this resolution, therefore, the majority acknowledged that the defense of internationalism was the real principled basis of the struggle against the Healy minority and that the regeneration of the WRP was only possible through the loyal collaboration of the British section in the work of the International Committee of the Fourth International. Only by upholding the authority of the world party could the WRP leaders consciously fight the class pressures exerted by British imperialism upon their section — the class pressures which found their most grotesque expression in the degeneration of Healy himself.

From the first hours after the split, however, the majority sought to renege on the agreement. For the last three months Slaughter has worked systematically to mobilize the disoriented petty-bourgeois elements within the WRP against the International Committee. At the same time, he has acted ever more brazenly to move the WRP into the orbit of Stalinism, revisionism and middle class radicalism.

4. Now the Central Committee, on the eve of its 8th National Congress, has explicitly repudiated the Resolution of October 25th. It has declared that it does not accept the authority of the International Committee and, in violation of the same resolution, is recalling reregistration forms which made membership in the WRP contingent on acceptance of the authority of the ICFI.

This means that a purely nationalist criterion now defines membership within the WRP. Neither its leaders nor its ranks are to regard themselves as members of the World Party, subject to its international democratic centralist discipline.

5. At the same time, the WRP Central Committee has repudiated the history of the Fourth International, rejected the political legitimacy of the International Committee, and "instructed" the IC to prepare for a discussion with all those enemies of Trotskyism against which it has fought for more than three decades. In advance of this discussion, the WRP has already made clear that it is not bound by the decisions of the IC since, as one of the two resolutions states, no section can be "subordinated to an international discipline determined by the IC."

6. The WRP demands, in effect, that the International Committee commit political suicide: "We are repudiating Trotskyism and proclaiming its death; therefore, the International Committee must acknowledge its own death as well. We are traitors, and we demand that you join us in our betrayal." That is the ultimatum which the WRP Central Committee is presenting to the International Committee. **To submit to it would be a betrayal of the whole history of the struggle for Trotskyism and a crime against the international working class. It must be repudiated unequivocally — not only by the ICFI but by the membership of the WRP at its upcoming** 8th **Congress.**

7. The political betrayal of Banda and Slaughter, summed up in these two resolutions, provides an example of renegacy virtually without precedent in the entire history of the Trotskyist movement. Though they strenuously deny the existence of any revolutionary situation anywhere in the world — thus reproducing the fundamental errors of Healy's method by turning his perspective of universal "revolutionary situations" inside out — the speed of their own degeneration is an expression of the enormous maturity of the political crisis of British and world capitalism and of the intensity of the class pressures now bearing down on the Marxist vanguard of the working class.

We could, without difficulty, reproduce hundreds of quotations written by both Slaughter and Banda which explicitly reply to the very positions which they now advance. But they are not simply altering their views on certain isolated though important aspects of program. They are now overthrowing the entire content of their political and intellectual lives! As they both approach the seventh decade of their existence, they present us with the miserable spectacle of repudiating everything they have ever said or done.

What is involved here is not the correction of political errors; it is complete political and moral disintegration. Banda and Slaughter, leading a pack of stampeding petty-bourgeois within the WRP, are taking the easy way out. Rather than making a principled correction of the political errors of the past decade, they seek to justify their own betrayals by blaming the Trotskyist movement itself. There is nothing original in this position: they are simply following in the footsteps of all those middle-class Souvarine-style skeptics of the past who always discovered in every political crisis and setback a new opportunity to proclaim the failure of Marxism.

8. The resolutions explicitly repudiate the entire history of the struggle for Marxism since 1940 — declaring, in effect, that through the assassination of Trotsky the Stalinist bureaucracy achieved its political victory over the Fourth International.

According to the resolutions of the Central Committee, the entire history of the Fourth International over the last 46 years has been an exercise in futility and repeated betrayals. All those who died to build the Fourth International — from the martyrs who perished during World War II right through to Tom Henehan in the United States and R. Piyadasa in Sri Lanka — wasted their lives fighting under a false banner.

9. In fact, the claim that the Fourth International died with Trotsky is a repudiation of Trotsky's decision to found the Fourth International. It was the position of the Stalinists that Trotsky's personality was the real axis of the Fourth International and that it could not survive his death.

Banda and Slaughter agree. Their resolution states: "After the founding of the FI, the first devastating blow was the assassination of Trotsky. Then came the liquidation of the IEC during the war and its reconstruction under the leadership of the SWP. Under the impact of contradictory developments of the class struggle, particularly in the metropolitan capitalist countries after the war, one leadership after another capitulated: Haston, Pablo, the SWP leadership, Healy and the IC leadership."

This argument has been made many times before, and always by centrists moving rapidly to the right. In the case of Banda and Slaughter, it is revived to justify their own political cowardice and degeneration. Wallowing in self-pity, they blame history for dealing them a bad set of cards.

At any rate, their version of history is a brazen falsification.

10. A **characteristic** of **all petty-bourgeois tendencies in** the process of breaking with Marxism, as Trotsky explained, is disrespect for the traditions of their organization. Slaughter and Banda have now discovered "in the liquidation of the IEC during the war" one of the fatal flaws of the Fourth International. (Presumably this explains why Slaughter and Banda collaborated with Healy to suppress discussion within the International Committee over differences on questions of theory and program 40 years later!)

Is that all they have to say about the struggle of the Fourth International during World War II? What about the work of the Trotskyists in France, where Marc Bourhis and Pierre Gueguen were shot by the Gestapo in October 1941; or of Marcel Hic, the secretary of the PCI, who was sent to Buchenwald and then Dora, where he was murdered; or of Leon Lesoil, A. Leon, Paul Widelin, all murdered by the Nazis.

Nor do Banda and Slaughter mention the publication of *Arbeiter und Soldat,* the only organ of revolutionary Marxism in German that was distributed by the Trotskyists among the German soldiers.

Whatever their political limitations, these fighters and others all over the world defended the program of the Fourth International and assured its survival despite savage persecution by the fascists, Stalinists and "democratic" imperialists.

11. Having dispensed with the struggles of the Fourth International during the Second World War, Slaughter and Banda make short work of the entire post-war history of our movement: "one leadership after another capitulated ..." The entire history of the struggle against Pabloism is rejected along with the history and political authority of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

Thirty-three years after he fought against the pro-Stalinist tendency represented by Pablo, whose goal was the political and organizational liquidation of the Trotskyist movement, Banda now rejects the historical implications of the "Open Letter" written by Cannon in 1953. Twenty-five years after writing that **"It is time to draw to a close the period in which Pabloite revisionism was regarded as a trend within Trotskyism"** (emphasis in the original), Slaughter demands that the International Committee seek a discussion "on the history and the tasks of the Fourth International" with "all those, all over the world, who are for the Transitional Program..."

For the International Committee to participate in the organization of such an unprincipled pigsty would be an act of unspeakable treachery. Slaughter and Banda now prefer to forget the direct results of the 1963 reunification of the Socialist Workers Party with the Pabloites which they, along with Healy, opposed in 1963: the entrance of the LSSP into the capitalist coalition government of Bandaranaike in 1964 — an historic betrayal of Trotskyism which led directly to the massacre of 15,000 peasant youth in the JVP uprising in Sri Lanka in 1971.

12. The WRP Central Committee renegades proclaim that "the IC is neither the World Party nor even the nucleus of the World Party" and assert that the "IC cannot claim political authority as an international leadership." On this basis, the renegades demand that the International Committee accept its own liquidation and regroup with all the Stalinist, revisionist and anti-Trotskyist petty-bourgeois radical riff-raff all over the world.

Neither Slaughter nor Banda are political novices and they know very well the political significance of their repudiation of the struggles of the Fourth International since 1940. As Slaughter wrote in relation to the OCI just 15 years ago and in response to far more cautious formulations: "Their 'reconstruction' of the Fourth International is a rallying of centrist elements to whom they hand, as a concession, the formula: the FI was destroyed by revisionism, it must be reconstructed. They know what the centrists will interpret this to mean: in an international 'regroupment' we will all begin at the same place, with no compulsions to learn the lessons of past revolutions and past betrayals." *(Trotskyism versus Revisionism,* Volume 6, p. 77)

13. The Workers League will not have anything to do with the bogus discussion which the WRP renegades now propose. At a time when the Pabloites all over the world are openly repudiating Trotskyism and working hand-in-glove with Stalinism to prepare new forms of popular frontism, our only interest is in the destruction of these reactionary middle-class organizations.

Is the discussion proposed by the WRP to include the German Pabloite organization, which is involved in unity discussions with a group adhering to the views of the late Enver Hoxha? Or with the Australian SWP, whose leader Percy, having recently announced his rejection of the Fourth International, now declares: "Let's recompose the left. Let's make it easier for people to find their way to revolutionary politics."

We must assume that included in the discussion envisaged by the WRP renegades would be the Spartacist League of Robertson, from which the Workers League broke decisively 20 years ago and whose degeneracy is illustrated in a statement on South Africa which appears in the most recent issue of their bi-weekly newspaper (January 17, 1986):

"As the black unrest continues, an Afrikaner Hitler can emerge, winning over a decisive section of the white populace. The black townships are already set up for civil war, surrounded by an empty 'free fire' zone. A South African Hitler could seal them off, blow up the sewer lines, demolish the hospitals, cut off electricity, food and water ... and wait. After about 18 months the resulting hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, of dead would secure 'social peace' for a generation."

So demoralized are these middle class forces, to whom the WRP renegades are now turning, that they even oppose trade boycotts directed against South Africa:

"If black Africans will suffer more than privileged whites from economic sanctions and disinvestment, how can this weaken, much less bring down, the apartheid system?"

14. Moreover, the WRP renegades' reference to agreement on the Transitional Program as a basis for discussion is a cynical fraud. The Transitional Program denounces centrism, which it defines as "left appendages" of Stalinism and Social Democracy.

They wish, nevertheless, to base themselves on the *Transitional Program? We* suggest that Banda and Slaughter ponder the following passage:

"Instead of learning from the past, they 'reject' it. Some discover the inconsistency of Marxism, others announce the

downfall of Bolshevism. There are those who put responsibility upon revolutionary doctrine for the mistakes and crimes of those who betrayed it. ...A good many prophets of 'new morals' are preparing to regenerate the labor movement with the help of ethical homeopathy. The majority of these apostles have succeeded in becoming themselves moral invalids before arriving on the field of battle. Thus, under the aspect of 'new ways,' old recipes, long since buried in the archives of pre-Marxian socialism, are offered to the proletariat."

15. With the political dishonesty that typifies petty-bourgeois renegades from Marxism, Banda and Slaughter offer an "internal" discussion within the IC before approaching the revisionists. What type of "internal" discussion is possible when the revisionist line of the WRP is vomited twice every week all over the pages of the *Workers Press?* The renegades have already publicly declared in the *Workers Press* of January 22, 1986 that:

"The WRP's degeneration was an integral part of the degeneration of the International Committee of the Fourth International. A thorough and scrupulously objective (sic) analysis of every aspect of the history of the Fourth International from the time of Trotsky's death is required. This is the indispensable pre-requisite for the regeneration of the Party."

The same article denounces, along with Healy's distortion of dialectics (abetted for 15 years by Slaughter) and the unprincipled relations with bourgeois national movements (but not regimes), the "abandonment of any real fight against revisionism in the Fourth International for a purely forensic pursuit of suspected agents in the SWP of the United States." This public attack on *Security and the Fourth International,* while the Gelfand case is still in the courts, exposes the true worth of the WRP's talk of an internal discussion.

16. We are, however, not at all surprised that these renegades should repudiate *Security and the Fourth International* and the Gelfand Case, impudently demanding that the Workers League approach the Socialist Workers Party in order to resolve the case. The International Committee's exposure of Pabloite complicity in covering up the crimes of Stalinism and imperialism against the Fourth International is an obstacle to the movement of the renegades towards these anti-Trotskyist forces.

There is a profound political logic behind this hatred of *Security and the Fourth International* which was once noted by none other than Professor T. Kemp in his book *Marx's Capital' Today,* published in 1982:

"The same Mandel, as leader of the United Secretariat, covers up for the agents of the Stalinist GPU inside the Trotskyist movement in the United States who opened the way for Trotsky's murder. He has resolutely opposed the inquiry called for by the International Committee of the Fourth International. He prefers to prepare the way for a reconciliation with the Euro-Stalinists in some new and still more treacherous Popular Front." (New Park, p. 187)

And now Mandel is joined by this same T. Kemp along with Banda and Slaughter — for the same political reasons. No discussion with the Stalinists and revisionists can get under way in Britain until the WRP renegades repudiate *Security and the Fourth International.*

Contradicting what they themselves have written on *Security and the Fourth International* over the last 10 years, they now join those who defended Hansen's ties to the FBI, who protected GPU agent Sylvia Franklin, and who directly collaborated with GPU murderer Mark Zborowski. As Jack Barnes, the new found ally of Slaughter and Banda, declared in 1982, "It is my job to protect the rights of American citizens. ... Mr. Zborowski has the same rights as any other citizen in this country."

Just a few weeks short of the 80th anniversary of Leon Sedov's birth and the 48th anniversary of his death, Banda and Slaughter joined hands with those who collaborate with his killer. They now claim that the Gelfand case "has set an extremely damaging precedent in calling on the state to determine the membership of a working class organization." That is exactly the line used by the SWP to distort the real political and legal foundations of the case.

As Banda and Slaughter know, the legal basis of the Gelfand case is that the US Government has no right to infiltrate its agents into a socialist political party, take control of its leadership, and expel members who seek to expose the agents. Like countless civil rights cases waged by the American labor movement over decades, this case invokes basic constitutionally-protected democratic rights against state attack.

17. Why, though, do the renegades feel such a great compulsion to declare their opposition to the IC publicly, prior to any discussion within the movement? Because they are not speaking to the International Committee at all; rather, they are concerned above all with obtaining the approval of the middle class; they are justifying themselves "as intellectuals," demonstrating to the radical snobs with whom they now hob-nob that they have broken with "sectarianism" — by which they mean not Healy's gross political blunders but rather the theoretical irreconcilability of Trotskyism.

The renegacy of Banda and Slaughter constitutes the latest chapter in the political, theoretical and moral disintegration of the right-wing petty-bourgeois nationalist Healy clique in the leadership of the WRP. For more than a decade, Banda and Slaughter worked to suppress discussion within both the WRP and the International Committee, boost Healy's authority and cover up the degeneration of the Workers Revolutionary Party. Not only did they cover up for Healy's grotesque abuse of authority (sexual misconduct, etc.) of which they were fully informed, they lied continuously to the International Committee about the real state of affairs inside the British section.

They now claim that the betrayal by Healy was at the same time a betrayal by the International Committee. But this slander requires that they ignore the actual development of the political struggle within the IC. When the Workers League raised differences between 1982-84 with the WRP's abandonment of the theory of Permanent Revolution and its opportunist political line in Britain as well as with Healy's subjective idealist philosophy, it was Banda and Slaughter who led the fight to protect Healy and isolate the Workers League within the International Committee.

18. The intensification of the class struggle, expressed most acutely in the year-long miners' strike, exposed the political bankruptcy of the WRP leadership and led to the explosion which shattered the Healy-Banda-Slaughter clique. Under pressure from the proletarian forces within the WRP, attempts by Banda and Slaughter to protect Healy failed and the unprincipled factional warfare on the WRP Political Committee got out of control.

Banda and Slaughter then moved for the expulsion of Healy and his supporters as quickly as possible in order to suppress a real analysis of the degeneration of the Workers Revolutionary Party and their own role in it. As for Healy and his supporters, they, too, opposed any discussion within the International Committee of the political crisis in the WRP.

19. The position taken by the International Committee of the Fourth International on the crisis within the WRP was absolutely principled. It sought to organize a principled discussion of differences within the Workers Revolutionary Party. While endorsing the expulsion of Healy for his despicable abuse of authority, the IC refused to enter into any unprincipled alliance with any section of the WRP. In its resolution of October 25, 1985, the IC declared:

"At the root of the present crisis which erupted with the exposure of the corrupt practices of G. Healy and the attempt by the WRP Political Committee to cover them up, is the prolonged drift of the WRP leadership away from the strategical task of the building of the world party of socialist revolution towards an increasingly nationalist perspective and practice."

The resolution further stated:

"The first step toward overcoming the crisis in the WRP is the recognition by its leadership and membership that it requires the closest collaboration with its co-thinkers in the ICFI."

Therefore, the IC proposed:

"The reregistration of the membership of the WRP on the basis of an explicit recognition of the political authority of the ICFI and the subordination of the British section to its decisions."

20. The pro-Healy minority, true to its opportunist and nationalist orientation, refused to even consider this resolution and split from the International Committee. As for the Banda-Slaughter group, realizing that it lacked any real authority before the WRP membership and thinking that it could later ignore the resolution once the split with Healy was consummated, it voted for the IC proposals. (Slaughter also needed time to mobilize the hysterical petty-bourgeois elements within the WRP and stampede them against the International Committee.)

The explicit recognition of the authority of the ICFI and the re-registration of all members of the WRP on this basis was the only basis for further collaboration between the ICFI and the WRP after October 26, 1985. At the Special Conference of the WRP on October 27, 1985, the membership voted, with no votes against, to accept the IC resolution of October 25, 1985.

21. But the Banda-Slaughter leadership of the WRP refused to carry out the mandate of its own membership. It made a deliberate decision to turn against the International Committee. At every point they refused to act as part of a world party, insisting on their right as a British organization to take whatever action they pleased without considering its international consequences.

The outcome of such decisions, taken in response to immediate national pressures, inevitably served the class in-

The year long miners strike in Britain

terests of the bourgeoisie. This was clearly shown in Banda's turn to the gutter Tory press, which demonstrated his utter incapacity to wage a principled political struggle. This was followed by the shutdown of the *News Line* as a daily paper without any consultation with the International Committee.

The culmination of this anti-Trotskyist rampage was the Friends Hall meeting of November 26, where Slaughter shook hands with the Stalinist Monty Johnstone and began questioning the entire history of the International Committee before an audience of revisionists.

From then on the repudiation of Marxism gathered speed. The *News Line,* and since December 21, the *Workers Press,* have become the sounding board for every form of revisionist assault on Marxism. Not even Engels has been spared the effect of the recantation of principles that is being organized under the middle class banner of "revolutionary morality." We do not doubt that it will not be long before the moral crusaders will discover the burning need for a critical review of the "morality" of Trotsky's suppression of the Kronstadt uprising.

22. The October 25 resolution also mandated the International Committee to conduct an investigation into all aspects of the political corruption of the WRP under the leadership of Healy. In the first stage of its investigation, the International Control Commission obtained documents that established that the WRP leadership, beginning in April 1976, established mercenary relations with sections of the Arab bourgeoisie and, literally, sold its principles for money. These unprincipled relations were concealed from the sections of the International Committee.

The IC Commission determined that the WRP leadership was responsible for a class betrayal and, pending a thorough-going analysis of the political source of this betrayal within the British section and a decisive change in the theory and practice of the organization to prevent further betrayals, the International Committee suspended the WRP from membership in the World Party.

23. This action enraged the WRP renegades: their resolution declares: "That since the IC has no political authority and is not a genuine international leadership, that it must acknowledge that the suspension of the British section was an organizational maneuver which it had no right to carry out, designed only to obscure the real issues arising out of the split with Healy and the class betrayal which the WRP and the IC carried out under his leadership."

We dismiss this pompous denunciation with contempt: the authority of the IC does not depend upon the approval of the WRP. As for its lying attempt to besmirch the IC with responsibility for their betrayals, let us remind the renegades that the **secret** agreements with Arab bourgeois were signed on the stationery of the Workers Revolutionary Party. It was the politics of the WRP, not that of the IC, that were for sale.

The political and historical necessity of the suspension was clear: the International Committee was not going to provide the WRP with a political cover for its on-going degeneration and further betrayals of the British and international working class. It refused to accept the bankrupt claim that the degeneration of the WRP was, on the one-hand, simply the product of Healy's personality, or, on the other, that it represented the decay of the ICFI as a whole.

As for the claim that the suspension was "designed only to obscure the real issue" involved in the split with Healy, let it be remembered that it was none other than Banda who wrote on November 2, 1985 that neither programmatic nor tactical issues were involved. "The split has taken place on the relation between the sexes in the party," he wrote.

24. Moreover, the ICFI made it clear to the WRP and to Slaughter that it had identified the political renegacy implicit in the WRP's rejection of internationalism. A second resolution, presented after the suspension, established the principled basis upon which the degeneration of the WRP could be halted and reversed. It simply called upon the WRP to accept, as the basis for the restoration of full membership in the International Committee, the historical continuity of Trotskyism embodied in the first four congresses of the Communist International and the Platform of the Left Opposition; the Transitional Program of 1938; the Open Letter of 1953 and the rejection of reunification with the Pabloites in 1963.

With the exception of Dave Hyland, the representatives of the British section, Slaughter, Kemp and Pirani, refused to support this resolution. This clearly demonstrated that the WRP majority had already decided to repudiate Trotskyism and that the degeneration of this leadership was irreversible.

25. In its class composition and in its program, the WRP renegades represent the groveling conservatism of the British petty-bourgeoisie which is especially characterized by its deeply-rooted class hatred of the proletariat.

The greatest indictment of Healy's so-called "cadre-training" was his inability to train and integrate workers into the Party leadership. For years his regime was sustained by middle class elements, with whom he maintained the most unprincipled relations and upon whom he could always depend to defend him against the workers and political opponents within both the WRP and the International Committee.

It is these very middle class elements who now run the WRP. The "theoretical" lead is provided by the four professors: Slaughter (Bradford University), Kemp (Hull University), Smith (London School of Economics), and Pilling (Middlesex Polytechnic). None of these men are professional revolutionists; in their outlook and lifestyle, they resemble the Sunday socialists of the Second International, not the proletarian leaders demanded by the Fourth.

For them, the fight against Healy is not for the restoration of Trotskyist principles — it is for their liberation from any semblance of centralism. What was Pilling's real grudge against Healy? This is laid bare in his recent article entitled, "Intellectuals isolated by the Healy method."

As for Kemp, who assisted Healy in the frame-up of Alan Thornett in 1974, he has been in political retirement for years — serving, however, on the editorial board of the pro-Stalinist American academic journal, *Science and Society,* along with Herbert Aptheker, the notorious defender of the Moscow Trials. In his literary activities, Kemp is already practicing Popular Frontism.

26. The four professors, supported by a retinue of demoralized and cynical semi-careerists in what remains of Healy's bloated apparatus, are the Burnhams of the WRP. They are not content with denouncing the International Committee and rejecting the history of the Fourth International. They are now openly repudiating even Lenin.

Professor Smith, who now admits that he helped falsify a

Control Commission report in order to frame Thornett, has written a direct attack on *What Is To Be Done?,* declaring that "its theoretical formulations are not the 'theoretical and practical base for the Bolshevik Party' " and claims that the struggles of 1902-03 are virtually without significance.

These views are not merely the property of Smith. Opposition to Leninist conceptions of organization and the struggle for Marxism within the working class has been written into a WRP document presented by Simon Pirani, the front-man for the four professors, whose arrogance is exceeded only by his ignorance. He declares: "Of all the damaging misconceptions of Bolshevism flaunted in the WRP the most dangerous one appears in the 6th Congress resolution: 'One of the central premises of the revolutionary party and its press is the necessity to bring socialist consciousness into the working class from outside it'."

This statement places Pirani on the side of all the social-democratic traitors who consider Lenin's struggle against bourgeois ideology in the labor movement and the corresponding forms of organization required by this struggle highly "dangerous" — to their own plans for betraying the working class.

27. It is no longer possible for Banda and Slaughter to pretend that the split in the WRP last October was about the sexual abuses of Healy. It was only the first stage in the disintegration of the right-wing clique that had betrayed Trotskyism and sought to destroy the International Committee.

The WRP resolutions confirm the warnings made by the ICFI about the preparations of Slaughter for a complete break with Trotskyism. At the same time, they expose that the WRP majority's acceptance of the October 25 resolution was merely a maneuver. As Slaughter-Banda now declare: "The CC endorsed the IC resolution on the 25th as a weapon against the Healyites."

However, now that they have discovered that they cannot any longer subordinate the IC, as they did under Healy, to the nationalist aims of the WRP, the Slaughter-Banda petty-bourgeois clique that runs the Central Committee declare that they "discard" the resolution and are rescinding the re-registration forms.

This is a repudiation of the agreement with the IC and a violation of the WRP Special Conference decision. Just five days before this resolution was placed before the Central Committee, Simon Pirani, in a letter to all party members, dated January 21, 1986, restated the conditions of membership:

"4. Registration of Membership: It was agreed that the re-registration, on the terms agreed between the ICFI, the WRP Central Committee and the Special Congress of October 26 will cease on Sunday, February 2nd, 1986. All registration forms must be returned to me at the Party Centre by that date.

"The list of membership compiled on the basis of the forms returned will be used in checking the eligibility of Congress delegates."

Those terms have now been overthrown. In announcing the withdrawal of the registration form, the Central Committee resolution "instructs branches to submit full lists of membership by February 2 to the center. **These lists must be the basis for the election of delegates to the 8th Congress of the WRP in accordance with our constitution."**

What a mockery of democratic centralism! The Central Committee renegades brazenly violate the decisions of the **Special Conference on the registration of Party membership** and cynically justify their action with a reference to the constitution. Slaughter and the renegades are employing the same corrupt organizational practices used commonly by the Labour Party right wing against its opponents.

In order to assure themselves of a majority, delegates will be elected on the basis of phony membership lists containing the names of people who refused to accept membership in the WRP on the basis of accepting the authority of the International Committee of the Fourth International. In other words, it will be a bogus congress packed with anti-Trotskyists.

28. The main argument employed by the WRP to justify its repudiation of the resolution of October 25, exposes both its abysmal ignorance of the actual political work of the ICFI as well as its rejection of the most essential internationalist principles fought for by Trotsky. The WRP renegades advance against the authority of the ICFI the very arguments used by the centrists of the 1930s against the founding of the Fourth International. The WRP Resolution states:

"There is historical precedent for the reregistration and even the reorganization under different leadership of a section of the Comintern. But then they were forming a new international with the authority of having just made a successful revolution. The present ICFI has not led any struggle in the working class in any of the few countries it is organizing."

On what "successful revolution" did Trotsky base the founding of the Fourth International? This statement shows very clearly that underlying the attack on the International Committee is the renegades' rejection of the Fourth International itself. Their reference to the Transitional Program is thus thoroughly dishonest. The idea that the authority of an international party is derived from a "successful revolution" is that of skeptics and self-seeking functionaries. Trotsky replied to this exact point in July 1939:

"The Fourth International is developing as a grouping of new and fresh elements **on the basis of a common program growing out of the entire past experience, incessantly checked and rendered more precise.** *In the selection of its cadres the Fourth International has great advantages over the Third. These advantages flow precisely from the difficult conditions of struggle in the epoch of reaction. The Third International took shape swiftly because many 'Lefts' easily and readily adhered to the victorious revolution. The Fourth International takes form under the blows of defeats and persecutions. The ideological bond created under such conditions is extraordinarily firm."*

29. Lenin, moreover, began his work for the building of the Third International before the Russian Revolution. Without the ruthless struggle of the Zimmerwald Left, which was only a tiny minority in 1915, against all concessions to centrism, there could have been no seizure of power by the Bolsheviks in 1917.

Let us stress yet another point: Lenin did not respond to the historic betrayal of Social Democracy by proclaiming the death of Marxism. He defended all that was progressive in the work of the Second International and cited these very achievements against those who had abandoned the political and theoretical positions established over many decades. Lenin always proceeded from the objective laws of the class

struggle and the historical tasks confronting the international proletariat in the imperialist epoch. The victory in 1917 created more favorable conditions for the building of the Third International, but it was not the historic basis for its formation.

As for authority, this is derived from the struggle for Marxist principles within the international workers' movement. (Slaughter and Banda have forgotten that such struggles were once the basis for the authority of the British Trotskyists.)

Marxists do not base their international strategy on successful revolutions from which they hope to acquire political authority. As Trotsky wrote in 1930, explaining the formation of the International Left Opposition: "If *the Communist Left throughout the world consisted of only five individuals, they would have nonetheless been obliged to build an international organization* **simultaneously** *with the building of one or more national organizations." (Writings of Leon Trotsky 1930,* Pathfinder, p. 285)

30. As for the claim that the ICFI "has not led any struggle in the working class," this petty lie clearly exposes the real political orientation of the renegades. The day-to-day struggles of the sections of the International Committee no longer interest them. In the early 1960s the American SWP discovered Castro and proclaimed him a "revolutionist of action." This was the way they prepared their liquidation into the corrupt milieu of middle-class radicalism.

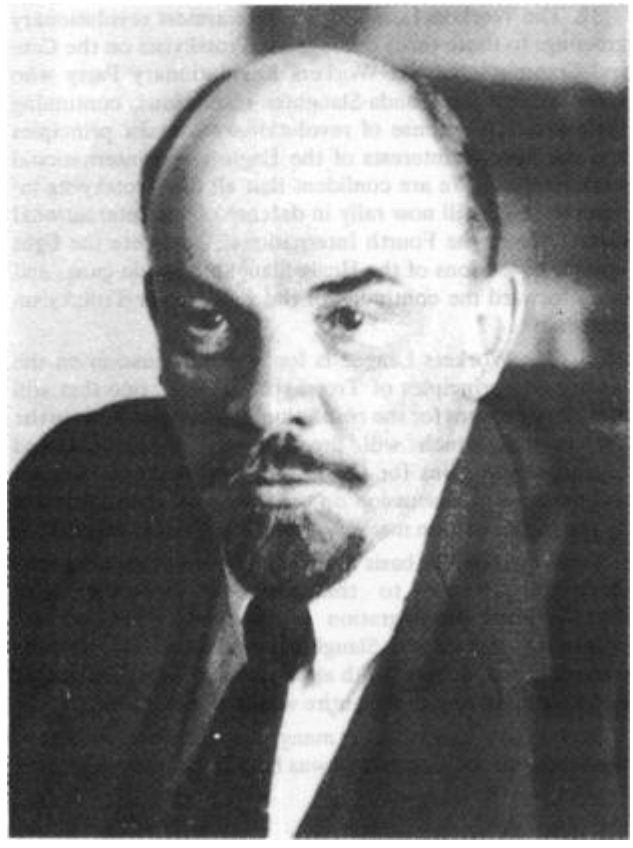
Allowing for the specific conditions existing in Britain, the WRP renegades are heading in the same direction. What they consider "struggles" will prove to be nothing more than their liquidation into the old middle-class protest politics that the SLL fought in the 1960s, adapted to the present-day needs of emerging Popular Frontism.

Moreover, this slander against the IC serves only to underscore the class gulf between the renegades and us. While the WRP leadership, saturated with middle-class actors, journalists and professors, was turning more and more toward unprincipled relations with Arab bourgeois regimes, the sections of the ICFI were fighting to root themselves in the working class.

The other sections of the IC can speak for themselves. The Workers League is justifiably proud of its record in the class struggle within the United States. Tom Henehan did not die while leading the life of a middle-class academic. The present composition of our membership and the party's Central Committee, which includes veterans of major class battles won to Trotskyism through the interventions of the Workers League, is the most powerful illustration of the irreconcilable difference between the class line of our party and that of the WRP leadership.

Nor are the class lines drawn only between the IC as a whole and the WRP leadership. We count among the achievements of the International Committee of the Fourth International the many great accomplishments of the Workers Revolutionary Party and its predecessor, the Socialist Labour League. The degeneration of Healy, Banda, and Slaughter does not detract from their past contributions nor does it wipe out the sacrifices made by the cadre of the British section. Among an important section of this cadre the struggle for Trotskyism in Britain continues, and we in the Workers League are proud to be their comrades.

31. The real political objectives of Banda and Slaughter



V.I. Lenin

are now exposed. Along with Healy, they are centrally responsible for the crisis within the WRP and the disorientation of large sections of its membership. But since October they have worked consciously to exploit that crisis and the confusion within the ranks to destroy the WRP as a Trotskyist organization and break with the International Committee.

Their activities since October have been a continuation of their degeneration over the past decade and confirm that they have broken completely with Trotskyism. In breaking with the International Committee, they are moving desperately to remove all political control over their turn to the right. That is why there can be no political compromise with the Banda-Slaughter renegades.

We call on all members of the Workers Revolutionary Party to decisively repudiate the splitting resolutions of the Central Committee majority. For the future of the WRP, this is a life and death question. To accept these resolutions would be to ratify a complete break with the International Committee. Every WRP member must think this question through carefully: Did you break with Healy in order to wind up with Ernest Mandel and FBI agent Barnes?

At the same time, we warn the IC against the efforts of Slaughter to paralyze the work of its sections. His behind-the-scenes activities are exposed by a letter, which we are enclosing, sent by Slaughter to a member of the Workers League, proposing a secret meeting with a comrade who is not even a member of our Central Committee nor a representative of a declared minority tendency. This proves that the renegades are working to split all the sections of the International Committee.

32. The Workers League sends its warmest revolutionary greetings to those three courageous Trotskyists on the **Cen**tral Committee of the Workers Revolutionary Party who voted against the Banda-Slaughter resolutions, continuing their steadfast defense of revolutionary Marxist principles and the historic interests of the English and international working class. We are confident that all the Trotskyists inside the WRP will now rally in defense of the International Committee of the Fourth International, complete the fight against all sections of the Healy-Slaughter-Banda gang, and carry forward the continuity of the struggle for Trotskyism in Britain.

33. The Workers League is for a real discussion on the history and principles of Trotskyism, that is, one that will arm all our cadres for the revolutionary struggles now on the agenda and which will produce real theoretical and organizational gains for the Fourth International. But we will not begin a discussion on the history of the movement by placing a question mark over the fact of our existence.

To discuss on the basis demanded by the renegades is to agree in advance to the political, theoretical and organizational disintegration of the Party. Yes, we are prepared to debate with Slaughter and Banda — in the same manner as we "debate" with all enemies of Trotskyism, that is, publicly, in front of the entire workers' movement.

34. It is now clear that for many years the development of the International Committee was held back by a nationalist clique leadership that disoriented young sections and exploited their devotion to internationalism. Since September the International Committee has ended the domination of the Healy-Slaughter-Banda clique and has demonstrated the strength of the Trotskyist principles upon which the work of its sections outside Britain are based.

The ongoing struggle of the International Committee is the real political answer to the metaphysical claims of "equal degeneration." The great gain of the struggle over the last four months is that the International Committee has cut through all the attempts to confuse and disorient the cadre with scandals and gossip and exposed the nationalist opportunism that underlay the degeneration of the WRP.

35. Unlike Banda, Slaughter and Healy, the sections of the ICFI will not turn their backs on the past struggles for Trotskyism in which these ex-leaders once played outstanding roles. We will never forget the lessons which they taught us and in which they once believed. But let the dead bury their dead. The betrayal of the WRP renegades has not destroyed the ICFI. Without them and against them, the struggle for Trotskyism, for the development and expansion of the International Committee of the Fourth International as the World Party of Socialist Revolution, goes forward.

Fraternally,

Workers League Central Committee

Approved unanimously

Letter from Cliff Slaughter to Peter Schwarz

January 30, 1986

Dear Comrade,

I understand from your letter of December 1985 that the International Committee, in my absence, appointed you as Secretary. That is why it is to you that this letter is addressed. (I cannot comprehend the associated decision of which you informed me, that the suspension of the WRP does not necessitate removing me as secretary.)

I demand that you place before the forthcoming Special Conference of the IC (to be called before March 1st, to consider whether the WRP will still be considered a member or not) my resignation as Secretary, a responsibility to which I was reelected at the 10th Congress in January 1985. My reasons are as follows:

1. The perspectives and decisions of the 10th Congress have, in the struggle against Healy, his politics and his practices, been effectively condemned by objective developments. No communist can accept them.

2. The IC, instead of preparing a Congress with new perspectives documents and an analysis of the split in the WRP and the IC, has instead convened a Conference to try the WRP majority leadership. IC members have intervened as spokesmen for a minority in the WRP in order to further this attack.

3. The struggle to expose and expel Healy has shown irrefutably that communist principles were betrayed by the WRP and the IC, and that the claim to have upheld the continuity of the Fourth International was the opposite of the truth. Only the struggle to expose that falsehood can be the basis for continuity with Trotsky and the 1938 Founding Conference.

The international work of the IC and its sections, led by Healy, centered around three sectors: (a) Healy's so-called "cadre-training" and "dialectical materialism"; (b) Relations with national liberation movements and bourgeois national governments in the Arab countries and Iran; and (c) "Security and the Fourth International."

Each was the brainchild of Healy, his subjective idealism and opportunism. The three were inseparably connected one with another.

The politics of Healy cannot be understood, negated and overcome, without recognizing that and accepting responsibility for both what happened **and** what must be done to overcome it.

"Cadre-training" was nothing but exploitation and abuse of the hundreds of young men and women who joined the movement to be communists but were "trained" to become anti-theory, anti-Marxist functionaries and/or victims of Healy's reactionary politics and physical abuses.

The "dialectics" developed by Healy was a subjectivist **(not** a Hegelian) and individualistic mystification in order to impose this relationship in a regime which became more and more brutal, obstructing any development of Marxism through communist relations between comrades and between the party and the working class.

The relations with the national liberation movements, especially the PLO, were turned into little more than an unprincipled maneuver to get the IC-WRP close to the bourgeois-national governments in the Middle East. The material and political relations so established, a rejection of the basic Trotskyist tenets of the Permanent Revolution, led to outright betrayals of the working class.

The **"Security and the Fourth International"** investigations became a hopelessly extravagant and paranoid pursuit of the single question of exposing "agents" in the SWP of the United States, at the political and material cost of totally impoverishing the fight against revisionism which was and is vital to the regeneration of the Fourth International. The "investigation" was founded materially on the reactionary **work** of the IC-WRP policies in the Middle East. The real theoretical questions that fight involved were put aside in favor of resort *(sic)* the courts and a vastly expensive pursuit of clues to "agents." These same theoretical questions were eliminated in Healy's "dialectics," in which hundreds were "trained" every year in all sections of the IC. Healy's "infallibility" cult dominated all these spheres, with comrades deliberately isolated in one field of work or another, and subjected to rumor and spying by Healy's closest associates and agents.

It is an insult to the intelligence, let alone to the communist movement and to Trotsky's whole tradition and struggle, to suggest that some particular one of these sectors of the work of the IC under Healy is somehow pure and separate from the rest.

The IC must accept its responsibility in these matters, and individuals must also do so. It is for this reason that I place before the coming Conference and before the IC my resignation. It is, I believe, the task of every member of the International Committee to consider his own responsibility and his own position. The spectacle of those who have sat on this committee for years and who voted with Healy at the 10th Congress in 1985 now voting self-righteously to "suspend" and even expel the WRP is ludicrous, even disgusting, from

the standpoint of communists. To face up to the objective truth in front of the working class **is the first test of** an honest communist. I insist that the **IC** make public in all sections my letter of resignation as its Secretary.

Yours fraternally,

C. Slaughter

P.S.

In September, when the implications of the betrayals carried out under Healy's leadership, without our having fought to stop those betrayals, I told the CC of the WRP that I must now resign as IC Secretary. It was Comrade North who said — and at the time I agreed — that my position as Secretary was important in completing the international struggle against Healy and what he represented, a struggle which at that time was shared by us. I now believe that that was a wrong decision, as proven by the experience of the struggle. It placed the preservation of a body calling itself the ICFI before the struggle to take through to the end the basic search for objective truth on which to refound Trotsky's International.

Resolution of the Central Committee of the Socialist Labour League (Australia)

February 1-2, 1986

The Central Committee of the Socialist Labour League recognizes that:

The two resolutions of the WRP Central Committee of January 26, 1986 repudiating the entire history of struggle waged by the Fourth International since 1940, and the ICFI since 1953 are a declaration of split from the ICFI and a turn to "regroupment" with revisionist forces which have broken with Trotskyism.

The resolutions are the necessary outcome of the persistent opposition of the majority of the WRP leadership to the fight waged by the IC to reestablish the British section on the fundamental principles of Trotskyism following the split with Healy.

By its repudiation of the October 25, 1985 ICFI resolution, with which it only agreed at the time for purely tactical reasons, the majority of the WRP leadership has joined the Healy rump group in refusing to recognize the political authority of the ICFI as the leadership of the world party of socialist revolution.

The response of the WRP leadership to the degeneration under Healy has not been to launch a struggle to overcome the revisionist political line and anti-internationalism which led to that degeneration but to openly fight for the liquidation of Trotskyism, reflecting the deepest needs of the British ruling class.

The growing crisis of the Thatcher government, fueled by the collapse of its economic strategy in the wake of the oil price war, brings forward the necessity for the creation of centrist organizations falsely claiming to represent the Fourth International to head off the radicalization of the working class which will accompany the return of a Labour government.

The WRP leadership proposed to organize this centrist regroupment through a discussion with all those who claim adherence to the "Transitional Program" but who have in fact repudiated all its principles.

The call by the majority of the WRP Central Committee for a discussion on the history of the Fourth International is completely fraudulent because it has already declared that the Fourth International no longer exists.

The majority of the WRP Central Committee is a petty-bourgeois nationalist clique heading extremely rapidly to the right. Having repudiated the entire history of the Fourth International since 1940, it will soon draw the conclusion, as other centrists have done before, that the Fourth International should never have been founded.

Twenty years after the split with the Robertsonites, who concluded that the Fourth International had been destroyed by revisionism and had to be reconstructed, the majority of the WRP Central Committee has arrived at the same positions.

The problems of the Fourth International, particularly in the postwar period, arose above all from the fact that imperialism, with the deadly assistance of Stalinism and reformism, was able to retain power in the major metropolitan countries.

The prolonged postwar boom, a product of the deliberate retreat by imperialism before the strength of the working class, meant that the struggle to educate and train a cadre took place under enormously difficult objective conditions.

But Trotskyism was not destroyed. Its continuity was the successful struggle by the ICFI against Pabloite revisionism in 1953 and 1963.

When these same liquidationist pressures exerted themselves in the WRP, forces came forward within the International Committee to fight them. This struggle ensured that in the split with Healy all the gains of the previous struggles were taken forward and the continuity of the ICFI maintained.

The SLL Central Committee declares:

1. Total opposition to the resolutions carried by the WRP Central Committee on January 26 repudiating the struggle by the ICFI for the continuity of Trotskyism and rejecting the political authority of the ICFI.

2. The International Committee of the Fourth International is the historically formed leadership of the world party of socialist revolution. Outside the ICFI and its sections "there does not exist a single revolutionary current on the planet really meriting the name."

3. Full support for a thorough-going discussion on the history and principles of the Trotskyist movement in order to rearm its cadre but total opposition to a discussion on whether the ICFI exists.

The SLL Central Committee calls on the ICFI at its next world congress to expel from its ranks the 12 members of the WRP Central Committee who voted for the January 26 resolutions.

League of Socialist Workers (BSA) Affirms Principles of Trotskyism

Statement of the Central Committee of the German Section of the ICFI

February 2, 1986

1. The Central Committee of the League of Socialist Workers, the German section of the International Committee of the Fourth International, supports the letter of the Central Committee of the Workers League of January 27.

2. We adhere to the view that the content of the two resolutions passed by the Central Committee of the WRP on January 26 is incompatible with membership in the International Committee of the Fourth International.

Not only does the majority of the CC of the WRP reject the authority and discipline of the IC, it also breaks with all the historical and political gains won in the struggle against Pabloism and the revisionism of the SWP and the OCI.

Hence, the acceptance or any kind of compromise with these two resolutions can only mean the destruction of the IC and its sections and signify a historic betrayal of the working class.

We urgently call upon every member of the WRP to repudiate these resolutions and warn that anything else will inevitably lead to split.

The League of Socialist Workers is not prepared to take the path of betrayal and allow the heritage of generations of revolutionary fighters to be sacrificed on the eve of the greatest revolutionary class confrontations.

What We Defend and What We Stand For

3. The Fourth International, the World Party of Socialist Revolution, exists and struggles today in the form of the International Committee of the Fourth International. Outside the cadres of the International Committee of the Fourth International — as Trotsky stressed in *The Transitional Program* — "there does not exist a single revolutionary current on this planet really meriting the name." (*The Transitional Program,* Labor Publications, 1981, p.42)

The strength of the Fourth International, declared Trotsky in 1938, consists in "its doctrine, program, tradition, in the incomparable tempering of its cadres" *(Ibid.).* If the IC today can lay claim to embodying the leadership of the Fourth International, the World Party of Socialist Revolution, it is precisely because only it has defended this doctrine, this program, this tradition against all those who have betrayed revolutionary Marxism and crossed over to the camp of the class enemy.

Can the fact that the most prominent leaders of the struggle against revisionism in the 1950s and 1960s have degenerated in any way diminish the historical significance of the struggles they waged in the past? To assert this is itself a rejection of Marxism, which understands political struggles always as an expression of the class struggle. Consequently, these struggles always have an objective class content, which exists independently of the individuals fighting them out.

Did Lenin, when some of the most outstanding Marxists of his time, such as Plekhanov or Kautsky, whom he respected and admired as teachers, betrayed their own principles, conclude that it was necessary to place a question mark over Marxism itself? Or to conduct a "public discussion" with those who had previously betrayed Marxism?

On the contrary, he counterposed their honorable past to their present disgraceful renegacy and intensified the struggle against all renegacy, and on this foundation trained the cadre which was to lead the October Revolution to victory and was to construct the Communist International as the revolutionary world party, winning millions to its banner.

In the same way, the IC can today defend past conquests only in struggle and turn its cadre to overcoming the damage which the nationalist degeneration of the WRP leadership has wrought among its ranks and take a decisive step toward educating its cadre to lead the enormous class battles now before us.

Those who are not ready to defend the gains of the past will never be able to conquer the future.

Far from engaging in "discussions" with "all those who are for *The Transitional Program,"* that is, with all the revisionists who have long since betrayed in theory and practice and are in part direct agents of the imperialist state, the task before us is to take up the struggle against revisionism with renewed energy.

In fact, it was precisely their abandonment of this struggle that led Healy, Slaughter and Banda to capitulate to the same class forces that Pablo did at the end of the '40s, Cannon in the '50s and Lambert in the '60s.

Contrary to the contention of those who betrayed the principles for which they once fought, their betrayal was not capable of destroying the International Committee of the Fourth International.

In its present form the IC embodies the enormous theoretical heritage which generations of revolutionaries — all the way back to Marx and Engels — have handed down in a lifetime of struggle. Nothing shows more clearly the extent of the degeneration of Banda and Slaughter than their scorn for the tens of thousands who have given their lives in the battle for Trotskyism.


Manifest
der
Kommunistischen Partei.
Veröffentlicht im Februar 1848.
Proletarier aller Länder vereinigt euch.
London.

Cover of the first edition of the Communist Manifesto published in 1848

Today we stand on the shoulders of these generations and that gives us confidence that we shall resolve the historical crisis of proletarian leadership and assurance in the victory of the world socialist revolution.

What Are the Principles Which We Defend?

4. In a sharp struggle against the various schools of petty-bourgeois socialism Marx and Engels worked out the theory and tactics of revolutionary proletarian socialism in 1840s. In February 1848 they presented the new world outlook in the *Communist Manifesto:*

"With the clarity and brilliance of genius, this work outlines a new world-conception, consistent materialism, which also embraces the realm of social life; dialectics, as the most comprehensive and profound doctrine of development; the theory of the class struggle and of the world-historic revolutionary role of the proletariat — the creator of a new, communist society, "as Lenin summed up its content in the article "Karl Marx." (Lenin, *Collected Works* Vol. 21, Progress Publishers, p.48)

The *Manifesto* had only just been printed when it experienced its baptism of fire. The Revolution of 1848-49 swept over Europe and Marx and Engels decisively participated in it through the establishment and issuance of the daily *Neue Rheinische Zeitung.* Their theory was brilliantly confirmed by the course of events.

By a concrete analysis of the lessons of the Revolution of 1848-49 Marx was in a position to determine the task of the working class with respect to the capitalist state apparatus far more precisely than was possible in the *Communist Manifesto.* The working class can not conquer or take over this state. It must **smash** it and erect its own state, the **dictatorship of the proletariat:** "all previous revolutions perfected the state machine, whereas it must be broken, smashed," was Lenin's summary of Marx's conclusion in *State and Revolution.* (Lenin, *Collected Works* Vol. 25, Progress Publishers p.406)

5. Based on the revival of new class struggles in Europe the First International was founded in 1864. Its head and soul was Karl Marx. The great achievement of this period was Marx's theoretical and practical unmasking of all pre-Marxist and nonproletarian socialist currents — the anarchism of Bakunin, the state socialism of Lassalle. the **Utopian** socialism of Proudhon and English liberal trade unionism. In this way the foundation for the construction of social democratic mass parties, firmly anchored in Marxism, was created.

The high point of the period of the First International was the Paris Commune, the first purely proletarian revolution in history. Its historical significance, despite the final defeat and slaughter of thousands of revolutionaries, cannot be overestimated.

Without the innumerable lessons of the Paris Commune the victory of the October Revolution would have been inconceivable. The Paris Commune not only confirmed Marx's theory that the proletariat must smash the bourgeois state and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat, it also showed for the first time under what form this must happen:

"The Commune is the form 'at last discovered' by the proletarian revolution, under which the economic emancipation of labor can take place.

"The Commune is the first attempt by a proletarian revolution to **smash** *the bourgeois state machine; and it is the political form 'at last discovered', by which the smashed state machine can and must be* **replaced."** (Lenin, *State and Revolution, Collected Works* Vol. 25, Progress Publishers, p.432)

6. Lenin based himself in 1902 on the totality of the achievements of Marxism when, in a new epoch, the epoch of imperialism, of the death agony of capitalism, he laid the foundations for the Bolshevik Party.

The parasitic character of imperialism created the material prerequisites for the formation of a small but privileged labor aristocracy and the complete passage of the opportunists in the labor movement into the camp of the bourgeoisie. Hence, Lenin in *What is to be Done?* insisted on the sharpest ideological and organizational demarcation against opportunism.

He stressed the existence of but two ideologies — bourgeois and socialist — standing in irreconcilable antagonism to one another. He determined the task of the revolutionary party to be the "struggle against spontaneity," against "the spontaneous development of the working-class movement" which "leads to its subordination to bourgeois ideology ..." (Lenin *What is to be Done? Collected Works* Vol. 5, Progress Publishers, p.384)

He insisted that — in the words of Kautsky — "socialist consciousness is something introduced into the proletarian class struggle from without..." (*Ibid.)* and not something that can spontaneously arise from within it.

Upon this basis he developed the plan of a centralized cadre party, which carries out its democratically arrived-at decisions in a disciplined manner, and of a Marxist paper as the collective propagandist, agitator, and organizer of the party.

At the second Congress of the Russian Social Democratic

Labor Party Lenin split with all those who were not prepared **to submit to a centralized party which was** built **"from** the top down."

The victory of the October Revolution of 1917 was a brilliant confirmation of the correctness of Lenin's struggle. All those who rejected Bolshevism finally wound up on the other side of the barricades.

Since then every revisionist tendency has been forced to attack the foundations of the Leninist party concept; and the renegades of the WRP have already shown in practice that they are no exception to this law.

7. The Third, the Communist International, accepted into its ranks only those parties constructed according to the principle of democratic centralism. The 21 "Conditions for Admission to the Communist International" passed at its Second Congress of the Comintern, basing itself on the lessons of the October Revolution, established the requirements for a genuine communist party in full detail.

The first four Congresses of the Communist International elaborated extremely rich material on strategy and tactics of the communist parties, based on the experiences of the heroic struggles of hundreds of thousands of revolutionary workers in Germany and many other countries.

8. When in the first workers' state of the world a bureaucratic degeneration set in as a result of the pressure and isolation imposed by imperialism, which also had its effect on the leadership of the Communist International, the International Left Opposition led by Trotsky undertook the task of defending and developing this heritage.

Against the fundamental nationalist revision of Marxism in Stalin's theory of building "socialism in one country," Trotsky defended and developed the perspectives, strategy and tactics of the socialist world revolution in his theory of the Permanent Revolution.

At the same time he made a Marxist analysis of the degeneration of the first workers' state and developed the perspective of the **political revolution** and overthrow of the Stalinist bureaucracy by the working class. The Soviet Union, according to Trotsky, is a **degenerated workers' state,** which must be defended against imperialism by the working class of the entire world.

However, this defense of the Soviet Union is inseparable from the struggle for the overthrow of the Stalinist bureaucracy and for the socialist world revolution.

From the defeat of the German working class in 1933, for which the Stalinist KPD (German Communist Party) was responsible, and the inability of the Communist International to draw any lessons from it, Trotsky drew the conclusion that the Third International, as in 1914 the Second International, had gone over completely into the camp of counterrevolution, and he began the **struggle for the Fourth International.**

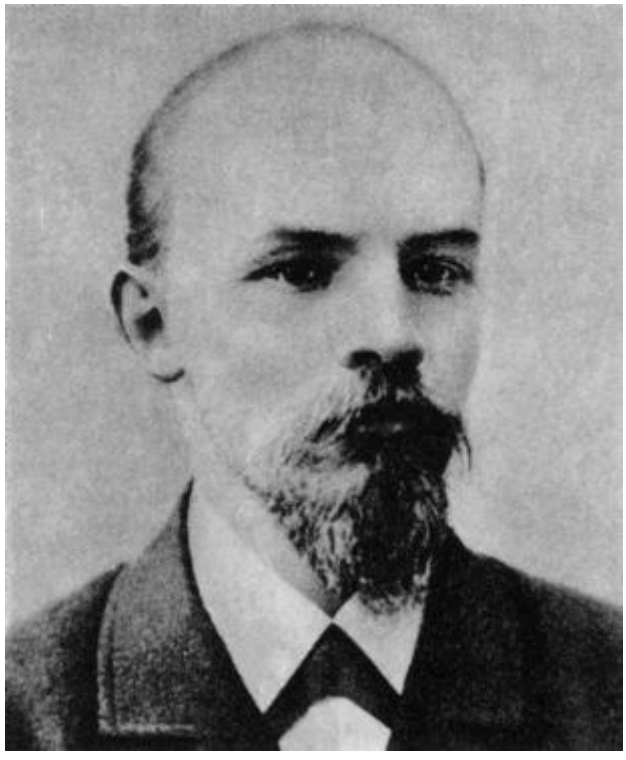
In this struggle Trotsky had especially to confront the centrists, who like Deutscher (and today Slaughter and Banda) claim that the founding of the Fourth International was premature because it had not arisen from great battles of the working class. Trotsky answered them in *The Transitional Program.*

"Skeptics ask: But has the moment for the creation of the Fourth International yet arrived? It is impossible, they say, to create an International 'artificially'; it can arise only out of great events, etc., etc. All these objections merely show that skeptics are no good for the building of a new International. They are good for scarcely anything at all.

"The Fourth International has already arisen out of great events: the greatest defeats of the proletariat in history. The cause for these defeats is to be found in the degeneration and perfidy of the old leadership. The class struggle does not tolerate an interruption. The Third International, following the Second, is dead for purposes of revolution. Long live the Fourth International!" (The Transitional Program, p.42)

9. The founding program of the Fourth International, *The Transitional Program,* is permeated with the spirit of ir-

Delegates to the First Congress of the Communist International



V.I. Lenin

Leon Trotsky

reconcilability to reformism, Stalinism, opportunism and centrism. Far from being a mere recitation of demands — as it is treated by the revisionists, who are "in favor of the *Transitional Program"* — it places at the very center the resolution of the "historical crisis of the leadership of the proletariat," that is, the selection and training of a tempered Marxist cadre.

10. The International Committee of the Fourth International was founded in 1953 to defend the Fourth International against the revisionism of Pablo.

Pablo abandoned the conception of Marx, Lenin, and Trotsky concerning the decisive role of the subjective factor, of the revolutionary party, in the proletarian revolution, in favor of a vulgar, mechanical theory of the relationship between the material base of society and its superstructure.

While on the one side he transformed the class struggle into a series of "objective processes" in which Trotskyist leadership played not the slightest role, and spoke of "a process of the socialist revolution that could not be reversed" — on the other hand, he developed the perspective of "centuries of degenerated workers' states," which expressed his pessimism in the revolutionary role of the working class.

On the basis of his mechanical conception, Pablo declared that under the pressure of the masses the Stalinist bureaucracy would reform itself and finally, flowing from this, denied any justification for any further independent existence of the Trotskyist movement.

While a section of his supporters drew practical consequences from this liquidationist perspective and deserted to the Stalinist parties, for the rest of the Pabloite revisionists it became the starting point for finding among students and intellectuals and later petty-bourgeois nationalists a substitute for the revolutionary role of the working class.

The break with Pabloite revisionism through the "Open Letter" on November 16, 1953 was a decisive step in defending the Fourth International against its destruction. In their "Open Letter" the SWP summarized "the fundamental principles upon which the world Trotskyist movement is built" once again:

"1. The death agony of the capitalist system threatens the destruction of civilization through worsening depressions, world wars and barbaric manifestations like fascism. The development of atomic weapons today underlines the danger in the gravest possible way.

"2. The descent into the abyss can be avoided only by replacing capitalism with the planned economy of socialism on a world scale and thus resuming the spiral of progress opened up by capitalism in its early days.

"3. This can be accomplished only under the leadership of the working class in society. But the working class itself faces a crisis in leadership although the world relationship of social forces was never so favorable as today for the workers to take the road to power.

"4. To organize itself for carrying out this world-historic aim, the working class in each country must construct a revolutionary socialist party in the pattern developed by Lenin; that is, a combat party capable of dialectically combining democracy and centralism — democracy in arriving at decisions, centralism in carrying them out; a leadership controlled by the ranks, ranks able to carry forward under fire in disciplined fashion.

"5. The main obstacle to this is Stalinism, which attracts workers through exploiting the prestige of the October 1917 Revolution in Russia, only later, as it betrays their confidence, to hurl them either into the arms of the Social Democracy, into apathy or back into illusions in capitalism. The penalty for these betrayals is paid by the working people

The occupation of the French Renault plant in May-June 1968

in the form of consolidation of fascist or monarchist forces, and new outbreaks of war fostered and prepared by capitalism. From its inception, the Fourth International set as one of its major tasks the revolutionary overthrow of Stalinism inside and outside the USSR.

"6. The need for flexible tactics facing many sections of the Fourth International, and parties or groups sympathetic to its program, makes it all the more imperative that they know how to fight imperialism and all its petty-bourgeois agencies (such as nationalist formations or trade union bureaucracies) without capitulation to Stalinism; and, conversely, know how to fight Stalinism (which in the final analysis is a petty-bourgeois agency of imperialism) without capitulating to imperialism." (Trotskyism versus Revisionism — A Documentary History, Vol. 1, New Park Publications, pp. 299-300)

11. Soon after the split with the Pabloites the leadership of the SWP began to surrender to the same class pressure to which Pablo had capitulated. In the **struggle against an unprincipled reunification** with the Pabloites, today's renegades of the WRP made some of their most important contributions to building the Fourth International.

In a letter of the National Committee of the SLL (Socialist Labour League of Britain) to the National Committee of the SWP, Cliff Slaughter wrote on January 2, 1961:

"It is because of the magnitude of the opportunities opening up before Trotskyism, and therefore the necessity for political and theoretical clarity, that we urgently require a drawing of the lines against revisionism in all its forms. ***It is time to draw to a close the period in which Pabloite revisionism was regarded as a trend within Trotskyism.*** *Unless this is done we cannot prepare for the revolutionary struggles now beginning." (Trotskyism versus Revisionism,* Vol. 3, p.49)

In another letter of May 8, 1961 the SLL warns the SWP of the increasing Pabloite tendencies within its ranks: "All along it is the conscious role of the revolutionary party — the vital **aspect** that is omitted." *(Ibid.,* p. 64)

In the same letter the SLL criticizes the increasing adaptation of the SWP to the petty-bourgeois leadership of Fidel Castro in Cuba. As regards the position of Trotskyists to such petty-bourgeois nationalists it writes:

"Following Marx, we say: support the bourgeois and petit-bourgeois parties insofar as they help strike common blows against our enemy, **oppose** *them on every issue in which they want to stabilize their own conditions of existence and their own rule. ... It is not the job of Trotskyists to boost the role of such nationalist leaders.*

"But, for us, in every case the vital question is one of the working class in these countries gaining political independence through a Marxist party, leading the poor peasantry to the building of Soviets, and recognizing the necessary connections with the international socialist revolution. In no case, in our opinion, should Trotskyists substitute for that the hope that the nationalist leadership should become socialists. "(Ibid., pp. 64-65)

The document "Problems of the Fourth International and the Next Steps," which the Political Committee of the SWP adopted in June 1962 marks its final capitulation to Pabloism. The SLL answered:

"The connection between the revisionism of the Pabloites and of the SWP leadership on the one hand, and the fight to build revolutionary parties, is not an abstract one; this revisionism represents a definite offensive against

revolutionary Marxism, in line with the interests of imperialism, which needs above all to prevent the new upsurge of the working class from finding a conscious expression and leadership. "{Ibid., p. 239)

The revisionism of the SWP had devastating consequences. It led to the liquidation of the once strongest section of the Fourth International, with deep roots in the working class, into the petty-bourgeois milieu of protest and opened the door to a flood of state agents into its leadership. (See *Security and the Fourth International.)*

The Workers League came into being in the US in a struggle against this betrayal by the SWP.

The SLL emerged strengthened from this struggle, won over the youth organization of the Labour Party and thus laid the cornerstone for the publication of the first Trotskyist daily newspaper.

The reunification of the SWP with the Pabloites in 1963 exacted an exorbitant price: in Ceylon the Pabloite LSSP in 1964 entered into the bourgeois coalition government of Mrs. Bandaranaike. For the first time in history a party which called itself Trotskyist had placed ministers into a bourgeois government.

The International Committee of the Fourth International on July 5, 1964 declared:

"The entry of the LSSP members into the Bandaranaike coalition marks the end of a whole epoch of the evolution of the Fourth International. It is in direct service to imperialism, in the preparation of a defeat for the working class that revisionism in the world Trotskyist movement has found its expression." (Trotskyism versus Revisionism, Vol. 4, p.255)

The responsibility for this is borne by the revisionist United Secretariat and the SWP, who had covered up the class betrayal in Ceylon by their unprincipled reunification. This betrayal opened the road for the bloody suppression of the JVP uprising of youth, causing the death of thousands of revolutionary young people.

12. The third world congress of the International Committee of the Fourth International in April 1966 turned into a violent battle against a new version of Pabloite liquidationism. This was expressed by two groups who had been invited to the conference as observers: the French *Voix Ouvriere* and the American Robertson (Spartacist) group.

Both of them were ready for "unity" with the IC, but only under condition that the IC make a prior declaration that Pablo had destroyed the Fourth International, that is, that it write off its entire history. When this was declined both groups left the conference. They represented a thoroughly petty bourgeois anti-internationalist tendency which rejected a centralized International and was only prepared to accept a centrist International lacking any inner discipline.

13. The principal struggle at the third world conference of the IC against the petty bourgeois, nationalist position of the French *Voix Ouvriere* and the Robertson group was to prepare all sections of the IC for the new tasks facing them in the class struggle.

The growing strike movement in all industrial nations along with the anti-Vietnam war movement in the US and in other countries, the radicalization of big layers of petty-bourgeois youth at the universities and the intensifying, ever more powerful resistance against the Stalinist bureaucracy in the Eastern European workers' states, all these created everywhere extremely favorable conditions for the building of the IC.

Instead of intervening on a principled basis in this movement and training a cadre, the leadership of the French OCI adapted to the radicalized moods of the petty bourgeois youth and attacked the Marxist principles of the IC in a sectarian manner.

The OCI declared that the Fourth International was destroyed by Pablo as the World Party of Socialist Revolution and had to be "rebuilt." It transformed the Marxist tactic of the United Front into a "strategy of the united class front," in order to conclude a centrist alliance with all so-called natural Marxists or "revolutionary organizers of the class" and rejected the centralist, that is the Bolshevik character of the world party.

In June 1967, scarcely a year before the general strike of the French working class, the central committee of the SLL warned the leadership of the OCI that an abandonment of the revolutionary principles of the IC and a return to Pabloite revisionism could only lead to the betrayal of the working class.

Under the heading "The Fourth International Is Not Dead" the declaration of the SLL states:

"Having insisted ... on the continuity of the Fourth International, rejecting the formula 'The Fourth International is dead' as a middle-class, pessimistic rejection of the revolutionary role of the working class and of revolutionary consciousness, we went on to formulate in the Commission on the tasks of the International Committee, the central principles of the type of Party we build, a Bolshevik Party." (Trotskyism versus Revisionism, Vol. 5, p.113)

Further down the SLL described the rapid radicalization of the working class in Western Europe, especially in France, and stressed:

"There is **always** *a danger at such a stage of development that a revolutionary party responds to the situation in the working class not in a revolutionary way, but by adaptation to the level of struggle to which the workers are restricted by their own experience under the old leaderships, i.e., to the inevitable initial confusion. Such revisions of the fight for the independent Party and the Transitional Programme are usually dressed up in the disguise of getting closer to the working class, unity with all those in struggle, not posing ultimatums, abandoning dogmatism, etc." (Ibid.,* pp. 113-114)

The OCI leadership rejected this principled criticism and during the general strike in May-June 1968 adapted completely to the spontaneous movement, refused to struggle for transitional demands in the working class, and thus covered up the betrayal of the Stalinists and Socialists.

Afterwards the degeneration of the OCI developed at a rapid tempo. In the summer of 1971, acting on the initiative of the OCI, the IC organized a youth assembly in Essen, at which the French openly allied themselves with all the revisionists and centrists against the SLL-YS (British section of the IC and its youth organization).

It voted against an amendment to the Essen Resolution brought in by the SLL-YS, in which it was stressed, "There could be no revolutionary party without revolutionary theory" and that "Revolutionary youth everywhere must

devote themselves above all to the task of developing Marxist theory through the struggle against bourgeois ideology in all the forms it takes in the workers' movement." *[Ibid., p.* 194)

The OCI then split from the IC.

14. At the center of the renegacy of the WRP leadership is the abandonment of precisely those principles for which it had fought for decades. In its practice and perspectives there appeared increasingly since the middle of the 1970s those Pabloite positions which it had in the past so energetically fought.

In July 1962 the SLL had attacked the SWP because it had characterized the Evian Agreement as "a major victory for the Arab revolution" and declared:

"No *attempt whatever is made at any general evaluation of this new animal, the 'Arab revolution'. Instead of a concrete analysis of the Egyptian, Syrian and Iraqi experiences, we have acceptance at face value of the claims of the Arab leaders themselves. Meanwhile their jails remain full of communists and militant workers." (Trotskyism versus Revisionism,* Vol. 3, pp. 250-251)

Fourteen years later, in April 1976 the WRP leadership concluded a secret and completely unprincipled alliance with the Libyan government, which was the start of an unprincipled relationship, lasting for years, with the Arab colonial bourgeoisie, in which the task of building Trotskyist parties in the Arab countries was absolutely given up and the Arab working class was betrayed.

At the 8th World Congress of the IC in January 1980 the IC was degraded by G. Healy to a "nucleus" of the World Party of Socialist Revolution. That reflected the growing nationalism of the WRP leadership and its increasing concentration on nonproletarian forces outside the IC.

In Great Britain it capitulated to centrists and left-reformists like Scargill, Livingstone and Knight, while its nationalist practice led to severe obstruction or even destruction of entire sections of the International Committee.

Especially since the victory of the bourgeois Iranian Revolution there appeared in the perspective documents of the WRP and of the IC ever more clearly Pabloite perspectives about "objective processes."

This found its high point in the perspectives document with its metaphysical schema of a worldwide, homogeneous revolutionary situation, which the WRP dictated to the 10th World Congress. In this document there was not even an attempt made to analyze the concrete situation in individual countries and give an actual orientation for the building of sections.

At its session of October 25, 1985 the IC decisively rejected this degeneration, expelled the most prominent leader, G. Healy, for misuse of his authority, and made clear that it would no longer tolerate the nationalism of the WRP. Only those who subordinate themselves to the IC of the FI and its authority can remain members of the IC and its sections.

All those who agreed to the resolutions of the CC of the WRP of January 26, 1986 and rejected the authority of the IC have thereby made it clear that they want to take the road of Pabloite degeneration and of betrayal of the working class and have placed themselves outside the IC.

In Defense of Security and the Fourth International

by David North

February 2, 1986

To the Members of the Workers Revolutionary Party

In recent weeks, a campaign has been initiated by the majority of the WRP Central Committee to discredit the decade-long investigation of the International Committee into the circumstances surrounding the assassination of Leon Trotsky and the infiltration of the Fourth International by agents of world imperialism and its Stalinist lackeys.

This campaign is part of a wider attack on the entire history of the International Committee, from which the WRP leadership has decided to split. The Slaughter-Banda leadership has already established contact with revisionist groups in Europe and the United States and will be working openly for a regroupment with Pabloite and well as Stalinist organizations as soon as the break with the IC is completed.

The attack on *Security and the Fourth International* is being orchestrated by Slaughter and Banda for the following reasons:

First, it serves their immediate factional needs to slander all those sections of the International Committee which are refusing to go along with the political renegacy of Banda and Slaughter.

Second, the repudiation of *Security and the Fourth International* is an essential prerequisite for a rapprochement with the revisionists.

During the past four months, it has become all too clear that the nationalist degeneration of the Healy-Banda-Slaughter leadership created conditions in which the ranks of the WRP were all but totally isolated from the political work of the International Committee. The membership was deprived of basic education in the history of the struggle against Pabloite revisionism, and, with the exception of annual rallies held to commemorate the assassination of Trotsky, was told very little about the results of the *Security and the Fourth International* investigation.

This is a major reason why a large number of members are susceptible to the lies told by Slaughter, T. Banda and others that the investigation was simply Healy's "brainchild," the product of his so-called "paranoia."

While we are able to understand, for the reasons given above, why some members might be confused about *Security and the Fourth International*, there is no confusion whatsoever on the part of either Slaughter or Mike Banda. They are intimately familiar with all aspects of *Security and the Fourth International.* Indeed, their involvement in this work began well before the Workers League was drawn into the investigation. Both Banda and Slaughter participated in dozens of meetings in which the evidence gathered in the course of the investigation was analyzed and its political significance assessed.

Slaughter, who drafted most of the early political statements related to *Security and the Fourth International*, restated as recently as October 1985, during his last trip to the United States, his strong conviction that the investigation was correct and necessary.

In its resolution of January 26, 1986, the WRP Central Committee attacks the Gelfand case for setting a "dangerous precedent in calling on the state to determine the membership of a working class political organization" — although Banda and Slaughter know that the legal foundation of the lawsuit was the official finding that the government takeover of a socialist political organization "is a drastic interference with the associational rights of its adherents and cannot pass constitutional muster." Moreover, it ignores the facts uncovered as a result of the case:

- That Sylvia Franklin was a GPU agent (refuting all the revisionists, particularly those who assembled in Friends Hall on January 14, 1977 on the "Platform of Shame"), and that Hansen and the SWP leadership had lied to the entire workers' movement.
- That the defense of Sylvia Franklin was motivated by the fact that the man who exposed her publicly — Louis Budenz — had also named Joseph Hansen as a GPU agent. This fact was uncovered at the Gelfand trial in March 1983.
- That Hansen's meetings with the FBI in 1940, following the assassination of Leon Trotsky, were totally unknown to the leadership of the SWP. Among those whose sworn statements refuted Hansen were key leaders of the SWP during that period: Felix Morrow, Morris Stein, and Farrell Dobbs (now deceased).

In the course of the case, the SWP collaborated directly with Mark Zborowski — the GPU agent who helped organize the assassination of Leon Sedov, Erwin Wolf, Ignace Reiss and Rudolf Klement — to prevent Gelfand's attorneys from obtaining his sworn deposition. In the end, the court ruled to stop Zborowski's deposition on the grounds that his testimony might identify agents inside the SWP, in violation of the 1982 Intelligence Identities Protection Act.

The WRP Central Committee resolution advises the Workers League to approach the SWP "to find a means to resolve this outside the courts..." This is an extraordinary suggestion, given the fact that the SWP and all Pabloite organizations all over the world refused between 1975 (when the IC initiated its Security investigation) and 1979

Joseph Hansen— GPU-FBI agent exposed by *Security and the Fourth International*

(the beginning of the Gelfand case) all appeals by the International Committee for the formation of a parity committee or commission of inquiry to study the evidence assembled by the International Committee.

Most of those appeals for an objective examination of the evidence were drafted by Slaughter and Banda.

It should be especially noted that the evidence assembled in the course of the Gelfand case established conclusively the fraudulent character of the so-called "verdict" published by the SWP in September 1976 and reprinted in the scurrilous pamphlet, *Healy's Big Lie.* It was proved, on the basis of sworn testimony, that none of the 168 individuals who signed the "verdict," denouncing the charges against Hansen as a "shameless frame-up," were shown any factual or documentary material refuting the charges against Hansen (which, at that time, were still confined to allegations relating to his cover-up of GPU activity against the Fourth International). Indeed, the SWP member chiefly responsible for circulating the "verdict" and obtaining signatures and statements denouncing the investigation, the late George Weissman, testified that he knew nothing about the factual content of the charges made by the International Committee and had never discussed them with Hansen.

We have been informed that in recent weeks, some members have been reading the SWP pamphlet, *Healy's Big Lie,* and claiming that it "refutes" *Security and the Fourth International.* This opinion can only be viewed as another example of the astonishing ignorance that is to be found among sections of the WRP. The substance of the 146-page legal brief submitted by Gelfand in June 1982 in opposition to the SWP's motion for summary judgment (for the dismissal of the case) was a detailed factual refutation of virtually every claim made by Hansen in the articles included in *Healy's Big Lie.* The SWP made no attempt to answer this legal brief. At trial, SWP leaders were pressed to cite the passages in *Healy's Big Lie* that supposedly answered the charges against Hansen. They could not.

At the risk of interfering with the budding romance between the Banda-Slaughter renegades and the SWP, let us cite just a few passages from the trial testimony of one of its leaders in order to show just how well the SWP answered the "slander campaign."

The following passages come from the testimony of SWP leader Larry Seigle on March 4, 1983, under questioning by Gelfand's attorney John Burton.

Q: Is there a policy about unknown contacts between Socialist Workers Party members and the government wherein Socialist Workers Party members furnish information, internal information about the SWP to the government? Is there a policy in your party about that, Mr. Seigle?

A: Unknown to whom?

Q: Let's say unknown to the political committee.

A: It would depend.

Q: On what would that depend?

A: On the circumstances.

Q: Do you have any idea whether or not Mr. Hansen met with Mr. Sackett (FBI Special Agent in charge of New York) in 1940 as asked of you by Mr. Gelfand?

A: I have no independent knowledge about it.

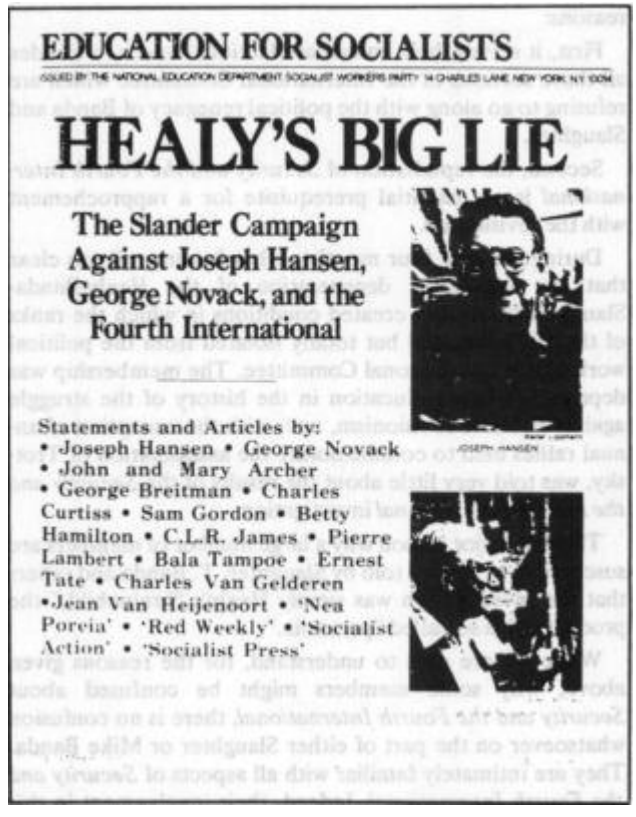
Q: Did you ever ask Mr. Hansen whether he met with Mr. Sackett in 1940?

A: No.

Q: Did you ever ask Mr. Barnes whether Mr. Hansen met with Mr. Sackett?

A: No, I didn't care.

Q: You didn't care whether Mr. Hansen was meeting with the special agent in charge of the New York City office of the FBI?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HEALY'S BIG LIE

The Slander Campaign Against Joseph Hansen, George Novack, and the Fourth International

Statements and Articles by:
• Joseph Hansen • George Novack
• John and Mary Archer
• George Breitman • Charles Curtiss • Sam Gordon • Betty Hamilton • C.L.R. James • Pierre Lambert • Bala Tampoe • Ernest Tate • Charles Van Gelderen
•Jean Van Heijenoort • 'Nea Poreia' • 'Red Weekly' • 'Socialist Action' • 'Socialist Press'

***Healy's Big Lie*— the pamphlet published in 1976 by the SWP**

A: That particular detail, 1 didn't care about. The essential answers were provided in *Healy's Big Lie.* I wasn't interested in anything more about it.

Q: But was that answer provided in *Healy's Big Lie?*

SWP ATTORNEY: Objection. The document speaks for itself.

THE COURT: Well if he knows, he may answer.

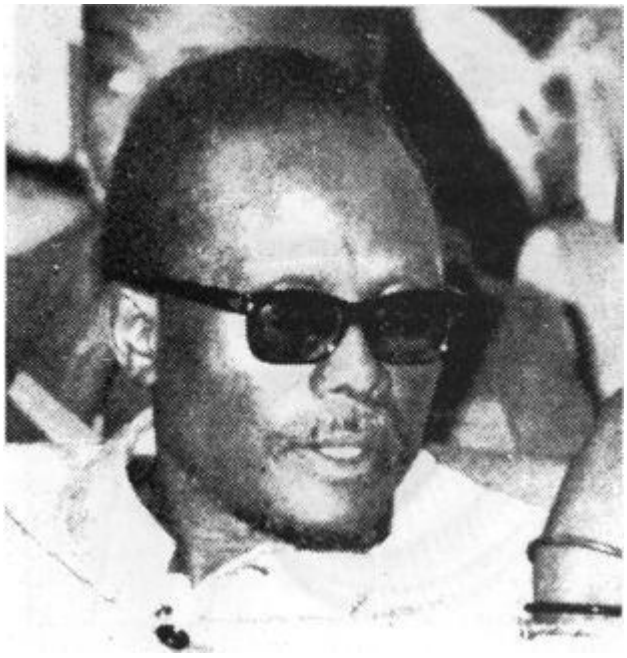
A: Your Honor, I don't know until 1 read the whole thing if that particular detail is answered.

Slaughter claims that there is no evidence that Hansen is an agent. Very well, we await his explanation to the documents related to Hansen's trips to the US Embassy in Mexico City and his requests for confidential contacts with the US government. We look forward to hearing his explanation for the lies about Sylvia Franklin. He should also be pressed to explain the significance of Budenz's identification of Hansen as a GPU agent.

If he attempts to answer these questions at all, he can do nothing more than repeat the old discredited lies of Hansen and the SWP leaders.

As for Banda, how does he reconcile his present vilification of *Security and the Fourth International* with the analysis he wrote 10 years ago of the SWP's position on the Angolan revolution, which carried the suggestive title, *SWP: Apologist and Defender of Imperialism.* This statement, which Banda wrote in the name of the International Committee, was a scathing denunciation of the SWP's opposition to the MPLA and its support for the CIA-South African-backed forces of the FNLA and UNITA. For those members of the WRP who perhaps do not remember the background of this polemic, Banda's statement was written after the SWP National Committee had specifically justified Holden Roberto's acceptance of CIA money and demanded that the MPLA call off its struggle against the Angolan agents of imperialism. In concluding his analysis Banda declared:

"The SWP's veiled support for the CIA-financed organizations and their overt hostility to the MPLA is inseparably tied up with the gross betrayal of Trotskyism which is expressed in the refusal of SWP leaders Novack and Hansen to answer any of the charges made against them by the International Committee of the Fourth International on the question of security and the Fourth International. Their consistent refusal to do anything to rid the movement of the stigma of GPU intrigue and provocation today renders them just as vulnerable to the pressure of the CIA.



Holden Roberto

Max Wechsler

"This group's degeneration into chauvinism and anti-communism is now almost complete with its abandonment of the national liberation struggle in Angola. This reveals a group of middle class skeptics which is being rapidly transformed — like the late Shachtman — into a counter-revolutionary agency of the State Department."

The fact that Banda is now prepared to denounce *Security and the Fourth International* and call upon the Workers League to approach the SWP is a measure of his own appalling political degeneration over the last decade. Both he and Slaughter have so completely abandoned themselves to opportunism that they change principled positions virtually overnight in order to suit their immediate factional ends. But they are not merely changing their minds. They are changing their class positions.

Aside from the factional and unprincipled motivations of Banda and Slaughter, we must acknowledge the fact that there are many comrades within the WRP who, as a result of the betrayals of the old leadership, have been prevented from familiarizing themselves with — let alone making a systematic study of — *Security and the Fourth International.* Many know little, if anything at all, about the political circumstances which gave rise to the investigation. Even before the International Committee began its investigation, a whole series of events had taken place within the Pabloite movement internationally which raised serious questions about the role of state agencies inside the revisionist organizations:

• The Gery Lawless affair, in which a leading member of the IMG achieved notoriety by publicly attributing a

Bala Tampoe

bombing to the IRA. He became known in the press as "The Man Who Tipped Off Scotland Yard."

• The Kevin Gately inquiry, in which an unidentified IMG member — who remained anonymous with the agreement of the organization's leadership — supplied Lord Justice Scarman with information which contradicted the previous testimony of IMG members and led to the absolving of the police of responsibility for Gately's death.

• The case of Max Wechsler, the minutes secretary of the executive committee of the Australian Pabloites, who revealed that he worked for the Australian Security Intelligence Organization (ASIO).

• The case of Bala Tampoe, the Sri Lankan Pabloite leader, who travelled to the United States and met with US Defense Secretary Robert McNamara on a junket financed by the CIA-controlled Asia Foundation.

During the period when the above incidents came to light (1974-75) the fall-out from the Watergate scandal in Washington led to the exposure of massive government infiltration of the US Socialist Workers Party, involving scores of "black-bag" operations and hundreds of agents and informants.

It was against this background that Hansen made his extraordinary intervention in defense of Tim Wohlforth in March 1975. Wohlforth, as some members of the WRP may recall, deserted the Workers League after the International Committee and the Workers League's Central Committee voted to establish a Commission of Inquiry to investigate his failure to report the family connections of Nancy Fields, his personal companion, to high-level CIA operatives.

In a fit of subjective rage, the immediate form assumed by his movement to the right, Wohlforth denounced the International Committee, repudiated 14 years of struggle against Pabloite revisionism, and rejoined the SWP. In turn, Hansen denounced Healy's actions in relation to Wohlforth as "paranoia."

One week later, in the April 7, 1975 edition of *Intercontinental Press,* in an article entitled "Red Lion Square — where were the heroes of the WRP?", **it was Hansen who first raised the question of agents!**

"Has the WRP been infiltrated by agents of the Special Branch? What are the identities of those in the WRP who suggested that the best course was to have nothing to do with the demonstration against fascism in Red Lion Square?"

As Slaughter no doubt prefers to forget, he replied to this statement on May 29, 1975, immediately after the Sixth Congress of the International Committee of the Fourth International. He proposed the formation of a parity commission consisting of an equal number of members from the IC and the United Secretariat to investigate the questions raised by Hansen and other matters related to the security of the movement. The letter stated that "G. Healy will present himself for questioning before the joint committee if Joseph Hansen will do so as well." Hansen, as Slaughter knows, rejected this proposal.

Slaughter renewed the proposal in a letter dated June 21, 1975. Hansen never replied to it.

On October 23, 1975, Slaughter wrote a letter in which he took up Hansen's evasions:

"Security is not only an organizational question, but above all a fundamental political question of the struggle of the world party of socialist revolution against the capitalist state, against the intelligence and repressive agencies of the imperialist powers, and against the Stalinist bureaucracy, the main counter-revolutionary force in the world arena, dedicated since its inception to the liquidation of the Fourth International.

"The training of revolutionary cadres for the revolutionary struggles of today cannot be carried out without a relentless fight to establish the historical con-

Tim Wohlforth

tinuity of Trotsky's life and death battle against the Stalinist bureaucracy.

"When Hansen lyingly accuses the Workers Revolutionary Party of being led by police agents and provocateurs, but then rejects a security investigation which would hit decisively at the Stalinists and their agents in the movement, what role is he playing? Why has he hitherto insisted on covering up the great historical questions concerning the murder of the founder of the Fourth International and his closest collaborators? What is the responsibility of those, like Hansen, who have criminally neglected these questions and now refuse to take them up?"

Perhaps Slaughter will argue that he wrote those lines under Healy's direction and that he did not believe them at the time. But if, indeed, Slaughter wants us to accept that he has simply functioned as a gun for hire and professional liar for the last 30 years of his life, there is no reason to grant any credibility to his present positions. For our part, however, we have a far higher estimate of Slaughter's past and his political contributions to the building of the International Committee. In repudiating this past, he is abandoning all that was principled in his many years of struggle for Trotskyism.

In this pamphlet, we are presenting to the members of the Workers Revolutionary Party a small part of the record of *Security and the Fourth International* — especially those documents which relate to the origins of this historic campaign. We regret that it is necessary to repeat now to members of the British section what we were telling members of the SWP in the United States more than a decade ago. But throughout the history of the revolutionary movement, there have been times of political crisis when it has been necessary to defend against attack all the old conquests of Marxism. This must now be done within the oldest and founding section of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

David North

Statement of the National Committee of the Young Socialists (Britain)

February 3, 1986

The Young Socialists National Committee (majority) is completely opposed to the social-chauvinist and anti-Trotskyist line of the WRP Central Committee majority leadership.

We reject the two resolutions passed by this same "leadership" at the "Central Committee" meeting on January 26, 1986 which amounted to a declaration of a split with the International Committee of the Fourth International and continued and **deepened** the nationalist degeneration of our Party under Healy.

The greatest crime of the Healy leadership was the abandonment of Trotskyist principles embodied in the Theory of the Permanent Revolution, the cynical abuse of the ICFI under the guise of "developing the British section" and the bloody betrayals of the international working class.

The rejection of the working class as the revolutionary force in society and abandoning the fight to build revolutionary Trotskyist leadership on a world scale, allowed Healy's grotesque attacks to emerge and go unchallenged.

It was on this basis, the refusal of the then pro-Healy minority to subordinate to the ICFI as the World Party and accept its authority, that Healy and his supporters were expelled from the International Committee.

They have continued their attacks on the IC by working inside the sections to break them up and politically destroy the IC as the World Party.

However, their actions are now being given political credibility by the same anti-Trotskyist and nationalist methods of the WRP Central Committee, in particular Cdes. Slaughter and Banda who have also been working within IC sections to break up the International Committee.

It confirms our analysis that the split within the Party leadership was between two right-wing factions and took an organizational form only. Had the Party leadership had its way, Healy would be quietly in retirement somewhere (probably writing books on "dialectical materialism"), the demands for control commissions silenced with the Party never knowing the truth and the International Committee an appendage of the WRP. That is the line which was being taken by the CC — such is the unprincipled nature of our "leadership."

It was the **membership** who refused to let the issues be silenced, who took decisive action in the fight for Trotskyism and demanded answers, inspired by the invaluable work undertaken by the American Workers League in making a political analysis of the degeneration of the Party.

The WRP CC under the leadership of Cdes. Banda and Slaughter now try to hide their own roles in the revision of Trotskyism and the theoretical "cover" which they provided for Healy, by whipping up nationalism and social-chauvinism within our Party.

The Young Socialists National Committee led the fight to expose Healy and his politics. We will lead the fight to expose the group of anti-Trotskyist renegades who now pose as the leadership of our movement.

We condemn the slanderous attacks which these "leaders" have made on our youth movement, equalled only by Healy, and their support both verbally and physically for the Runcorn comrades who refuse to print our paper and now are to join the CC in censoring it.

We salute the role of the ICFI in exposing the complete political degeneration of both Healy and the Banda-Slaughter faction, and their decision to suspend the Workers Revolutionary Party from the International Committee.

Faced with a total political division between the WRP and YS leadership, the YS National Committee is left with no alternative but to take these basic, fundamental differences to the International Committee of the Fourth International if our youth movement is to survive and flourish.

- Stand in political solidarity with the International Committee of the Fourth International!
- Expose and defeat all revisers of Trotskyism — both inside and out of the WRP!
- Build the Young Socialists and the International Youth Committee of the Fourth International!
- Forward to the Trotskyist World Party of Socialist Revolution!

Young Socialists National Committee

"For a Public Discussion on Healy's IC"

Workers Press Article by Dave Good

February 7, 1986

In November last year the Workers Revolutionary Party held a meeting at Friends Meeting House on the question of "Revolutionary Morality and the split in the WRP." Speaking on behalf of the Central Committee, Cliff Slaughter pledged that "We are at the beginning of an objective analysis, and all those who wish to really learn the lessons can certainly participate. We will examine all questions as Trotskyists."

That was more than two months ago. Many other groups have produced material on the crisis in the ranks of our movement and a public discussion on the degeneration of the WRP is underway.

In the February issue of *Socialist Viewpoint* there is an article by John Lister on the internal discussion now taking place within the WRP. He was one of those expelled from the WRP in 1974, along with Alan Thornett and supporters. The 1974 expulsions have been viewed with some criticism by a lot of members of the WRP since the expulsion of Healy in October 1985. Indeed Cyril Smith, the chairman of the Control Commission in 1974 which called for the expulsion of Thornett, described it as a "controlled commission" in the pages of the *Workers Press.*

The present Control Commission of the Workers Revolutionary Party is reexamining the 1974 expulsions and will present a report on its findings to the party's 8th Congress in February-March 1986.

In the article. Lister makes the following point in relation to the WRP Central Committee's decision to engage in public discussion on the degeneration of the party:

"The very notion of discussion with other left-wing currents was sufficient to send the Healy group into near apoplexy, denouncing Slaughter and others as 'centrists and liquidationists' for contemplating such a course.

"Under this withering fire (from such withered sectarians) sections of the WRP majority appear to have quailed and retreated somewhat from the bold stance in favor of open discussion outlined by Slaughter in the first public meetings on the split."

Lister does have a point, since November 1985 there has been a certain reluctance within the leadership of the WRP to engage in the public discussion which was decided upon. That is not to say that there has been no change in the public stance of the party, but there have been some questions which have been considered almost taboo in the pages of our press.

The silence of the *Workers Press* on a number of questions, especially matters which would formerly have been considered "internal" party matters, has hindered the party's struggle against Healyism and even led to covering up for some of its defenders internationally. I believe that this is an unprincipled way for our party to proceed and one which must be changed forthwith.

In particular we have remained silent on the political frameup being hatched by the International Committee of the Fourth International against the present leadership of the WRP. Alas, this silence can be continued no longer, unless our party is prepared to ignore the discussion taking place publicly, or even worse to attempt to deny the truth.

In the *Socialist Viewpoint* article Lister states in relation to the present leadership of the WRP that "they have been challenged by an opposition promoted and encouraged by Dave North, leader of the WRP's American sister party, the Workers League. North, donning the barely convincing guise of a longstanding opponent of Healy, has used the remnants of the WRP's 'International', the International Committee, as a lever against the Slaughter wing of the movement. The WRP is currently 'suspended' by the International Committee at North's urging."

It is indeed true that on Monday, 16 December 1985, the International Committee decided to suspend the WRP from

Alan Thornett

the IC. The WRP is the British section of the Fourth International, affiliated to the International Committee. This decision was taken on the basis that the WRP had "carried out an historic betrayal of the ICFI and the international working class.

"This betrayal consisted of the complete abandonment of the theory of the permanent revolution, resulting in the pursuit of unprincipled relations with sections of the colonial bourgeoisie in return for money" (ICFI resolution on the suspension of the WRP, 16 December 1985).

At the IC meeting the WRP was suspended without written charges and no opportunity to prepare a defense. The comrades who expelled Healy and his rotten clique were suspended from the IC on the basis of a frameup.

In October the IC set up an International Committee Commission "to investigate, but not limited to, the corruption of G. Healy, the coverup by the Political Committee and the financial crisis of the WRP." This interim report was supposedly the basis of the suspension, but it was not made available to the IC delegates until after the meeting had finished.

Lister and Thornett will find the IC's method familiar: call a control commission into the corruption of G. Healy — and use it to find his opponents guilty!

The ICC interim report does not take up the corruption of G. Healy, but attempts to frame the present leadership of the WRP for the actions of Healy. In fact any of the practices of Healy which implicate the leaders of the IC are deliberately left out of the report. The BMW car (£16,000) and the £20,000 slush fund are not mentioned, because the money was provided by the Socialist Labour League of Australia. So much for the fight against Healy's corruption!

The suspension was opposed by the WRP Central Committee, but supported by a minority, led by Central Committee members Dave Hyland, YS National Secretary Julie Hyland and Colleen Smith. This minority follow the political line of Dave North, secretary of the Workers League in the United States. At its meeting on 29 December 1985, the Central Committee of the WRP passed a resolution rejecting the suspension of the British section of the ICFI. It is an abrogation of international leadership that the IC takes this action at a time that the discussion is underway for the WRP congress.

"The arbitrary, administrative action of the IC can only aid the Healyite clique and is meant to prevent a full discussion on the degeneration of the IC in the last 10 years as expressed in its repudiation, in practice, of the Permanent Revolution and the building of a world revolutionary leadership."

The resolution went on to say that "we accuse the IC of splitting the WRP at a time when the Party is under vicious attack from the Healy clique and we believe that this shows the irresponsible, unprincipled nature of the IC and shows its adherence to the methods of the Healy clique."

An intense discussion is now taking place within the WRP, and in the other sections of the IC, on the issues involved in the degeneration of the WRP and the ICFI together with the consequences of the expulsion of Healy and the rump who defended his corrupt practices within the WRP.

Lister goes on to take up the question of the relation of the WRP to the IC. He raises the fact that "North and his co-thinkers ... refer repeatedly and apolitically to the need for **the WRP leadership to 'recognize** the **authority** of the **International Committee,'** and stress their defense of what they regard as a 'continuity' of the IC tradition."

This is at the heart of the differences between the WRP and the IC. North says that the degeneration of the WRP was a nationalist deviation from Marxism. He goes on to assert that the IC is the embodiment of internationalism and the continuation of the struggle of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky.

If the WRP subordinates itself to the IC the national chauvinism of the WRP can be overcome with the assistance of the IC which North claims is the world party of socialist revolution.

But comrades from the WRP have repeatedly asked what is this IC tradition which we are supposed to subordinate ourselves to? Furthermore, where does the IC get its authority from? After all it was led by G. Healy for many years and followed his political line which is now recognized within the IC to have been thoroughly revisionist.

The international work of the IC has consisted, over the last decade, of three main aspects. Firstly, the establishment of relations with the national liberation movements and national bourgeoisie of the Middle East. Secondly, Healy's so-called cadre training. Thirdly, Security and the Fourth International and the Gelfand case.

Over the last 15 years the WRP and the IC have established relations with the Palestine Liberation Organization and the national bourgeoisie in the Middle East. It has been pointed out, quite correctly, both within the IC and the WRP (not to mention by many other groups over a period of many years) that these relationships were opportunist. They led to support for the murder of 21 Iraqi communists by the regime of Saddam Hussein, the characterization of the Libyan Jamahiriyah as socialist and the assertion that the Iranian revolution was the greatest blow to imperialism since the Russian revolution.

These relations meant the repudiation of the theory of Permanent Revolution in practice despite many declarations in favor of it. It meant the abandonment of any perspective of building sections of the FI in the Middle East.

The IC complains that these opportunist relations were established behind their backs. There is no doubt that Healy and his clique did many things without informing the IC, the WRP central committee or the WRP membership. But abandonment of the theory of Permanent Revolution and opportunism in the Middle East was done **publicly.** Strange leaders these that didn't notice these publicly wrong positions and complain that it was all done behind their backs.

But North and the IC go further, accusing the WRP of establishing mercenary relationships with reactionary and nonproletarian forces. This is the cover for North's abandonment of the side of this work which was correct.

The defense against imperialism of the PLO and those bourgeois national regimes fighting against imperialism is not something that the WRP is going to abandon or apologize for. We will continue to take our responsibilities as revolutionaries in a metropolitan capitalist country seriously and tirelessly defend all those in the fight against imperialism, no matter how much we disagree with them.

We do recognize the need for criticism of those fighting imperialism, but we oppose those who see this as an excuse

for denouncing the enemies of imperialism as reactionary and nonproletarian at every turn.

We understand that the pressure of imperialism on this question leads to a desire by North to ditch this principled position, but we will oppose this national chauvinism in the same way that we fought Healy.

To characterize the PLO, the Libyan Jamahiriyah and other bourgeois national regimes as "reactionary and nonproletarian forces," as the IC does, has nothing in common with Marxism. Read Lenin's report on the National and Colonial Question to the Second Congress of the Communist International! These national revolutionary movements must be supported in the struggle against imperialism by anyone who wishes to call themselves a Trotskyist.

In actual fact support for the national revolutionary movements together with criticism of the inability of the national bourgeoisie to carry through the tasks of the national revolutionary struggle, is the only basis for the building of Trotskyist parties in these countries.

The question of "cadre training" has been discussed at some length in the WRP meetings and articles in our press. From the theoretical standpoint Healy's "philosophical work" was an attack on the ideological foundations of Marxism. There can be no revolutionary movement without rigorous defense of the theoretical basis of Marxism — principally dialectical materialism, historical materialism and Marx's political economy.

But Healy's "cadre training" goes much further than attacking the ideological foundations of our movement, it also created the conditions for it to be carried out. It was, in reality, the systematic moral, political, theoretical, personal and physical destruction of the cadres of our movement. It was not just what Healy said, but also what he did. Those like North who raised criticisms of Healy's "Studies in Dialectical Materialism" only tackled one side of the problem. It is not merely a question of being right as opposed to those who are wrong.

The question of cadre training must be viewed from the standpoint of revolutionary practice. In order to overcome the legacy of Healyism, it is necessary to change the social relations within the party which enabled Healy to carry out his vile barbaric practices which were not just anticom¬munist but also antihuman. This is the degenerate ideology of the bourgeoisie, and no matter how much North protests, it is a **near-fascist ideology.**

In the IC meeting of December 16 North asserted that in the fight to regenerate the WRP, "numbers do not matter." I have a message to him, and all those in the IC who think like him, from the membership of the WRP.

Numbers do matter, after all "numbers" are only our members, our cadres. In the WRP things have changed, with the expulsion of Healy came the fight for the rights of members. We will not stand idly by and see our cadres destroyed by "leaders" with no respect for the rights of members. We will fight for communist relations within our movement and: break with all those who reject the communists need for respect and dignity as well as determination and sacrifice.

We dealt with Healy and we are quite capable of dealing with the remnants of his supporters in the WRP and the IC.

North and the IC are presently supporting a minority within the WRP who have disrupted our meetings and trampled on our party's constitution. They have made communist relations in our meetings at all levels, impossible. This is the continuation of Healy's destruction of cadres and we will fight it every inch of the way. North has disagreed with what Healy had to say on the question of cadre training, but he took part in Healy's destruction of cadres and is continuing to do so. North wants Healyite "cadre training" without Healy's "dialectics" — let the destruction of cadres continue — we say no more, our cadres are the heart of our movement.

The third aspect of the IC's work is *Security and the Fourth International,* with the Workers League's involvement in the Gelfand case in the US. This is a very touchy subject for North. The WRP Central Committee has called for a reevaluation of the whole of *Security and the Fourth International,* and most leaders of the WRP are of the opinion that the whole thing is a frameup of Hansen and Novack, whose only "crime" was to revise Marxism, not spy for the FBI/CIA or GPU. This has caused panic in the leadership of the Workers League.

The "forensic science" of Healy, Mitchell and North will have to be reevaluated. It is untenable to contend that *Security and the FI* is the high point of the international struggle of the working class against the capitalist state, as North does and indeed the WRP used to.

The position of the WRP Central Committee is that we will not subordinate ourselves to these traditions. Anyone who will defend the work of the IC as the "continuity of Trotskyism" is no Trotskyist.

In October last year the IC proposed a reregistration of the membership of the WRP "on the basis of an explicit recognition of the subordination of the WRP to the IC." This was endorsed unanimously by the WRP central committee on the basis that it was aimed at the exclusion from membership of the Healyite rump. In practice they split with the WRP before the reregistration began and those excluded from membership were constitutionally expelled with full rights of appeal to the party's 8th Congress.

The form of the reregistration was the signing of a form recognizing the authority of the IC, and the subordination of the WRP to its decisions.

Hundreds of party members who had taken part in the fight against Healy refused to sign such a Healyite loyalty oath. Under pressure from the membership the central committee withdrew the form which was politically and constitutionally unjustifiable.

At the same meeting of the WRP central committee a resolution was passed on the crisis in the IC. This resolution calls quite mildly for:

1) All evidence presented and conclusions drawn be reexamined.

2) That such an investigation, including a full financial account, be carried out internally at this stage.

3) That we recognize that the Gelfand case has set an extremely damaging precedent in calling on the state to determine the membership of a working class political organization.

4) That the IC strive to find a means to resolve this outside the courts including an approach by the Workers League to the Socialist Workers Party.

This has sent North wild. The Workers League Central Committee is calling for the expulsion of the majority Central Committee members in the WRP. The 8th Congress of the WRP taking place this weekend is described as a "bogus conference packed with anti-Trotskyists."

So be it. If North, Beams and the IC want to defend the Stinking corpse of Healy's IC, they are welcome to do so. But I would point out to them that the truth is a powerful enemy.

To John Lister and other interested parties, the public discussion will proceed in earnest.

Resolutions of the 8th Congress of the Workers Revolutionary Party (Internationalist)

Feburary 8-9, 1986

The 8th Congress of the WRP, meeting in Hammersmith on the 8th and 9th of February 1986, repudiates the two CC resolutions of January 26, 1986 which state that "The IC is neither the world party nor even the nucleus of the World Party" and which call for a regroupment of all renegades from Trotskyism and which further state that "The IC cannot claim political authority as the international leadership."

These resolutions bureaucratically and opportunistically violated the decisions of the Special Congress to reregister the membership on the basis of the subordination of the WRP to the ICFI and were a declaration of split with the ICFI.

By preventing the internationalists in the Party from entering the Congress to fight for their positions before the membership, these political cowards transformed their bogus congress into nothing more than a revisionist swamp.

This duly-constituted congress, based on the decisions of the Special Congress of October 26-27, 1985, declares that the renegades' resolutions represent a break from all the historic gains and theoretical conquests of Trotskyism which are embodied in the ICFI and an attempt to liquidate the Trotskyist cadre.

The decision of the CC renegades, led by M. Banda and C. Slaughter, to use the state forces (the police) to bar the membership from gaining entry to the congress, was a clear declaration of class position, of total hostility to the working class and its revolutionary vanguard.

Congress, in repudiating these resolutions, declares that the only basis for membership of the WRP is acceptance of the Special Congress resolution of the ICFI dated October 25, 1985.

Congress affirms that the struggle carried out for over 10 years on *Security and the Fourth International* and continued by the Workers League with the Gelfand case represents an historic gain in the fight against Stalinism, revisionism, and for the training of a cadre against state attack.

Vigilance against attack by the agencies of Stalinism and imperialism in this period of enormous class struggle internationally is an absolute necessity.

We pledge to bring to the notice of the international working class the organic link between the renegade attack by the Banda-Slaughter group on *Security and the Fourth International,* and their use of the state against the members of their own party.

Congress hereby expels M. Banda, C. Slaughter, their renegade Central Committee supporters, and all their followers, from the WRP and requests that the ICFI expel those renegades and lift the suspension of our section.

Congress declares that the frantic efforts of the Banda-Slaughter-Healy groups to liquidate the Trotskyist cadre in Britain and internationally have failed, and calls on all members of the WRP to rally to the banner of the ICFI and to reregister on the basis of this resolution.

Resolution on Security and the Fourth International

The 8th Congress of the WRP, held in Hammersmith, 8th and 9th of February 1986, reaffirms its support for the ICFI investigation, *Security and the Fourth International.*

We reject the attacks by the Banda-Slaughter group, who no longer represent the British section of the Fourth International, and who are attacking *Security and the Fourth International,* as part of their continuing attack on the ICFI.

We call on the ICFI to continue the fight to expose the role of state agents in the workers movement throughout the world as a central task in the building of the revolutionary leadership internationally.

This congress sends its warmest fraternal greetings and support to Alan Gelfand for his struggle to expose the state agents within the SWP in America.

In this struggle, he doesn't act as an individual, but represents the struggle of all workers for their democratic rights.

Resolution of the 8th Congress of the Workers Revolutionary Party (Slaughter-Banda)

February 8, *1986*

This 8th Congress of the Workers Revolutionary Party declares that the International Committee of the Fourth International does not represent the continuity of the Fourth International founded by Leon Trotsky in 1938. Failing to analyse and correct the degeneration and betrayals which it carried out under the leadership of Healy, it has now organised an anti-communist opposition and split against the Workers Revolutionary Party, because of the Workers Revolutionary Party's principled struggle against Healyism. This Congress rejects completely the special international conference called by the International Committee to expel the Workers Revolutionary Party, and instructs the central committee to begin work immediately to regroup all those in the International Committee sections who are fighting to defeat Healyism and against the actions of D. North and the International Committee majority. The public discussion of problems of the Fourth International will continue and this party will work for an international pre-conference of all those who stand on the Permanent Revolution, *The Transitional Programme*, the first four Congresses of the Communist International, before the end of 1986.

"British Trotskyists Defend Internationalism, Reject Banda-Slaughter Splitters"

Bulletin Editorial Board Statement

February 11, 1986

On Saturday, February 8, a faction inside the Workers Revolutionary Party led by M. Banda and C. Slaughter, split from the International Committee of the Fourth International.

Duly-elected delegates to the 8th Congress, representing at least half the party membership and opposed to the anti-internationalism of Slaughter and Banda, were barred from entering the conference hall and fighting for their positions inside the Congress.

The gates outside the conference hall were locked, and 25 police, gathered by the splitters, stood guard outside the Congress. Slaughter arrived at the Congress venue and entered the conference hall with a police escort.

Delegates elected in accordance with the decision of the WRP Special Congress of October 26-27, 1985, which had stipulated acceptance of the political authority of the International Committee as the essential criterion of party membership, moved to another location where they convened the legitimate 8th Congress of the WRP (Internationalist).

The attempted sabotage of the 8th Congress was the result of a premeditated decision by the faction led by Slaughter and Banda to preempt political discussion, expel all supporters of the International Committee from the WRP, and present the undecided and disoriented sections of the party membership with a *fait accompli.*

On January 26, 1986 the Central Committee of the WRP voted by 12 to 3 to overturn the decision of the October Special Congress and changed the rules governing the election of delegates to the upcoming 8th Congress.

The Central Committee repudiated the unanimous resolution of the Special Congress which required the reregistration of all WRP members on the basis of explicit acceptance of the subordination of the WRP to the International Committee of the Fourth International. The Central Committee ordered that the reregistration forms be withdrawn and that delegates be elected on the basis of new membership lists supplied by the branches.

In practice, this meant that anti-Trotskyists who had refused to sign the reregistration forms could now be counted as members and included in the delegate selection

Police were called by the Slaughter leadership to prevent the minority tendency supporting the International Committee from attending the 8th Congress of the WRP.

process — not to mention names indiscriminately added to bolster the delegates of the Slaughter-Banda faction.

Along with the vote to repudiate the Special Congress resolution — which had endorsed the IC resolution dated October 25, 1985, and was signed by Banda and Slaughter — the Central Committee also voted on January 26 to endorse a resolution which declared that "The IC cannot claim political authority as an international leadership. Neither can sections be subordinated to an international discipline determined by the IC."

The resolution also denounced the ICFI's decade-long investigation into the circumstances surrounding the assassination of Leon Trotsky and the penetration of the Socialist Workers Party by imperialist and Stalinist agents.

This splitting resolution was directed especially at the actions of the International Committee at its meeting of December 16-17, 1985, which heard the interim report of a control commission set up to investigate the political degeneration of the WRP under the leadership of G. Healy, Banda and Slaughter.

This report documented irrefutably the mercenary relations established by the WRP, behind the back of the ICFI, with Arab semi-colonial bourgeois regimes, in which Trotskyist principles were sold for money. In order to create the conditions for a serious accounting and principled correction of this protracted opportunist degeneration, and to defend the integrity of the International Committee, the ICFI voted to suspend the WRP as its British section.

The IC meeting of December 16-17 also rejected claims (made by Banda and Slaughter) that the ICFI had degenerated equally with the WRP, and reaffirmed the historical continuity of the Trotskyist movement, the First Four Congresses of the Communist International, the Left Opposition's struggle against Stalinism, the *Transitional Program,* the "Open Letter" against Pabloite revisionism on which the IC was founded in 1953, and the struggle between 1961-63 against the bogus "reunification" of the US Socialist Workers Party with the Pabloites.

On Friday, February 7, 1986, the Slaughter-Banda faction published an edition of *Workers Press* with a front-page attack on the International Committee of the Fourth International, on a pro-ICFI tendency within the WRP, and on the Workers League of the United States and its national secretary, David North.

This issue included a four-page statement by M. Banda, general secretary of the WRP, entitled "Twenty-seven Reasons Why the International Committee Should be Buried Forthwith and the Fourth International Built."

In this statement, Banda presents a slanderous account of the entire history of the Fourth International, denounces all those associated with it, asserts that the "FI was proclaimed but never built," and declares that it was an "historical accident."

Banda, however, did not attend the congress. He remains in Sri Lanka where he has spent the last three months since he deserted his post in the midst of the inner-party crisis. Banda was deeply implicated in the attempted coverup of the abuses which led to Healy's expulsion.

While in Sri Lanka, Banda has been reestablishing his personal and political contacts with the anti-Trotskyist LSSP, which betrayed Trotskyism in 1964 when it entered the **bourgeois** coalition government **of M. Bandaranaike.**

Banda's statement, which, as *Workers Press* admits, arrived in Britain three weeks ago, was never circulated to the membership for discussion prior to its publication on the eve of the 8th Congress.

Since October 1985, when it first learned of the crisis within the WRP, the ICFI has conducted a principled and uncompromising struggle against the nationalist degeneration of the entire WRP leadership. This struggle has brought into the open the revisionist character of both the Healy and Banda-Slaughter factions of the WRP.

As Banda's document makes clear, he has been politically opposed to the formation of the Fourth International for at least a decade. In the case of Slaughter, his opposition extends back even further. This scepticism underlay their refusal and inability to conduct any principled struggle against Healy's political degeneration.

In turn, Healy suppressed political discussion, organized his leadership on the basis of the most rotten, opportunist relations, and provided a political cover for these right-centrist forces within their Central Committee.

Together, they collectively constituted a nationalist anti-Trotskyist clique leadership. They collaborated to oppose all those within the ICFI and WRP who sought to defend Trotskyism against the revisionist line of the Healy-Slaughter-Banda leadership.

Inside the WRP, a minority led by Central Committee member David Hyland, the leadership of the Young Socialists, and virtually the entire proletarian forces within the party, have fought loyally in defense of the International Committee and its Trotskyist principles.

Although supported by only a minority on the party's unrepresentative Central Committee, the internationalist line fought for by Hyland evoked a powerful response among the WRP's rank and file.

By the time of the Congress, support for this principled line had grown to such an extent that Banda and Slaughter felt compelled to bar Hyland and all his supporters from even attending.

It is politically significant that the February 7 edition of the *Workers Press* denounced those who were in the leadership of the fight against Healy's revisionist politics and organizational abuses, David Hyland and David North.

Throughout the summer, Hyland, together with leaders of the youth movement, fought persistently within the leadership against the efforts of Banda, Slaughter and virtually the entire Political Committee to prevent a Control Commission investigation into Healy's abuses.

From 1982 to 1984, North produced the first and only documents criticizing Healy's distortion of dialectical materialism and the revisionist political line of the WRP. These criticisms were suppressed by Slaughter and Banda, who used their positions in the leadership of the WRP and ICFI to threaten the Workers League with the rupture of all political ties between the Workers League and the ICFI.

Meeting in Hammersmith, the WRP (Internationalist) convened the legitimate 8th Congress, repudiated the January 26 resolution of the renegade Central Committee and expelled Banda and Slaughter.

"Behind the Split in the Workers Revolutionary Party"

Bulletin Article by David North

February 21, 1986

The International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI), supported by the proletarian internationalists inside the Workers Revolutionary Party, has defeated an attempt by the petty-bourgeois clique led by C. Slaughter and M. Banda to liquidate, politically and organizationally, the world Trotskyist movement.

The calling of police on Saturday, February 8, to the WRP Congress venue to prevent duly and properly elected delegates from attending was the culmination of a series of attacks on the history, program and principles of the ICFI by Banda and Slaughter.

At least 25 police were called to the Congress where they provided an escort for Slaughter as he entered the building where his anti-Trotskyist faction held a bogus congress and completed their split from the International Committee.

Delegates elected in accordance with the decisions of the WRP Special Congress of October 26-27, 1985 then moved to another location where they convened the legitimate Eighth Congress of the WRP (Internationalist).

As a result of the seven-month political and organizational crisis within the WRP, it is now clear that the personal corruption of G. Healy, which initially sparked the explosion within the party ranks and forced his expulsion on October 19, 1985, was only part of a far deeper political degeneration affecting the entire central leadership — above all, Healy's closest collaborators for more than three decades, Banda and Slaughter.

The publication of M. Banda's "Twenty-Seven Reasons Why the International Committee Should Be Buried" lays bare the political essence of the organizational crisis which erupted over the exposure of G. Healy's grotesque abuse of authority: the wholesale rejection by the Healy-Banda-Slaughter leadership of the entire political, theoretical, programmatic and historical foundations of the Fourth International. Once again the Marxist view that the regime of a party is a product of its political line has been vindicated.

In Banda's "27 Reasons," the general secretary of the Workers Revolutionary Party reveals that he has not been a

The locked gates outside the meeting place of the WRP's 8th Congress

Trotskyist for at least a decade and regrets the years which he delayed his break with the International Committee. Banda contemptuously denounces the entire history of the Fourth International as "an uninterrupted series of splits, betrayals, treachery, stagnation and confusion." He declares that "It must be stated emphatically, nay, categorically, that the FI was proclaimed but never built." He attacks the International Committee, of which he was a member for 32 years, as "a grandiose illusion, a contemptible maneuver and a disgusting charade."

In his first public statement since his expulsion from the WRP last October 19, Healy pretends that Banda's present position simply developed overnight. He writes that "In the 35 years we politically worked together he would argue at times, but he politically agreed with every major decision made by conferences and almost countless Central and Political Committees over that long period." *(News Line*, February 8, 1986) A more devastating indictment of his own leadership could not be imagined. Such was the opportunist nature of the political regime that existed within the WRP that Healy consciously covered up the fact that his closest collaborator and protege had degenerated into little more than a right-wing Pabloite. It is now clear why Healy worked desperately at successive congresses of the International Committee since 1979 to suppress any serious discussion on questions of program and perspective.

In another article, which appears under the pseudonym "Paddy O'Regan," G. Healy admits that while Cliff Slaughter "betrayed the Party and the youth" for more than 20 years, he continued to support him in the post of secretary of the International Committee. The value of these admissions, regardless of their subjective and factional motivation, is that they expose the disgusting political rot that had accumulated over many years within the leadership of the WRP. In place of principled relations, cynical and opportunist maneuvering prevailed within the central leadership.

In turn, the Banda document exposes the political basis upon which Banda and Slaughter collaborated with Healy between 1982 and 1984 to prevent criticisms made by the Workers League of the WRP's increasingly Pabloite revisionist political line and Healy's subjective idealist philosophy from being discussed in the ICFI.

Moreover, it explains why for three months, from July to October 1985, the WRP leadership — particularly Banda and Slaughter — suppressed demands for a Control Commission into abuses committed by G. Healy against the cadre of the WRP.

Under the Healy-Slaughter-Banda leadership, the WRP had become a political incubator for anti-Trotskyism, in which the historically-developed principles of the Fourth International were abandoned and betrayed. Demoralized by the protracted character of the struggle against reformism in the workers' movement and increasingly skeptical toward the revolutionary capacities of the British and international working class, the WRP leadership abandoned the proletarian orientation for which it had fought against the Socialist Workers Party and succumbed to the Pabloite disease which it had combatted in the 1960s. In place of the patient struggle to penetrate the working class of all countries and build new sections, the attention of the WRP leadership was increasingly focussed on the development of mercenary relations with petty-bourgeois nationalists and even bourgeois nationalist regimes aimed exclusively at securing funds to finance the work of the WRP in Britain.

At the same time, forgetting all that they had said and written about the reactionary anti-internationalism of the SWP, Healy, Banda and Slaughter treated the International Committee with disdain — plundering the material resources of its sections and using them merely as adjuncts of its pragmatic operations. While the tactical aspect of these activities were supervised by Healy, their political and theoretical cover were provided by Banda and Slaughter.

The right-wing clique in the leadership of the WRP which had protected Healy — going so far as to conceal for nearly three years an increasingly desperate financial crisis in the party in order to maintain his and their political authority — only moved to charge and expel him when a rebellion in the party's ranks made continuation of the coverup impossible.

The International Committee never accepted the position that the crisis within the WRP was merely a question of Healy's personal degeneration and organizational abuses. It categorically refused to rubber-stamp the belated opposition "led" by Slaughter and Banda. In its first resolution on the situation inside the WRP, dated October 25, 1985, the ICFI stated:

"At the root of the present crisis which erupted with the exposure of the corrupt practices of G. Healy and the attempt by the WRP Political Committee to cover them up, is the prolonged drift of the WRP leadership away from the strategical task of building the world party of socialist revolution towards an increasingly nationalist perspective and practice."

It insisted that **"The first step towards overcoming the crisis in the WRP is the recognition by its leadership and membership that it requires the closest collaboration with its co-thinkers in the ICFI."**

The IC proposed, in order to purge the WRP of all anti-internationalists within its ranks, that members inside the WRP be reregistered "on the basis of an explicit recognition of the political authority of the ICFI and the subordination of the British section to its decisions." In actuality, this meant only that the WRP should consciously act upon the statutes of its own constitution, in which the party is identified as a section of the ICFI.

This resolution was unanimously endorsed by the British delegation to the ICFI meeting of October 25. On the next day, the Central Committee of the WRP unanimously endorsed it as well. It was approved with no votes against by the membership of the WRP at its Special Congress on October 27. The ICFI attempted to present this resolution to members of the then-minority within the WRP supporting Healy. This faction refused even to consider it and split from the WRP.

Thus, the political relations between the ICFI and the Slaughter-Banda faction was based solely on the internationalist conditions stated in the October 25 resolution. The political necessity of these conditions arose from the fact that the ICFI would politically collaborate only with those who were prepared to fight consciously under its discipline to overcome the nationalism produced by the class pressures of British imperialism that was the source of the degeneration of the Workers Revolutionary Party.

It soon became clear that Banda and Slaughter had accepted the October 25 Resolution simply as a tactical maneuver

to win the support of the ICFI against the pro-Healy faction. Once the latter had rejected the resolution and split from the WRP and the ICFI, Banda and Slaughter began working to repudiate the agreement with the International Committee. Opposing at every point the subordination of the British section to the ICFI, they fought to continue the old political relations under Healy in which the ICFI was subordinated to the nationalist practice of the WRP as it pursued an increasingly right-wing course.

But within the British section a tendency was forming around those forces which had fought against the attempted Political Committee coverup of Healy's abuses and which had demanded a Control Commission investigation. These forces, led by Central Committee member Dave Hyland, the organizer of the party's work in the mining region of South Yorkshire, refused to back down from this demand — even in the face of repeated political and physical threats by Banda. This tendency formally constituted itself as a minority on November 9, 1985.

The political platform of this minority called for a return to the Transitional Program, the defense of the Theory of Permanent Revolution, the resumption of the struggle against Pabloism, the re-establishment of the party's traditional proletarian orientation, and the restoration of democratic centralism within WRP.

Mindful of the long-established practice under the Healy-Banda-Slaughter leadership of expelling those members who raised political differences, the ICFI, at its meeting of November 5, 1985, carried a resolution insisting that no organizational measures be taken by the leadership against its critics within the party before the Eighth Congress, scheduled to take place on February 8-9, 1986.

Slaughter initially objected, saying that the resolution was unnecessary because it simply asked the WRP leadership to obey its own constitution. It was pointed out that it was precisely because the rights of the membership had been so consistently abused that such a resolution was necessary.

Throughout the month of November it became ever more apparent that the anti-internationalism that had prevailed under Healy was continuing and that the degeneration of the WRP had not been brought under control, let alone reversed.

On November 12, 1985, the WRP Central Committee announced the closure of the daily *News Line* and its replacement by a twice-weekly. This decision had been made by Banda and Slaughter in advance of the November 5 IC meeting, but they had decided not to raise the matter with the international delegates.

Responding to the refusal of the WRP leadership to even discuss such an important decision with its international comrades, the Central Committee of the Workers League wrote to the WRP Central Committee on November 21, 1985. It stated:

"We are deeply disturbed by the mounting evidence that our comrades in the leadership of the British section of the International Committee of the Fourth International have not yet begun to analyze the political issues raised by the split nor confronted the source and nature of the degeneration that has produced the explosion inside the WRP. Our great concern is that in the absence of such an analysis, which is the precondition for the theoretical arming of the section, the split will remain at the level of a purely organizational break with Healy and his supporters. This would mean that the WRP will continue to drift further and further away from Trotskyism and the International Committee of the Fourth International.

"The basic source of our disagreement and the cause of increasing friction between us is that the Workers Revolutionary Party is not prepared to acknowledge, except in verbal and platonic form, the authority of the International Committee of the Fourth International. Precisely because it does not recognize that the most essential feature of Healy's political degeneration was his subordination of the international movement to the practical needs of the British section, the WRP leadership is in real danger of continuing, albeit in somewhat different form, the same nationalist-opportunist course."

The political implications of the on-going degeneration of the Workers Revolutionary Party was starkly revealed at the meeting on "Revolutionary Mortality," held on November 26, 1986 at Friends Hall in London. In front of several hundred revisionists and anti-Trotskyists of all stripes, Slaughter publicly called into question the historical foundations of the International Committee. Exploiting the confusion within the WRP membership — especially among its most unstable petty-bourgeois elements — the Slaughter-Banda clique was heading rapidly for a regroupment with revisionist and Stalinist forces. This was symbolized when Slaughter publicly shook hands with arch-Stalinist Monty Johnstone in front of the audience at Friends Hall.

Opposing this political betrayal, Comrade Peter Schwarz of the Bund Sozialisticher Arbeiter (German section of the ICFI) wrote to the WRP Central Committee on December 2, 1985:

"Having attended the London meeting on the expulsion of G. Healy on November 26 I am writing to you because I am deeply disturbed by the contribution Comrade Slaughter made at that meeting. In my opinion it amounts to nothing less than a complete rejection of the history and tradition of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

"Made in front of the entire coterie of British revisionism by the secretary of the ICFI, I cannot help but take this speech as a clear indication that Comrade Slaughter wants to split with the ICFI altogether and rejoin the revisionist and Stalinist swamp."

Slaughter and his supporters on the Central Committee — especially the parasitic elements who have their hands on the purse strings of the substantial assets of the party apparatus — denounce the Schwarz letter as "lies." In fact, their real objections were that the letter exposed all too clearly the political road taken by Slaughter-Banda, and that it alerted the ICFI and those in the WRP minority tendency fighting for internationalism that the right-wing clique was moving rapidly to liquidate the WRP as a Trotskyist organization.

On December 16-17, 1985, the International Committee assembled to hear an interim report prepared by its Control Commission that had been established at its meeting of October 25 "to investigate, but not limited to, the corruption of G. Healy, the coverup by the Political Committee and the financial crisis of the WRP."

The report presented detailed documentary evidence that the WRP under Healy had established politically corrupt relations with bourgeois regimes in the Middle East and sold the principles of the Trotskyist movement for cash. The documents, which included Healy's private correspondence,

revealed that the WRP leadership cynically used the Palestine Liberation Organization to further its own money-raising schemes. In concealing these unprincipled relations, the WRP leaders lied systematically to the sections of the International Committee and to the British working class.

Not only did the documents expose the sinister connection between the corrupt relations established by Healy with bourgeois regimes in the Middle East and the conscious revision of Trotskyism; they also revealed how the clique in the party leadership worked systematically to protect Healy from criticisms within both the ICFI and the WRP.

On the basis of this interim report, the ICFI declared that "the WRP has carried out an historic betrayal of the ICFI and the international working class.

"This betrayal consisted of the complete abandonment of the theory of permanent revolution, resulting in the pursuit of unprincipled relations with sections of the colonial bourgeoisie in return for money." The ICFI majority refused to accept the subjective argument advanced by Slaughter that the responsibility for this betrayal lay simply with Healy but insisted that "the political responsibility for the nationalist degeneration which allowed these practices to be carried out rests with the entire leadership of the WRP. ... The ICFI does not seek to blame any individual leader but holds the entire leadership responsible."

Accordingly, on December 16, 1985 the ICFI suspended the WRP as the British section. The WRP delegation was split on this vote, with Slaughter, T. Kemp and S. Pirani opposing the suspension and D. Hyland supporting it.

The suspension was necessary because the ICFI recognized that the political degeneration which had produced the betrayal had not ended with the expulsion of Healy, and, therefore, the ICFI could not lend its authority to the WRP and assume responsibility for and sanction further betrayals of the British and international working class. The suspension of the WRP made its membership in the ICFI contingent upon a conscious struggle by its leaders and members to halt the revisionist degeneration on the basis of the historic principles of the Trotskyist movement.

Far from turning its back on the WRP, the ICFI elaborated in detail what had to be done in order to restore the membership of the British section in the International Committee of the Fourth International. In a resolution presented by the ICFI on December 17, 1985, it simply called upon the WRP to reaffirm its agreement with the programmatic foundations of Trotskyism, embodied in "the decisions of the First Four Congresses of the Communist International (1919-22); the Platform of the Left Opposition (1927); the Transitional Program (1938); the Open Letter (1953); and the documents of the struggle against the bogus SWP-Pabloite reunification (1961-63)."

The conclusion of this resolution stated: "The ICFI and the Central Committee of the WRP shall now work closely together to overcome as quickly as possible the existing problems which are the legacy of the nationalist degeneration of the WRP under Healy, to reassert the basic principles of internationalism within the WRP, and on this basis restore its full membership in the International Committee of the Fourth International. The organizational structure of this relationship shall at all times be based on the Leninist principles of democratic centralism, which are elaborated in the statutes of the Fourth International."

Slaughter, Pirani and Kemp voted against this resolution. Slaughter refused to explain his differences with the resolution, which did no more than reaffirm the historical and programmatic foundations of the ICFI. But this opposition confirmed that the real content of the degeneration of the WRP was the repudiation of Trotskyism by the entire old WRP leadership, now split into the two right-wing factions of Healy and Slaughter-Banda.

In the course of the ICFI meeting, in answer to a direct accusation that he was already working with the Stalinists, Slaughter qualified his "denial" by stating, "If it were true, I wouldn't tell you anyway."

It was now clear that the political breech between the WRP majority led by Slaughter-Banda and the International Committee was unbridgeable. Not only did they reject the democratic-centralist organization of the Fourth International, but they were also opposed to its very existence.

In the aftermath of the suspension, Slaughter, working closely with a coterie of middle-class professors now placed in the leadership of the WRP, initiated a wild slander campaign against the International Committee. A central target of these attacks was the decade-long investigation of the International Committee into the assassination of Leon Trotsky and the penetration of the Socialist Workers Party by agents of the Soviet GPU and the American FBI-CIA. Banda and Slaughter, who had played central roles in the initiation and development of this investigation, began denouncing it without even challenging any of the evidence which had been assembled, particularly in the course of the Gelfand case.

Aside from immediate factional considerations, the purpose of this campaign was (1) to facilitate a political rapprochement with the Pabloite allies of the Socialist Workers Party, and (2) to work toward a political rehabilitation of Stalinism for the purpose of justifying collaboration with the agents of the Soviet bureaucracy.

Michael Banda, who had deserted his post in the leadership of the WRP in the midst of the party crisis to return to Sri Lanka for an open-ended vacation, wrote the lengthy, above-mentioned document attacking the entire history of the Fourth International. At the same time, he resumed personal contact with members of the anti-Trotskyist LSSP, the party which betrayed the working class in 1964 by entering into the bourgeois coalition government of M. Bandaranaike.

The Banda document arrived in Britain in mid-January but it was not shown to the membership of the WRP or the IC. Instead, it served as the basis for two resolutions carried by the majority of the WRP Central Committee on January 26, 1986. These resolutions overturned the October 27 Special Congress Resolution which mandated the reregistration of the WRP membership on the basis of an explicit recognition of the authority of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

The political and practical content of these resolutions was to declare a split with the International Committee. The renegades who voted for these resolutions were acting in violation of the decisions of the Special Congress and were consciously rigging the delegate selection process for the Eighth Congress scheduled for February 8, 1986.

According to the decision of the Special Congress, membership in the WRP was to be limited only to those who signed the reregistration forms acknowledging the authority of the ICFI. A substantial section of the majority supporters,

making no secret of their revisionist views and political hostility to the International Committee, refused to sign the reregistration forms. By mid-January, the Slaughter faction realized that it would lose its majority on the Central Committee if the election of delegates was based on party membership as defined by the Special Congress decision on rereregistration. Therefore, the Central Committee majority ordered on January 26 that the reregistration forms be withdrawn and that delegates be elected on the basis of membership lists supplied arbitrarily by the branches.

These split resolutions were opposed by the Central Committee minority led by Hyland, which fought to uphold the authority of the ICFI as well as the decisions of the Special Congress.

The Banda-Slaughter renegades completed their split on February 8. When the duly-elected delegates of the minority arrived at the Congress venue, they were barred from entering. The majority then called the police to enforce the decision. Unable to confront the principled Trotskyist positions of the minority in front of the Congress, the Slaughter-Banda faction resorted to the tactics of anti-communist bureaucrats.

The minority delegates, representing the real Trotskyists inside the party, found another location and assembled the legitimate Eighth Congress of the WRP (Internationalist).

Healy, Banda and Slaughter are politically dead from the standpoint of revolutionary Marxism. They have capitulated shamelessly to the pressures of British imperialism and are now collaborating with the worst enemies of the Trotskyist movement. But they have completely failed in their efforts to destroy the International Committee. The ICFI and the Workers League will work tirelessly to expose the reactionary politics of the right-wing cliques of Healy and Banda-Slaughter while collaborating closely with those genuine Trotskyists of the WRP (Internationalist) who are fighting to reestablish as quickly as possible the British section of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

Statement of the National Committee of the Young Socialists (Britain)

February 21, 1986

The Young Socialist National Committee salutes the courageous struggle of the Trotskyist faction within our movement who have exposed and driven out the social-chauvinist, anti-Marxist Banda-Slaughter clique.

We applaud the International Committee of the Fourth International for their decisive role in this historic fight to defend and develop the principles of Trotskyism embodied in the Fourth International through its cadre.

The YS National Committee is proud to have fought alongside our comrades to build the independent revolutionary movement under the leadership of the ICFI, the world party of socialist revolution, against all counter-revolutionary elements within the workers' movement.

The use of state forces by the Banda-Slaughter clique to prevent WRP members from attending their bogus Eighth Congress, is the clearest vindication of the minority Central Committee members (Comrades Dave Hyland, Colleen Smith and Julie Hyland) supported by the majority of WRP and YS members, to expose the split within the Party leadership of Healy, Banda and Slaughter as an organizational break between two right-wing factions.

Both the Healy group and the Banda-Slaughter clique are now openly revealed to be the greatest defenders of nationalism and anti-Trotskyism.

Whilst the Banda-Slaughter ex-leadership barred those Party members who were in the forefront of the fight against Healy, the doors were opened to revisionist organizations and their supporters in the anti-Trotskyist binge last weekend.

We support the decision of the ICFI to suspend the British section and membership on the basis of opportunist and unprincipled relations with various Arab bourgeois regimes. It has brought the forces of reaction and advocates of social-chauvinism out into the open.

Since July 1985, when Healy's sexual abuse and corruption first came to the attention of a small number of Party members, the YSNC fought tirelessly alongside those comrades to bring these corrupt practices before the Party membership.

We fought to show that these vile abuses could only take place when the revolutionary role of the working class under a Trotskyist leadership had been abandoned. Only then could the Party membership be abused in such a way. These corrupt practices manifested a fundamental political degeneration in the leadership of our Party.

For at least two months of this struggle, from July to September, Healy enjoyed the support of not only Torrance and Redgrave, but of Mike Banda and the majority of the Central Committee.

Banda, along with Torrance and other Party leaders, joined forces to suppress the demands for a Control Commission from parents of youth involved, moved to bureaucratically force them out of the Party and lied to the ICFI about the real state of affairs within the WRP.

Even as late as October 1985, Banda voted along with the majority on the then Political Committee for charges against the YS National Secretary for raising Healy's abuses in a London Youth Faction meeting.

In a further attempt to cover up the degeneration within the Party leadership, the majority of the ex-CC voted to accept a glowing tribute from M. Banda to G. Healy, to accept Healy's retirement on the grounds of "ill health and old age," and for the *News Line* Anniversary to pay tribute to Healy's "great work," despite knowledge of Healy's abuses.

They further allowed Healy to attend the College of Marxist Education to "lecture" where he factionalized.

Only when the Banda-Slaughter clique realized that their own political lives were in danger due to their unprincipled support for Healy, did they move for his expulsion as quickly as possible so that their own role in the degeneration would not come out.

Recognizing their lack of political credibility within the Party, the Banda-Slaughter clique raised the banner of "revolutionary morality" devoid of any political content, and hid behind the political analysis of the IC, which Healy had shown complete contempt for.

The first special congress of the WRP after the split in October 1985, voted unanimously to subordinate the British section to the political authority of the ICFI and for this to be the basis for Party membership.

But, true to the nationalist traditions of the ex-Healy leadership, the Banda-Slaughter clique would also not accept the subordination of the British section to the ICFI and the interests of the international working class.

"Rally behind the flag" became more and more the chant of the Majority CC, whilst they maneuvered and lied to undermine the ICFI and the principles of Trotskyist internationalism.

From then on, the Majority CC renegades (the minority within the Party) took up where Healy left off — attacking the youth movement, covering up before the Party membership and vilifying the ICFI.

On Tuesday, February 4, they physically ejected some of the very comrades who had led the fight against Healy from the Party center and then banned these members from the premises.

Under feeble shouts of "fight the Healy rump," the Banda-Slaughter clique suppressed any real analysis of the degeneration within the leadership and sought to prevent a real political struggle against this reactionary tendency.

The YSNC, determined to examine the continued political degeneration of the WRP leadership, opposed the nationalist line of the Majority CC, who were abandoning any pretense of Trotskyism and moving rapidly to the swamp of centrism.

All attempts to analyze and discuss the major events in the class struggle were outlawed, in particular the printworkers' strike. While the Trotskyist faction insisted that Healy's greatest crime had been the abandonment of the working class as the only revolutionary force in society and the betrayals of the international working class, the Banda-Slaughter clique counterposes to this the bourgeois conception of the "individual" and his "rights."

In an open display of hostility towards the youth and its role in the struggle for Trotskyism and revolutionary politics, the CC renegades censored the letters page in our *Young Socialist* and moved to stop the paper altogether — an act that only Healy could benefit from and certainly was applauding.

By January they had achieved their objective when Runcorn printworkers firstly refused to dispatch and then pulped the *Young Socialist* because it fought to expose the Healy leadership's unprincipled relations.

By continuing the national chauvinist line of Healy and continuing the abandonment of Trotskyism, the Banda-Slaughter renegades had also to defend these actions.

The logical result of this right-wing development culminated in two resolutions passed by the ex-CC which announced a split with the ICFI, a further turn into the camp of anti-Trotskyism and rescinding the agreement of the Party membership presented by the IC and endorsed by the first special Congress.

In doing so they aligned themselves with Healy and all anti-Trotskyists in their contempt for the international movement and working class, counterposing the "interests" of one national section.

In splitting with the ICFI and openly repudiating Trotskyism, this group has lost all claim to the WRP, British section of the ICFI, and we endorse the proposals to expel these renegades from our ranks.

The Young Socialists movement, conceived by Lenin and Trotsky and steeled in the uncompromising battle against Stalinism, revisionism and reformism will march forward in its revolutionary traditions.

Just as Stalinism and the agents of imperialism were unable to destroy the revolutionary politics of Trotskyism and smash the Fourth International, so Healy and his cothinkers, Banda and Slaughter, have failed in their pathetic, reactionary attempt.

We pledge to wage an uncompromising fight to defeat these renegades and all enemies of Trotskyism, by building the WRP and YS as the British section of the ICFI, the only revolutionary movement worldwide.

Dissolve the International Committee

Resolution of the Workers Revolutionary Party (Slaughter-Banda)

March 1986

1. The Workers Revolutionary Party appeals to Trotskyists throughout the world to support its struggle against Healyism and for the building of the Fourth International.

We declare our determination to construct an international revolutionary leadership based on the first four congresses of the Communist International, the Permanent Revolution, the struggle of the International Left Opposition, the *Transitional Program* and the other founding documents of the Fourth International.

We will engage in a full discussion with all of those internationally who stand on these programmatic foundations. This discussion will range over all of the theoretical, historical and political problems which confront Trotskyists the world over.

We firmly believe that the essential pre-condition for the building of the Fourth International is a thorough re-examination of its history. The WRP will work for an international pre-conference on these lines before the end of 1986.

2. The Workers Revolutionary Party declares that the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI) is not the continuation of the Fourth International founded by Leon Trotsky in 1938.

The ICFI continues the politics of Healyism and is an obstacle to the task of building the Fourth International.

The WRP rejects the traditions of the ICFI as anti-communist and considers its claim to be the World Party of the Socialist Revolution as having no basis in reality.

The character of the ICFI is revealed in the three main aspects of its international work.

Firstly, Healy's so-called "cadre-training" which was in reality a systematic attack on the ideological foundations of Marxism. In practice it was the moral, political, theoretical, personal and physical destruction of the movement's cadres in Britain and internationally.

Secondly, opportunist relations with national bourgeois regimes in the Middle East which were an abandonment of the Permanent Revolution in practice.

This led to support for the Saddam Hussein regime's murder of 21 communists in Iraq, the characterization of the Libyan regime as socialist, and the Iranian revolution as the greatest blow to world imperialism since the Russian revolution of 1917.

Thirdly, the frameup of the late Joseph Hansen and George Novack of the US Socialist Workers Party as GPU-FBI agents in the bogus investigation of Healy, Mitchell and North entitled *Security and the Fourth International.*

This is continued in the US courts through the Gelfand case, which calls for the capitalist courts to determine the membership of the SWP, a working-class political organization.

The refusal of the WRP to subordinate itself to the ICFI is not a rejection of democratic centralism, but is based on our rejection of the ICFI as reactionary and anti-Trotskyist and we call for its immediate dissolution.

The discipline of the ICFI has nothing in common with the democratic centralism of Lenin and Trotsky but is a means of maintaining Healy's ICFI without Healy.

The membership of the WRP will no more subordinate itself to Healy's ICFI than it would to Healy's Political Committee. We hereby sever all organizational links with the ICFI and its national sections.

3. In October 1985 there was a consciously led explosion in the WRP which resulted in the expulsion of T.G. Healy, a leader of the Trotskyist movement for more than 40 years and of the ICFI since its formation in 1953.

Healy was expelled for the sexual and physical abuse of party members and slandering Workers League National Secretary Dave North as a CIA agent. This led to a split with the Healy-Torrance group in the WRP, and the Greek and Spanish sections of the ICFI, on the question of revolutionary morality.

This group rejected revolutionary morality and the need for communist relations in the Trotskyist movement. They defended Healy's corruption rather than face up to the moral, political, theoretical and organizational bankruptcy of the WRP and its leadership.

Behind this split were deep going ideological differences. Their defense of the rapist Healy revealed a deep seated anti-communism which was a manifestation of the degenerate ideology of the bourgeoisie.

The WRP was an organization that was not revolutionary. Our program involved opportunist adaptation to sections of the reformist labor and trade bureaucracy in Britain and the national bourgeois regimes in the Middle East. This opportunism was covered up with ultra-left phrases.

The WRP's theoretical work ignored political economy and historical materialism, concentrating on Healy's subjective idealist philosophy. Contrary to Healy's assertions it was not a party based on revolutionary theory, but in practice on an ingrained anti-theoretical outlook.

Relations within the WRP were anti-communist and corrupt. The Healy regime attacked and destroyed the party's cadres. Relations with the working class were devoid of revolutionary morality. Our organization was based on a reactionary anti-theoretical activism and was financially crippled.

4. The expulsion of Healy and the split with the Healy-Torrance group ousted the old party leadership, with one section rejecting Healy and helping to defeat his clique. This brought out into the open the extent of the crisis in the party.

With Healy's apparatus broken, the conditions emerged for a serious reevaluation of the history and character of the WRP and the ICFI. The leaders of the ICFI tried to use the crisis of leadership in the WRP to stifle this discussion and keep it under their control.

The leaders of the ICFI rejected revolutionary morality as a diversion and tried to introduce "internationalism" as the main question. They defined as "internationalists" those who were for the ICFI.

Anyone who was opposed to the ICFI they branded as national chauvinist. This has nothing to do with the revolutionary internationalism of the proletariat.

These leaders could not face the re-evaluation of the movement's history and tried to stifle any serious discussion of it. The questioning of the nature of the ICFI led to the challenging of the bogus investigation conducted by Healy, Mitchell and North on behalf of the WRP and ICFI, fraudulently called *Security and the Fourth International.*

Rather than face the real political bankruptcy of this, and the ICFI as a whole, the leaders of the ICFI framed the present leadership of the WRP for Healy's crimes.

They suspended the WRP, without written charges to answer, on the basis of the Interim Report of an unconstitutional International Committee Commission.

This fraudulent report was only produced in writing after the suspension had been voted upon. The report was a coverup of the role of the leaders of the ICFI and a preparation to bureaucratically remove the anti-Healy leadership of the WRP.

The WRP Central Committee rejected the report and suspension, taking up the fight for an international discussion on the nature of the ICFI and all of its sections, including the WRP.

The WRP Central Committee went on to call for an internal re-evaluation of *Security and the Fourth International* and reject the re-registration of the membership of the WRP on the basis of subordination to the ICFI as unconstitutional and an attack on the rights of party members. The leaders of the ICFI responded by organizing a split in the WRP.

5. The Hyland-Short group formed a faction in the WRP on the basis that revolutionary morality was a diversion. They acted as the agents of the ICFI within the WRP and called anyone who opposed them liquidationists.

They campaigned for the continuation of the daily *News Line* and against facing the real situation of the party. This revealed their failure to break from the reactionary activism of Healy and Torrance.

This group defended the ICFI, and claimed that *Security and the Fourth International* was a great gain for Trotskyism. They continued the anti-theoretical outlook of Healyism, launching a witchhunt of intellectuals in the party.

The real character of this group was revealed in their anti-communist behavior. They disrupted party meetings, verbally abusing and physically threatening party members who disagreed with them.

They rejected revolutionary morality and communist relations in practice, as well as in words. They stole party funds and conspired to steal party vehicles and premises.

For four months the anti-Healy WRP fought a battle against attacks on three fronts, all of which were aimed to destroy the WRP and the fight to re-evaluate its history and character.

While the Healy-Torrance group was trying to destroy the WRP's fight against Healyism through the courts, the leaders of the ICFI tried to keep the discussion within the confines of their political straitjacket. The Hyland-Short group played the role of disrupting the discussion with their anti-communist behavior inside the WRP.

6. The WRP rejects the characterization **by** the ICFI that the splits in our ranks are over the question of internationalism. The split with the ICFI developed out of the expulsion of Healy and is over the question of revolutionary morality.

The depth of the ideological differences between the WRP and the ICFI is revealed by the fact that the leaders of the ICFI reject revolutionary morality as a diversion from the real issues. **Revolutionary morality is the central question.**

The WRP believes that these ideological differences are fundamental. We contend that the establishment of socialism requires the critical assimilation of all the cultural conquests of bourgeois society, both material and ideological, **by** the working class.

The development of the world capitalist economy has long ago created the economic pre-conditions for socialism. The establishment of socialism requires the expropriation of the capitalist class and social ownership of the means of production.

This can only be achieved through the socialist revolution, in which the working class overthrows the capitalist class and its state, and establishes itself as the ruling class of society.

The ideological pre-condition of the socialist revolution is the development of Marxism as the ideology of the working class, and this can only be achieved through the construction of a revolutionary party at the head of the working class.

Marxism arose out of, and is continually developed through, the critical assimilation of all the positive developments of the bourgeoisie ideologically.

We therefore believe that a real development of political economy, historical materialism and dialectical materialism, as the theoretical foundations of Marxism, is vital to the building of a world revolutionary leadership.

It is only from the standpoint of the world scientific outlook of Marxism that it is possible to develop the program, perspectives, strategy and tactics of the revolutionary party of the working class.

7. The WRP rejects the January 27 resolution of the

Workers League Central Committee. Reference to the membership of the WRP as "disoriented petty-bourgeois," "a pack of stampeding petty-bourgeois" and the party's 8th Congress as "a bogus conference packed with anti-Trotskyists" reveal their contempt for the membership of the WRP.

Having failed to win a majority in the WRP for continuation of the ICFI they have split in order to try and defend the Gelfand case.

The WRP undertakes to conduct a full investigation into the circumstances of the so-called *Security and the Fourth International.*

This was initiated by the WRP, in particular, Healy and Mitchell, with the assistance of North in the Workers League of America. The slander campaign against the late Joseph Hansen, George Novack and the present leadership of the SWP in the US, led to the Gelfand case.

This case is an attempt by Gelfand to get the US courts to determine his eligibility as a member of the SWP. At the center of this case is the assertion that the entire leadership of the SWP are FBI agents. This campaign is a diversion from the discussion of political differences with the SWP.

While the WRP does not in any way endorse the political line of the SWP, we are opposed to the use of capitalist courts against working-class political organizations. The Gelfand case sets a dangerous precedent, and we support the SWP's right to determine its own membership.

The WRP calls on the Workers League to withdraw from the Gelfand case and make an out of court settlement with the SWP on the court costs. The WRP will make every effort to assist in this.

Anti-Trotskyists Split from SLL

Statement of the Political Committee of the Socialist Labour League (Australia)

March 4, 1986

A group of anti-Trotskyist renegades has split from the Socialist Labour League, the Australian section of the International Committee of the Fourth International, to regroup with the revisionist forces to attack the SLL and the ICFI. This group, led by Phil Sandford and Robert Buehler, broke from the SLL and the ICFI after a special national congress at the weekend, during which they declared they would not recognize the political authority of the ICFI.

Sandford, Buehler and their followers declared support for the Banda-Slaughter renegades in Britain, who openly broke from Trotskyism on February 8, when they excluded properly elected delegates who supported the ICFI from the 8th Congress of the WRP and called in the police to enforce that decision.

During the SLL Congress, Buehler declared political solidarity with the Banda-Slaughter renegades, hailing them as "British Trotskyists." Before splitting from the SLL, Buehler and Sandford declared their political solidarity with former SLL National Secretary Jim Mulgrew by voting against his expulsion for an anti-party action.

Mulgrew did not attend the Congress to answer the serious charge against him and neither Sandford nor Buehler presented anything to contradict the irrefutable evidence against him, but they voted against his expulsion from the SLL.

The Buehler-Sandford renegades have openly revealed their anti-communist politics. They align themselves with the Banda-Slaughter group, who used the police to exclude Trotskyists from the WRP 8th Congress in Britain, while in Australia they defend the renegade Mulgrew.

The political basis of the split in the SLL could not be clearer. Buehler, Sandford and their supporters declared that they would not recognize the political authority of their own organization, thereby establishing there was no basis for them to remain in it.

They have now aligned themselves with every revisionist organization which has fought to liquidate the Fourth International over the past three decades, and completely support the position of the renegade Banda that the ICFI should be "buried forthwith."

In splitting from the SLL, they were answering a call from the Banda-Slaughter anti-Trotskyists for an international regroupment to attack the ICFI, which came in a resolution from the bogus 8th Congress of the WRP on February 8-9. That resolution stated:

"This 8th Congress of the Workers Revolutionary Party declares that the International Committee of the Fourth International does not represent the continuity of the Fourth International founded by Leon Trotsky in 1938.

"Failing to analyze and correct the degeneration and betrayals which it carried out under the leadership of Healy, it has now organized an anti-communist opposition and split against the WRP because of the WRP's principled struggle against Healyism.

"This Congress rejects completely the special international conference called by the International Committee to expel the WRP, and instructs the central committee to begin work immediately to regroup all those in the International Committee sections who are fighting to defeat Healyism and against the actions of D. North and the IC majority.

"The public discussion of the problems of the Fourth International will continue and this party will work for an international pre-conference of all those who stand on the Permanent Revolution, the Transitional Program and the first four Congresses of the Communist International, before the end of 1986."

In answering this call for regroupment, the Sandford-Buehler renegades are not breaking from "Healyism" but from the principled struggle waged by the ICFI against Pabloite revisionism.

The ICFI was founded in 1953 in response to the Open Letter to the world Trotskyist movement from the American Socialist Workers Party, calling for a fight against the liquidation of the Fourth International into counter-revolutionary Stalinism being carried out by Pablo and his supporters. The ICFI successfully maintained the continuity of the Fourth International when it broke from the SWP, which carried out an unprincipled reunification with Pabloite revisionism in 1963. The Banda-Slaughter renegades and their supporters in Australia now clearly repudiate the entire struggle of the ICFI since 1953 and are regrouping with those who attack its principles.

The Banda-Slaughter renegades' resolution, the political basis of the split by the Buehler-Sandford group, is a complete falsification of the history of the struggle against Healy and the WRP. The leadership of the Workers Revolutionary Party carried out no principled struggle against "Healyism." In fact, they collaborated with Healy because, at least from the mid-1970s, they were in the process of fast rejecting the principles on which the ICFI was founded and built. This was why in July 1985, when a fight to expose Healy's vile sexual and physical abuse of the cadre of the WRP and the ICFI was taken up by members of the WRP, Banda and

Slaughter carried out a systematic campaign to protect Healy.

Banda, who now calls for the ICFI to be "buried forthwith," attempted to drive out of the party members who called for Healy to be charged. Healy was expelled from the WRP on October 19 only because Banda and Slaughter could no longer maintain the coverup in the face of a rebellion in the ranks of the party.

The ICFI, which had been systematically lied to about the situation in the WRP, first heard a report from its British section on October 25, 1985.

It expelled Healy from its ranks immediately. But in so doing, it recognized that Healy's attacks on the Trotskyist movement were a product of the nationalist degeneration of the entire British leadership, and took steps to reestablish the principles of Trotskyism in the British section.

The ICFI was opposed at every turn by the Banda-Slaughter leadership, who fought to continue the nationalist politics of Healy, without Healy. Under Healy, Banda and Slaughter, the ICFI was increasingly subordinated to the narrow, national and pragmatic needs of the WRP. The political basis of this degeneration was the ever-more explicit abandonment of Trotsky's theory of Permanent Revolution and its replacement with unprincipled alliances with sections of the colonial bourgeoisie and the trade union and Labour bureaucracy.

At its October 25 meeting, the ICFI declared that it could collaborate only with those in the WRP who fought against the nationalist degeneration which had taken place in the British section.

It called for the re-registration of the WRP membership on the basis of an explicit recognition of the political authority of the ICFI and the subordination of the British section to its decisions. The British delegates, including Banda and Slaughter, voted for this decision, which was then endorsed by the WRP Central Committee on October 26 and by a special conference of the WRP the following day.

The ICFI, also with the unanimous support of the British delegates, set up a control commission to investigate the corruption of G. Healy. In its interim report, delivered to the ICFI on December 16, the control commission established that the WRP under Healy had entered mercenary relationships with sections of the colonial bourgeoisie in the Middle East, in which the principles of the Trotskyist movement had been sold for cash.

The ICFI majority refused to accept Slaughter's position that this was merely the result of the activities of G. Healy. It was, in fact, the sharpest expression of the degeneration of the WRP. Slaughter and Banda had blocked with Healy in suppressing criticisms of the WRP's increasingly Pabloite political line raised by Workers League national secretary Dave North in 1982 and 1984 and expelled members of their own party who raised differences.

In order to defend its principles and integrity, the ICFI suspended the WRP as the British section. On December 17 it carried a resolution setting out a principled basis for the restoration of full membership of the WRP.

Both resolutions were rejected by the majority of the WRP leadership. While Banda deserted his post to return to Sri Lanka and resumed contact with the LSSP, the party which broke from Trotskyism in 1964 when it entered the Bandaranaike coalition government, Slaughter whipped up a campaign against the ICFI. He received support from Buehler, Sandford and Mulgrew in the SLL.

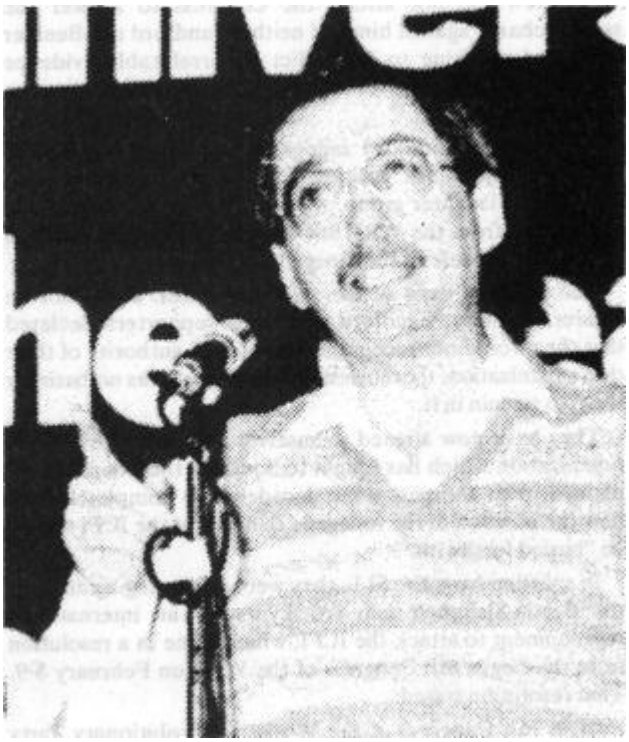
The SLL held a special conference lasting eight days over the Christmas-New Year period to discuss the crisis in the ICFI. It was attended by two members of the WRP who were able to freely argue against the ICFI decision to suspend the WRP. At the end of the most wide-ranging and open discussion in the history of the SLL, the conference voted by a more than two-to-one majority to support the suspension of the WRP.

Within the WRP, a minority led by Central Committee member Dave Hyland, who had refused to back down to Banda's demand that he withdraw his call for a control commission investigation into Healy, was winning increasing support for the principled struggle waged by the ICFI.

The Banda-Slaughter clique faced the possibility that it would lose control of the Central Committee at the WRP Congress of February 8-9. This was the reason that the WRP Central Committee majority overturned the decision to re-register the party membership on the basis of recognition of the political authority of the ICFI. The WRP majority declared the re-registration was invalid because the ICFI did not have any political authority.

But even after this decision, which permitted open anti-Trotskyists to attend the conference, the WRP majority still faced defeat on the conference floor. They therefore excluded minority delegates from the Congress and called the police to enforce their decision.

These anti-communist actions of the WRP majority were fully supported by the Buehler-Sandford group in the SLL. On February 1-2 the SLL Central Committee majority adopted a resolution calling for the expulsion of the WRP CC majority at the next world congress of the ICFI, recognizing that the January 26 resolutions were an open declaration of split.



J. Mulgrew

This resolution was opposed by Buehler, Sandford, Mulgrew and their supporters. Mulgrew declared that the ICFI was not the continuity of Trotskyism. The IC, he said, could go to the "trash can of history, and quite frankly I'll be pleased to see you go there."

The Central Committee meeting of February 1-2 also carried a resolution calling on the ICFI to expel the leaders of the Spanish and Greek sections for refusing to recognize the political authority of the ICFI. This resolution was carried unanimously.

It was supported by both Buehler and Sandford. But they opposed a resolution stating that all those in the SLL who refused to recognize the political authority of the ICFI should be expelled from the party at its Easter Congress.

This resolution was based on a clear principle: the SLL, as the Australian section of the ICFI, could not have in its ranks members who would not recognize the political authority of the world party to which they belonged.

The February 1-2 Central Committee meeting clearly exposed the opportunist character of the Buehler-Sandford group. They upheld the political authority of the ICFI in expelling Healy and his supporters, but would not recognize that political authority themselves.

Following the February 8 split in the WRP, the Buehler-Sandford group formed a minority faction in the SLL. They said they would abide by the discipline of the ICFI and the SLL but would not recognize the political authority of the ICFI. They were accorded minority rights, but immediately began to break the discipline of the SLL when members of the faction refused to sell and distribute *Workers News.*

Despite these provocations, no organizational measures were taken against them. Despite the clear anti-Trotskyist positions of the minority at last weekend's special congress, no organizational measures were taken against them.

The SLL majority was prepared to allow them full rights within the party to fight for their positions before the Easter Congress. But immediately after the special congress they split.

Their politics were defeated in an open struggle in the SLL lasting more than four months. That struggle has made clear the revisionist foundations of any new organization they set up. It will be nothing more than a recruitment ground for the most vicious opponents of the ICFI and the SLL. Before their renegacy, the Buehler-Sandford group made clear their liquidationist position by calling for the ending of the twice-weekly *Workers News* and the production of a weekly.

Right at the point where growing sections of the working class are coming into conflict with the Labor government, these renegades wanted to liquidate one of the major gains of the SLL.

Like their mentors in Britain, they are openly adapting to the trade union and Labor bureaucracy.

The objective basis for the struggle inside the ICFI over the past months has been made clear by the recent events in Haiti and especially the Philippines.

The political foundation of the Healy-Banda-Slaughter leadership, at least over the past decade, was its rejection of the theory of Permanent Revolution in the colonial and semi-colonial countries and accommodation to imperialism at home via the trade union and Labor bureaucracy. This led to liquidation of sections of the ICFI and abandonment of the struggle to build new ones.

The essence of the struggle against the Banda-Slaughter renegades and their supporters internationally has been the fight against the resurgence of Pabloite revisionism within the ICFI.

The defeat of the liquidators of Trotskyism within its own ranks has been the indispensable preparation by the ICFI to go forward in the building of the world party of socialist revolution. The Buehler-Sandford group was the political expression in the SLL of the fight for anti-Trotskyism led by Healy, Banda and Slaughter.

The Buehler-Sandford renegades have not broken from "Healyism" — the essence of which is the liquidation of Trotskyism — but continue its attacks on the ICFI. The SLL has registered a decisive political victory in exposing this revisionist tendency and purging it from its ranks.

The Political Committee calls on all SLL members to take forward the gains of this split by carrying out a determined campaign to educate workers and youth on the political lessons of this struggle and recruit into the party.

"Michael Banda, A Renegade from Trotskyism"

by Keerthi Balasuriya, National Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist League (Sri Lanka)

March 5, 1986

Mr. Michael Banda, general secretary of the Workers Revolutionary Party of Britain and a renegade from Trotskyism, who recently betrayed the International Committee of the Fourth International, has been invited by prominent LSSP leader Hector Abeywardene to rejoin the LSSP.

This will not come as a surprise to the Trotskyists throughout the world who fought to defend the ICFI, the world party of socialist revolution, from the most virulent liquidationist attack ever levelled against it by the renegade leaders of the former WRP, both the Healy and Banda-Slaughter factions.

It is entirely in order that H. Abeywardene, one of the prominent liquidationists in the old LSSP, who was responsible for the liquidation of the Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India (then the section of the Fourth International in India) into Jayaprakash Narayan's Praja Socialist Party after the Second World War, and who publicly declared that the biggest "mistake" of the LSSP was ever to have joined the FI, should now be in solidarity with M. Banda, who has denounced as futile the founding of the FI itself and its history, including the history of the ICFI from 1953.

This invitation was extended to Banda when he recently visited the LSSP headquarters. Having deserted his own organization at the height of a grave political crisis, Banda is currently in Sri Lanka hobnobbing with all the diseased anti-Trotskyist elements, hoping to assemble a menagerie of renegades against the ICFI under the false label of "defenders of the Transitional Program."

Banda's response to the LSSP invitation has been that only the lack of Sri Lankan citizenship stands in his way. He agreed, however, to meet the LSSP boss Colvin R. Da Silva, to continue with "discussions."

Banda's rendezvous with these treacherous enemies of the working class, against whom he fought since 1953, will confirm him as an unregenerate apostate, rarely witnessed in the history of the working-class movement.

M. Banda, who had been a member of the BLPI (Ceylon unit) during the late 1940s, and subsequently the LSSP (Ceylon section of the FI), migrated to Britain in 1950 along with his brother Tony Banda. Having joined the Trotskyist movement in Britain, he was instrumental in forming the ICFI in order to insure the continuity of Trotskyism against the attempt made by Michel Pablo and his group to liquidate the Trotskyist movement into Stalinism in 1953.

During the very period Banda was fighting to defeat this pro-Stalinist tendency in the FI, Pablo organized a group inside the LSSP, led by K.P. Silva, L.W. Panditha, and T.B. Subasingha, to liquidate the LSSP into the thoroughly discredited, meager ranks of Sri Lankan Stalinism. It is important to remember at that stage the Stalinists in Sri Lanka were numerically, and in their political influence, decisively inferior to the LSSP.

While the LSSP leaders correctly expelled the pro-Stalinist Pablo gang from their ranks, they refused to support the ICFI to fight this tendency internationally.

The worst opportunism and nationalism of the LSSP leaders came into the open when they lined up with the same Pablo-Mandel group who organized the pro-Stalinist split in the LSSP, after Pablo gave them an undertaking not to interfere in the internal affairs of the LSSP.

At that time, the British Trotskyists, including Banda, correctly warned the LSSP that their collaboration with Pablo would pave the way for the total destruction of the LSSP as a proletarian party. This warning was vindicated in no time.

The LSSP's lineup with Pablo's revisionist secretariat meant that they could not conduct a political struggle against the very same class forces which produced a pro-Stalinist group in their own ranks.

Even though M. Banda now denounces the 1953 split, he knows full well that the thoroughly discredited Stalinist party in Sri Lanka could gain a semblance of credibility only with the theoretical and political cover provided by Pablo's henchmen and the total retreat of the LSSP leaders from any struggle against this tendency.

While the Stalinists gained ground with this betrayal, the LSSP, now totally disarmed by the very same Pabloite outlook, degenerated into a second grade Stalinist party, vying with the Stalinists to tail-end the national bourgeois Sri Lanka Freedom Party of Bandaranaike.

(Banda, who decries the 1953 split, does so well knowing that the group at present in the leadership of the Communist Party, its general secretary, K.P. Silva, and its trade union leader, L.W. Panditha, is the very same group that was organized by Pablo in 1953 to split the LSSP.)

When the LSSP slid down the slope of degeneration after 1953 and increasingly turned toward the SLFP, the Socialist Labour League, the British section of the ICFI, of which Banda was a leader, broke off all political relations with Colvin R. Da Silva and Douric de Souza as far back as 1959.

As the British Trotskyist press, *The Newsletter*, of October 10, 1964, reported: "When Douric de Souza, presently a leader of the revisionists, came to London in 1959, we firmly drew attention to the policy of betrayal which they

Demonstration of the Revolutionary Communist League, the Trotskyists in Sri Lanka

were following, and he broke off all political relations with us. We did the same with Colvin Da Silva too.

"The *Newsletter* published a statement against the tendency of accommodation to a coalition government which was accumulating in the Ceylonese party."

Today Banda reestablishes political relations with Colvin Da Silva and the rest of the LSSP leaders, who are immeasurably more degenerate than they were in 1959 and spits on the entirely principled stand taken by the British Trotskyists in 1959.

Notwithstanding Banda's cynical lies about the role of the ICFI and his own role, and his claim that the IC never prepared for a split in the LSSP and only "gate-crashed" the LSSP conference in 1964, the British Trotskyists urged the revolutionary wing of the LSSP to prepare for a split in 1963.

In a statement published in July 1963, written by Banda himself, the ICFI characterized the LSSP leaders as a "bunch of petty bourgeois charlatans masquerading as Marxists." Banda quoted from the "Transitional Program," the founding document of the Fourth International, and compared it with the policies of the LSSP.

" 'There is not and there cannot be a place for it in any of the Peoples Fronts. It uncompromisingly gives battle to all political groupings tied to the apron strings of the bourgeoisie.'

"The ICFI firmly believes that hundreds of devoted communists in the LSSP will reaffirm the principles and the program of the FI successfully and wipe out revisionism and revisionists from its ranks." *(Labour Review,* July 1963)

When the LSSP entered the coalition government of Bandaranaike, only the ICFI unequivocally called upon the revolutionaries to split with the coalition traitors, and ruthlessly fought to unmask them and their Pabloite mentors.

The United Secretariat of Mandel and Hansen were for a coalition government, and covered up their complicity with the equivocators.

As late as April 1964, the United Secretariat was urging the LSSP to enter a coalition with the SLFP along with the LSSP-CP-MEP United Left Front: "Any form of coalition government with such a party (i.e., the SLFP) as long as it remains the dominant majority within such a coalition, can only lead to the immobilization of the left in advance and its becoming itself a target for the growing resentment of the

masses." That was the position of the United Secretariat in **1964.**

It was in the course of the historic struggle against this great betrayal that the Revolutionary Communist League was established as a section of the ICFI in Sri Lanka through the interventions of Gerry Healy, Mike and Tony Banda during the period of 1964-67.

The terrible results of the LSSP-Pabloite betrayal did not take long to show up. In 1970 the LSSP-CP-SLFP coalition came to power in order to carry out the most brutal attacks against the workers, peasants, youth and Tamil masses.

The LSSP leaders, whose company Banda is now seeking, presided over the massacre of 15,000 youth in crushing the JVP-led uprising.

Banda is also well aware of the fact that the LSSP leaders are directly responsible for the murder of Comrades Laksh¬man Weerakoon and L.G. Gunadasa, members of the RCL, which fought to mobilize the working class against the coalition government in 1971.

He is also well aware of the fact that the entire RCL press was proscribed with the support of the LSSP leaders, and the leadership of the RCL, including K. Balasuriya, Wilfred (Spike) Pereira, and A. Wakkumbura, were arrested.

In the midst of the monstrous repression carried out by the coalition government against the JVP and the Sri Lankan Trotskyists, Banda denounced the LSSP leaders as hirelings of imperialism.

The betrayal did not end there. Colvin Da Silva proceeded to take the lead in institutionalizing the oppression against the Tamil nation by redrafting the constitution, making Sinhalese the only state language and Buddhism the state religion.

From 1970 to 1977, Banda completely supported the fight undertaken by the RCL to mobilize the working class to break the coalition and expose the LSSP traitors.

Having broken from the ICFI today, he is establishing his peace with the LSSP traitors against the ICFI and the RCL. The reactionary class content of the liquidationist "theories" of Banda, which claim that there has been no Trotskyist movement from 1940 onwards, is now absolutely clear.

We emphatically state that his cynical "theories" are nothing but a flimsy cover for his adaptation to the most reactionary forces the Trotskyist movement has fought against, and from now on he will place all the intimate knowledge he gained in a leading post in the Trotskyist movement at the disposal of these enemies of the working class.

It is our duty to warn the working class and the national liberation movements in Sri Lanka, India, Britain and the world over, not to place the slightest trust in M. Banda, his collaborator C. Slaughter, and the bogus WRPs led by them and by G. Healy, between which there are no principled differences.

By politically reconciling with the LSSP leaders, the most ardent defenders of the unitary racist state, who unconditionally support the racist war of the Sinhalese bourgeoisie against the Tamil nation, M. Banda has betrayed the interests of the national liberation struggle. Any self-respecting revolutionary organization would consider the heinous actions of M. Banda sufficient grounds to throw him out of its ranks.

We are eagerly waiting to see what attitude C. Slaughter, D. Bruce and Co., the political cohorts of Banda, will now take.

"Michael Banda: A Political Obituary"

Bulletin Article by David North

March 7, 1986

The news that the Lanka Sama Samaja Party of Sri Lanka (LSSP) has invited Michael Banda to rejoin its ranks and that the WRP general secretary is discussing the matter with Colvin Da Silva is a development which, though it can come as no surprise to those who have followed the crisis within the Workers Revolutionary Party and have read Banda's recent denunciation of the International Committee, is an event of considerable political importance.

After 38 years in the Trotskyist movement, during which he played a decisive role in the struggle against revisionism, Banda has decisively capitulated to his life-long enemies.

He was, to his great credit, among the first who detected the revisionist implications of the 1951 Third World Congress perspectives — which, by 1953, assumed the practical form of an open organizational attack upon the very existence of the Fourth International.

Only 23 years of age, Banda threw himself body and soul into the battle against the Pabloite traitors who, functioning as a pro-Stalinist fifth column, sought to completely liquidate the sections of the Fourth International into the local Communist Parties.

Though the LSSP professed opposition to the liquidationist perspective of Pablo, it refused to endorse the "Open Letter" written by James P. Cannon, calling upon the cadres of the Fourth International to repudiate and defeat the revisionists.

Its leaders, Leslie Goonewardene and Colvin Da Silva, came out against the formation of the International Committee, organized at the initiative of Cannon to defend orthodox Trotskyism against Pabloism.

As Banda was to explain many times in the years to come, the attitude of the LSSP toward the struggle against Pabloism stemmed from an organic nationalism and political centrism that was to lead inexorably to the great betrayal of 1964 — the decision of the LSSP to enter a bourgeois coalition government.

It is now obvious that the recent document submitted by Banda — "27 Reasons Why the IC Should Be Buried" — is nothing more than a cynical justification for his abandonment of Trotskyism and re-entry into the LSSP.

His politically bankrupt and utterly dishonest denunciation of the "Open Letter" and the founding of the International Committee is a belated and pathetic apology for the duplicitous role played by the LSSP while the Fourth International was engaged in a life-and-death battle against Pabloism, a struggle which posed to the world Trotskyist movement the decisive question: "To be or not to be?"

M. Banda

Since 1964 the betrayal of the LSSP — the first party calling itself Trotskyist to enter a bourgeois government — has served as the historical demonstration of the implications of Pabloite revisionism. (In the accompanying analysis which appears on these pages, Comrade K. Balasuriya of the Revolutionary Communist League of Sri Lanka explains very well the political background and outcome of this betrayal.)

In approaching the LSSP, Banda gives notice that he, too, is in the process of crossing class lines and aligning himself with the capitalist state against the working class. It flows from the political logic of this development that Banda should suddenly repudiate — without any previous explanation — *Security and the Fourth International* and defend Hansen's cover-up of Stalinist provocations against the Trotskyist movement and his secret collaboration with the FBI. Naturally, the SWP publishes Banda's attack on the

International Committee and his defense of Hansen in the latest edition of its ***Intercontinental Press.***

But the significance of Banda's renegacy extends beyond his personal fate. In the course of the last eight months, the International Committee has witnessed the political disintegration of what had for many years constituted the central leadership of its oldest section, the Workers Revolutionary Party in Britain.

All three political leaders who had been most identified with the historic struggle against Pabloite revisionism — Banda, Gerry Healy and Cliff Slaughter — have broken with the International Committee of the Fourth International.

However intense their subjective hatred of one another, it is politically undeniable that all of them have broken with the principles upon which the Fourth International was founded in 1938. Whatever tactical differences they have, all of them have gone over to the Pabloite perspectives.

No matter how Healy tries to pass himself off as a sort of "historic leader for life," he now bases himself upon a coterie of unstable middle-class radicals whose political loyalties are based largely on personal considerations. And no matter how many articles he commissions defending his intuitive "practice of cognition," the fact is that Healy was absolutely blind to the monstrous growth of revisionism within his own central leadership.

Between 1982 and 1984, the Workers League raised directly with him and on the International Committee the danger that the WRP was adopting clearly revisionist positions.

In a letter to Banda, dated January 23, 1984, the Workers League stated, "We are deeply troubled by the growing signs of a political drift toward positions quite similar — both in conclusions and methodology — to those which we have historically associated with Pabloism." Warning that this drift "will produce political disasters within the sections," the Workers League called for "a renewal of our struggle against Pabloite revisionism — above all, against the manifestations of its outlook within our own sections."

Healy's response was to threaten the Workers League with an immediate split, and in this he was fully supported by Banda and Slaughter. All the political developments which have since transpired prove that underlying these unprincipled relations within the WRP leadership was a common opposition to Trotskyism — above all, its concept of proletarian internationalism and the program of permament revolution.

The factional bitterness of the present on-going dispute between Healy on the one hand and Slaughter-Banda on the other does not imply the existence of principled differences between them. Healy himself once described a similar situation inside the Socialist Workers Party, during the period preceding its reunification with the Pabloites:

"It was equally clear from the informal discussion with Dobbs that the SWP was being torn asunder by an internal crisis which on the surface appeared to center around organizational issues.

"Its failure to clarify the reasons for the Pablo split now meant that a number of factions inside the party were blindly fighting against each other, without the political issues being clear.

"The one thing that did emerge from all this squabbling was the right-wing revisionist orientation of all the factions.

"Cannon did nothing to clear up this political mess; he simply intensified it."

For more than a decade the line of the WRP was characterized by what Trotsky once called "right-centrist downsliding." The essence of this centrist downsliding was a fundamental loss of political confidence in the revolutionary role of the working class, internationally and in Britain.

This tendency gathered strength with the return of Social Democracy to power in 1974 and then with the victory of the Tories in 1979. The objective source of this downsliding was the pressure of imperialism upon the Trotskyist movement.

One by one, the WRP abandoned positions which the International Committee had conquered in the struggle against Pabloism. In the name of immediate tactical gains in Britain ("the movement is everything") the strategic perspective of the Trotskyist movement, the building of the World Party to lead the socialist revolution, was abandoned ("the final goal is nothing"). Political differences which emerged in the WRP leadership on fundamental questions of international revolutionary strategy were swept under the rug.

In fact, there does not exist a single document that would indicate the existence of a single political difference within the WRP leadership during the past decade. The leadership had become a clique, subordinating principles to personal relations.

The Marxist science of political perspective was replaced with pragmatic intuition. Relations of the most opportunist character — with bourgeois nationalists, left talkers in the Labour Party and trade union bureaucracy — were developed.

Healy, Banda and Slaughter are part of a broad liquidationist tendency that is apparent to anyone who seriously examines the present development of all those organizations which claim affiliation to the Fourth International.

On the last day of 1982, Jack Barnes, national secretary of the revisionist Socialist Workers Party and protege of Joseph Hansen, outlined the real perspective of this emerging liquidationist tendency. He said that within a decade no one will call themselves a Trotskyist!

Healy was not prepared to say that, but by 1983 there was very little to distinguish the political line of the WRP from that of the Pabloites on the most fundamental questions.

The extreme right-wing orientation of the Banda-Slaughter renegades of the WRP — toward regroupment with Stalinists, revisionists and radicals — was nurtured under Healy's leadership.

As for the Healy-led faction of the WRP, its daily *News Line* epitomizes liquidationism. It is a newspaper without a party, functioning largely as a publicity organ for sections of the trade union bureaucracy.

Healy's opportunism has now reached the point of a thorough-going hatred of Trotskyist principles. Hence he denounces the author of this article as "a genuine sectarian propagandist of the purest water, a man to whom numbers of members is irrelevant."

Healy, like Banda, has come full circle. He now levels against his Trotskyist opponents the same slander of "ultra-left sectarianism" that were hurled against him by Hansen and the SWP Pabloites 25 years ago. He considers it the chief crime of the Workers League that "The most vital

question is to maintain doctrinal purity," which, according to Healy, is "possible only in the smallest discussion group ..."(*News Line*, February 15, 1986)

This comment simply exposes Healy's political cynicism and lack of confidence in Trotskyism. He long has ceased to believe in the power of revolutionary ideas and their ability to win the undying allegiance of the working class. For a revolutionist, this is a politically fatal position.

At any rate, we are willing to accept the "charge" that during the struggles of the last eight months, the Workers League has fought under the banner of "doctrinal purity." As for "numbers," we have seen the real political character of Healy's "cadre." His own Political Committee — consisting entirely of individuals selected by himself — degenerated into a squalid hotbed of gross opportunism. And Healy's political protege, his successor as general secretary, is on the verge of joining a party of the capitalist state!

Only those members of the Workers Revolutionary Party that stood with the International Committee and formed the WRP (Internationalist) represent the historic principles of Trotskyism.

The struggle waged by the International Committee against Healy, Banda and Slaughter has been completely vindicated. It has successfully defended the political principles embodied in the fight against Pabloism in 1953 and again in 1961-64.

Now it must strive to assimilate all the lessons of this struggle, develop its world perspective, and consolidate the victory of Trotskyism over the petty-bourgeois liquidationist tendency.

"The Case Against the SWP —What the Facts Show"

Bulletin Articles by David North

March 11, 14, 18, 1986

The anti-Trotskyist renegades of the Workers Revolutionary Party (Banda-Slaughter group) have immediately won the support of the Socialist Workers Party, which devotes several pages of the latest edition of *Intercontinental Press*, dated March 10, 1986, to reprinting the articles which first appeared in the *News Line* on February 7 denouncing the International Committee of the Fourth International.

For 20 years *Intercontinental Press*, founded by the late Joseph Hansen in the aftermath of the SWP's break with the International Committee, has functioned as the principal international organ of anti-Trotskyist distortions, misinformation and political provocation.

In the mid-1970s, it promoted the US State Department line on Angola — opposing the struggle led by the MPLA to unite the country and justifying the receipt of CIA cash by Holden Roberto.

Not long after, in the 1970s, Hansen personally recruited a notorious Nicaraguan traitor and agent of Somoza, Fausto Amador, to write for *Intercontinental Press* as its principal Central American correspondent — despite the protests of the Pabloite organizations in Europe. These are but two examples of the provocative role of this journal in the international socialist and anti-imperialist movement.

In all those years, *Intercontinental Press* continuously vilified the International Committee and the British Trotskyists in the WRP and its predecessor, the Socialist Labour League. But now, in the aftermath of their break with the International Committee, Banda and Slaughter are given a warm welcome by *Intercontinental Press.*

The SWP reserves its greatest praise for the WRP renegades' denunciation of *Security and the Fourth International,* the decade-long investigation conducted by the International Committee into the circumstances surrounding the assassination of Leon Trotsky in August 1940 and the penetration of the SWP by agents of Stalinism and imperialism.

This investigation established, on the basis of documents and sworn testimony, that Hansen, the long-time leader of

***Intercontinental Press*—founded 20 years ago by Joseph Hansen**

the SWP, was unquestionably an agent of the US government.

Doug Jenness, one of 12 ex-students from Carleton College who mysteriously entered the SWP and rose rapidly into its leadership, declares in *Intercontinental Press*, "A staggering blow has been dealt" to *Security and the Fourth International by* the attack launched by the WRP renegades — especially the statement written by M. Banda entitled, "27 Reasons Why the International Committee Should Be Buried Forthwith."

This document was written by Banda shortly after he deserted his post as general secretary of the Workers Revolutionary Party and traveled to Sri Lanka for an open-ended vacation. Armed with an eclectic selection of old party documents, he set about revising the entire history of the Fourth International, with the aim of proving that it should never have existed.

On the basis of this thesis, Banda has now entered into negotiations with the Lanka Sama Samaja Party, which took the politics of Pabloism to its logical conclusion and entered a bourgeois coalition government in 1964.

Having been recently invited to rejoin the LSSP, with which he broke politically in the early 1950s, Banda is presently in the process of repudiating the proletarian revolution and affiliating with a party of the capitalist state.

That portion of Banda's statement which deals with *Security and the Fourth International* has been reprinted in *Intercontinental Press.* What Jenness does not tell his readers is that Banda's attack on the International Committee's *Security* investigation appears as the summation of his vitriolic denunciation of James P. Cannon, founder of the SWP.

His attempt to demonstrate that Cannon was an unprincipled and cowardly scoundrel is central to Banda's neo-Stalinist thesis that the Fourth International has been, since the day of Trotsky's assassination if not earlier, a politically degenerate organization, led by charlatans and mountebanks, incapable of taking a correct position on any question facing the working class.

Doug Jenness

Banda denounces Cannon's "disgusting accommodation to Norman Thomas" and charges that the SWP refused "to consider the US Communist Party as a legitimate part of the working class."

Banda goes on to proclaim that the historic Minneapolis Smith Act trial of 1941, in which Cannon and 17 other SWP leaders were convicted of sedition for opposing US imperialism, constituted "the greatest betrayal of Trotskyism" and exposed "Cannon's political cowardice and capitulation to backward sections of the US working class ..." Big words from Mr. Banda who, as he was wont to admit, "never heard a shot fired in anger or sorrow."

That is not all. He asserts that "The enormous influence of the SWP in the FI proved fatal," largely because Cannon "had made a fetishistic dogma out of Trotskyism."

Proof of Cannon's bankruptcy, according to the hindsighted Banda, was the SWP leader's famous American Thesis of 1946 "which was a continuation of his national-defensist orientation covered up in seemingly revolutionary terms." As a result of this supposed nationalism, "Cannon and the SWP abandoned even the pretense of building the Fourth International by 1950."

Furthermore, in order to support his claim that the International Committee was politically contaminated by the decisive role played by Cannon in its formation, Banda claims that during the period leading up to the split with Pablo, **"Cannon was adapting to the left Democrats in the** US **and keeping a shameless and inscrutable silence on the Rosenberg executions."**

Like everything else written by Banda, who attempts to tailor history in accordance with his immediate factional needs, this is an obscene libel.

Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were executed on June 19, 1953. In the issue of *The Militant* dated June 1, 1953, the front-page headline read **"Witch Hunters Push Doomed Couple Toward Death Chair."** Denouncing the "cowardly silence of the labor officials," the SWP called upon "trade unionists throughout the nation to demand action from their union organizations and officials."

"It is not too late to save the Rosenbergs," *The Militant* declared, **"Everything must be done to stop the hand of the executioner."**

In the next issue, dated June 8, 1953, the headline of *The Militant* read **"Demand Witch-Burners Halt Legal Murder of Rosenbergs."** The front page also carried an editorial entitled, **"Labor Must Fight This Injustice."**

One week later, in the issue of June 15, 1953, the front-page headline read, **"Last Ditch Clemency Fight in Rosenberg Case — World Protest Rises In Effort To Save Couple."** The front page also carried an official appeal from the SWP for clemency, signed by its national secretary, Farrell Dobbs.

In its next issue, dated June 22, 1953 and printed hours before the execution, *The Militant* front-page headline read, **"Government Demands Blood, Court Dooms the Rosenbergs."** The front page also carried an article reporting an SWP rally in defense of the Rosenbergs.

Finally, in its issue of June 29, 1953, the front-page article

James P. Cannon

is headlined, **"Revulsion Sweeps World At Murder of Rosenbergs."**

Significantly, Jenness makes no reference whatsoever to Banda's wild distortions of the historical record and his conscious lies about the role of Cannon in the leadership of the Fourth International and the SWP. He is totally uninterested in defending what was principled and correct in the history of the SWP. When it comes to covering up for Hansen, Jenness and his co-leaders are willing to accept help from any source, no matter how discredited it is.

Banda's article confirms a political law: all those who break with Trotskyism immediately align themselves with Hansen. For such renegades the denunciation of *Security and the Fourth International* is an obligatory ritual.

Banda declares, "No one who honors Trotsky's impeccable and scrupulous regard for absolutely verifiable facts and irrefutable evidence will have anything more to do with this monstrous frame-up..."

We have already provided an especially revealing example of Banda's somewhat less than impeccable attitude towards facts and evidence. But let us note that prior to writing these lines in January 1986, Banda had never once questioned either the political legitimacy of *Security and the Fourth International* or the validity of its conclusions.

Quite the opposite: he was, along with Cliff Slaughter, one of the principal protagonists of the investigation. In the course of a decade, he personally reviewed and analyzed virtually all the evidence gathered in the United States.

We could quote from countless articles and speeches in which Banda passionately defended the investigation conducted by the International Committee, which he now denounces as a "damnable fantasy," "a manic witchhunt, a desperate forensic diversion," etc. Only nine years ago, in January 1977, Banda had this to say about a London gathering of revisionists called to denounce the ***Security and the Fourth International*** investigation.

"Those acquainted with the history of the struggle against revisionism will find difficulty in suppressing a spontaneous desire to retch at the temerity of the organizers who defend the criminal activities of the GPU and their accomplices under the banner of a bogus 'workers democracy'."

Defending the necessity of the investigation into *Security and the Fourth International,* he explained that "the exposure of Stalin's crimes and complicity of the revisionists in the coverup of these crimes is central to this preparation of a new cadre of revolutionaries.

"Those who oppose this task in whatever form **are serving the interests of counterrevolutionary Stalinism. We have been warned.**

"The voice is the voice of Lambert, Mandel and Novack — but the face is the face of Marchais, Berlinguer, McLennan — and Stalin!"

Under the influence of objective events, a political leader is often compelled to review and reconsider many things.

But the innocence or guilt of Hansen, unlike questions of perspective and program, is determined by documents and evidence whose intrinsic significance is not altered by changes in the political and economic conjuncture. In his denunciation of *Security and the Fourth International,* Banda does not explain what facts pertaining to the investigation led him to change his mind. He does not challenge the authenticity of the documents which established Hansen's collaboration with the state. He does not even raise new questions about evidence.

There exists no logical transition from one position to another — no intellectual process of doubting, questioning and re-examining. Banda simply leaps from one position — in defense of *Security and the Fourth International* and its conclusions — to its polar opposite.

No worker will take the present statements of such a man seriously and accept his credentials as an objective and impartial witness. It is obvious to everyone that his denunciation of *Security and the Fourth International* is dictated by nothing more than the most base and subjective considerations.

Having changed his politics, entered into new political alliances, repudiated Trotskyism, and become an opponent of the International Committee, Banda now finds that the exposure of Hansen's collaboration with the FBI cuts across his own immediate political needs.

Attempting to justify his assault against *Security and the Fourth International,* Banda declares that it is "based entirely on circumstantial evidence and political innuendo." This is aimed against the lawsuit initiated by Alan Gelfand against the US government and the Socialist Workers Party, which produced a massive amount of evidence which substantiated the allegations of the International Committee against Hansen. The relief sought by Gelfand through this lawsuit was that the US government be compelled to identify its agents and remove them from the leadership of the SWP.

It is obvious that Banda does not understand the significance of circumstantial evidence and its relation to direct evidence. The source of this failure lies not in a lack

of familiarity with the nature of bourgeois law — that could be forgiven — but in a general disinterest in the dialectical nature of thought and the objective forms of its development. Not only the verdicts of jurors but a great portion of the knowledge developed by science relies heavily on circumstantial evidence.

From the gradual dipping of a ship's mast below the horizon, Columbus inferred the curvature of the earth. The direct evidence to support this conclusion, with which the science of the time almost unanimously concurred, came much later. From more complex circumstantial evidence Einstein inferred the relativity of space and time.

In the more narrow and prosaic sphere of juridical conclusions, the legal concepts of circumstantial and direct evidence are not mutually exclusive but dialectically interconnected. A single piece of evidence may be both direct and circumstantial, depending upon the context within which it is presented. The development of a circumstantial case requires the integration of many small but interrelated pieces of direct evidence.

It is true that Hansen did not leave behind a death-bed confession, and the US government refused Gelfand's demand for a release of its files. Thus, there is no **ultimate** direct evidence — at least none that is presently in the public domain — that Hansen was an agent. But there exists a powerful circumstantial case that he was, based on scores of pieces of direct evidence.

Let us take an example from the case to illustrate the relation between circumstantial and direct evidence.

At his deposition in 1982, SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes confirmed that Hansen met with the FBI Special Agent B.E. Sackett in 1940.

Prior to this admission, the charge that Hansen had met secretly with the FBI was supported by inferences drawn circumstantially from small pieces of direct evidence: that is, letters from the American Consul in Mexico City informing the US State Department that Hansen wanted to establish a "confidential" contact "to whom information can be imparted with impunity"; letters from the US State Department to the Mexico City Embassy informing them that arrangements to provide Hansen with a contact had been made; letters from the US Consul to Hansen giving the name of the agent he was to contact in New York; a letter from FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover to Sackett advising him on how to deal with Hansen; a letter from Hansen to his contact in the Mexico City Embassy informing him that he "shall visit him [Sackett] shortly."

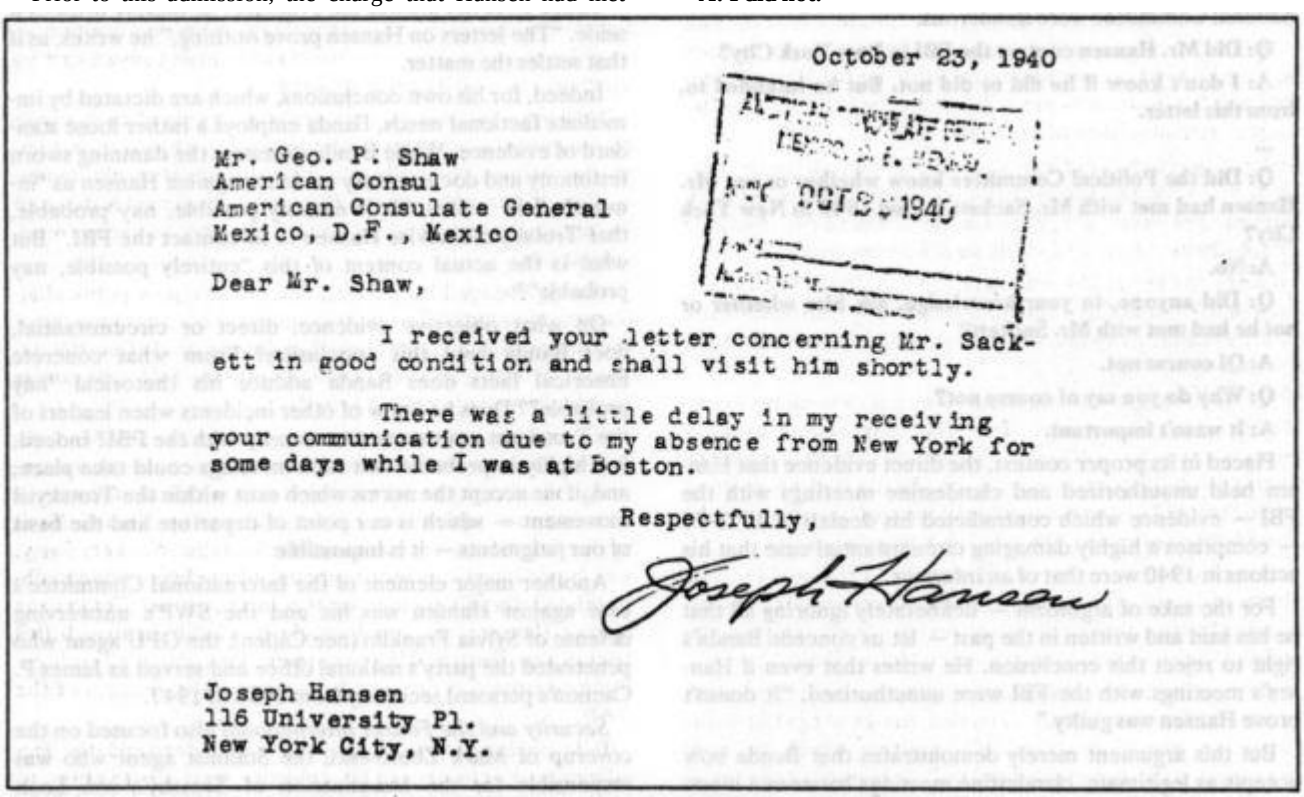
From these pieces of direct evidence there emerged a very persuasive "circumstantial" case that Hansen met with Sackett in New York. However, the first piece of "direct" evidence that the meeting did, in fact, take place came when Barnes said so under oath — a very damaging admission which he attempted to retract one year later during the actual trial of the Gelfand case.

Moreover, there is a compelling circumstantial case that Hansen's meetings with the FBI were not authorized by the Socialist Workers Party. But the content of this circumstantial case is highly damaging direct evidence, that is, the sworn testimony of SWP leaders who denied having any knowledge of meetings between Hansen and the FBI.

Farrell Dobbs, a member of the SWP Political Committee in 1940, was questioned under oath on this matter on April 11, 1982:

Q: Did you know that in 1940 Mr. Hansen had face to face meetings with the FBI in New York City?

A: I did not.



October 23, 1940

Mr. Geo. P. Shaw
American Consul
American Consulate General
Mexico, D.F., Mexico

Dear Mr. Shaw,

I received your letter concerning Mr. Sackett in good condition and shall visit him shortly.

There was a little delay in my receiving your communication due to my absence from New York for some days while I was at Boston.

Respectfully,

Joseph Hansen

Joseph Hansen
116 University Pl.
New York City, N.Y.

Hansen's confirmation of the arrangements to meet confidentially with the FBI.

Q: Have you ever heard that before?

A: I have no knowledge of such a thing ever happening and no reason to believe that it did.

Q: Why do you believe that it didn't happen?

A: Because I have no reason to believe it did.

Two weeks earlier, on March 25, 1982, Felix Morrow, author of the classic Trotskyist work *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Spain* and a member of the SWP Political Committee in 1940, testified as follows:

Q: Did the Political Committee authorize anyone to meet with the FBI or the State Department or the US government?

A: I don't recall anything such as that. I don't recall it at the time.

Q: Is that a fact of some significance? Would that be something that, let's say, would be noted in the minutes or —

A: Of course it would. If anyone of us would be turning up at the FBI we would certainly have made a record of it.

Q: Why is that?

A: For self-protection.

Q: Would it be suspicious if, let's say, government documents confirmed that a member of the party had met with the FBI and -

A: There was no record of it. That's right, that would be suspicious.

In their questioning of one of Barnes's closest collaborators, Larry Seigle, Gelfand's attorneys established that the present-day leadership of the SWP claimed never to have asked Hansen before his death in 1979 whether he had met with the FBI; and that it therefore had no factual basis to support its claims that the allegations made by the International Committee were slanderous.

Q: Did Mr. Hansen contact the FBI in New York City?

A: I don't know if he did or did not. But he intended to, from this letter.

Q: Did the Political Committee know whether or not Mr. Hansen had met with Mr. Sackett during 1940 in New York City?

A: No.

Q: Did anyone, to your knowledge, ask him whether or not he had met with Mr. Sackett?

A: Of course not.

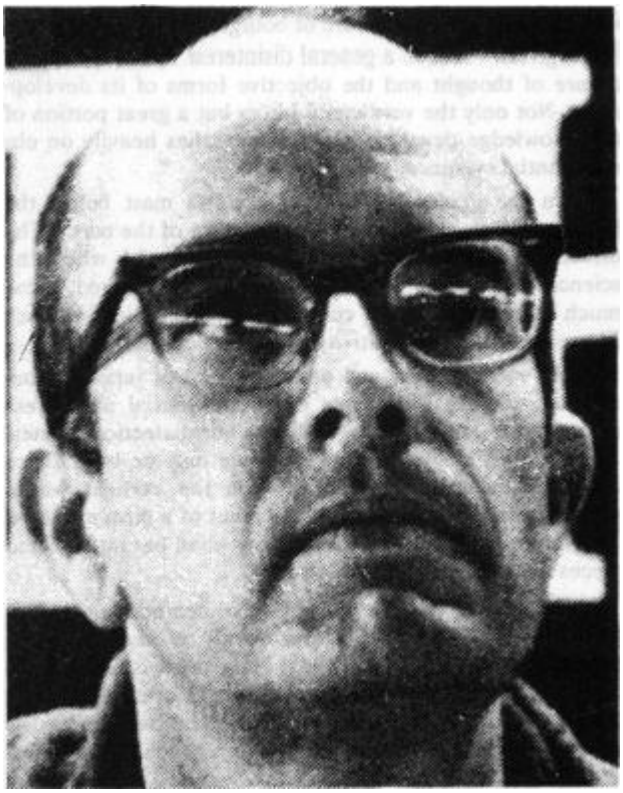
Q: Why do you say of course not?

A: It wasn't important.

Placed in its proper context, the direct evidence that Hansen held unauthorized and clandestine meetings with the FBI — evidence which contradicted his denials in 1975-76 — comprises a highly damaging circumstantial case that his actions in 1940 were that of an informer.

For the sake of argument — deliberately ignoring all that he has said and written in the past — let us concede Banda's right to reject this conclusion. He writes that even if Hansen's meetings with the FBI were unauthorized, "It doesn't prove Hansen was guilty."

But this argument merely demonstrates that Banda now accepts as legitimate, clandestine meetings between a member of a revolutionary party and the police and intelligence



Jack Barnes—SWP national secretary

agencies of US imperialism, behind the back of the party. It does not, however, diminish the significance of the **direct and circumstantial** evidence marshalled by the International Committee against Hansen.

Banda does not answer the evidence; he merely brushes it aside. "The letters on Hansen prove nothing," he writes, as if that settles the matter.

Indeed, for his own conclusions, which are dictated by immediate factional needs, Banda employs a rather loose standard of evidence. While Banda dismisses the damning sworn testimony and documentary evidence against Hansen as "innuendo," he writes, "It is entirely possible, nay probable, that Trotsky did advise Hansen ... to contact the FBI." But what is the actual content of this "entirely possible, nay probable"?

On what objective evidence, direct or circumstantial, does Banda base this conclusion? From what concrete historical facts does Banda adduce his rhetorical "nay probable"? Does he know of other incidents when leaders of the Trotskyist movement met secretly with the FBI? Indeed, it is highly improbable that such meetings could take place; and, if we accept the norms which exist within the Trotskyist movement — which is our point of departure and the basis of our judgments — it is **impossible.**

Another major element of the International Committee's case against Hansen was his and the SWP's unswerving defense of Sylvia Franklin (nee Callen), the GPU agent who penetrated the party's national office and served as James P. Cannon's personal secretary from 1938 to 1947.

Security and the Fourth International also focused on the coverup of Mark Zborowski, the Stalinist agent who was responsible for the assassination of Trotsky's son Leon Sedov and three other leading Trotskyists in 1937-38.

But Banda simply writes — just a few more drops of ink — *"The IC proved nothing which we didn't already know about Sylvia Callen or Zborowski."*

Let us review what Banda wrote on this very subject nine years ago, in a letter to Jack Barnes dated January 4, 1977:

"We propose the immediate setting up of a parity commission with three from the International Committee and three from the 'Unified Secretariat' or a committee of prominent figures from the international labor movement mutually agreed upon.

"We shall present to this inquiry all the evidence that has been collected since the International Committee began its investigation into 'Security and the Fourth International' in May 1975.

"This proved irrefutably that Joseph Hansen and George Novack of the Socialist Workers Party (USA) have followed a deliberate policy of covering up for the GPU, the secret police of the Soviet bureaucracy, for the past 36 years.

"They have shielded and come to the defense of known GPU agents like Sylvia Callen, alias Caldwell, who became James P. Cannon's personal secretary and office manager of the SWP national headquarters in New York. The SWP leadership held a bogus Control Commission in 1950 which rigged a report completely clearing her. On November 29, 1960, she was named as a co-conspirator in the Robert Soblen spy ring in a Federal Grand Jury indictment.

"To this day she is lauded by the Hansen-Novack clique as an 'exemplary comrade'. Reba Hansen wrote in 1975: 'Her (Sylvia Callen's) devotion to the movement and her readiness to put in long hours of hard work inspired all of us. Sylvia and I became close collaborators and good personal friends. She was a warm human being'. *(James P. Cannon As We Knew Him,* Pathfinder, 1976)

"They have covered up for other agents like Mark Zborowski, who masterminded the murder of Trotsky's son, Leon Sedov, before being brought to the United States in 1971 with the help of Novack.

"They have opposed any investigation into the GPU's murderous activities against the Trotskyist movement — including its penetration of Trotsky's household in Coyoacan and the assassination of the founder of the Fourth International on August 20, 1940.

"For these reasons the International Committee indicted Hansen and Novack as accomplices of the GPU on January 1, 1976, and called for a commission of inquiry to investigate."

When Banda wrote those lines. *Security and the Fourth International* was still in its early stages of development. The most damaging evidence was still to be uncovered. On its face, Banda's assertion that, "The IC proved nothing which we didn't already know about Sylvia Callen or Zborowski" is absurd, because until the *Security* investigation was initiated in 1975, virtually nothing was known about them at all.

Moreover, it was the initial discovery of the first pieces of evidence relating to Callen that produced Hansen's extraordinary outburst in defense of Cannon's secretary. Let us recall what he wrote:

"Sylvia Caldwell (that was her party name) worked very hard in her rather difficult assignment of managing the national office of the Socialist Workers Party, which included helping Cannon in a secretarial capacity. In fact all the comrades who shared these often irksome chores with her regarded her as exemplary. They burned as much as she did over the foul slander spread by Budenz."

Hansen declared that the "frameup" of Caldwell "was required by the imperative need to 'prove' that Healy Thought is truly sane and in consonance with reality."

Between 1977 and 1983, the International Committee assembled a massive case proving that Budenz's allegations were true and that Hansen and the SWP leadership were covering up for her role in the GPU network that organized the assassination of Leon Trotsky.

The ICFI gathered crucial details relating to her personal and political background: that she was a member of the Stalinist National Student League while attending the University of Wisconsin and that she married a leading Stalinist activist on the campus, Zalmond David Franklin — thus substantiating details that had been provided by Budenz in his book, *Men Without Faces.* This last detail was of fundamental importance because Caldwell-Callen-Franklin had presented herself to the SWP as an unmarried woman.

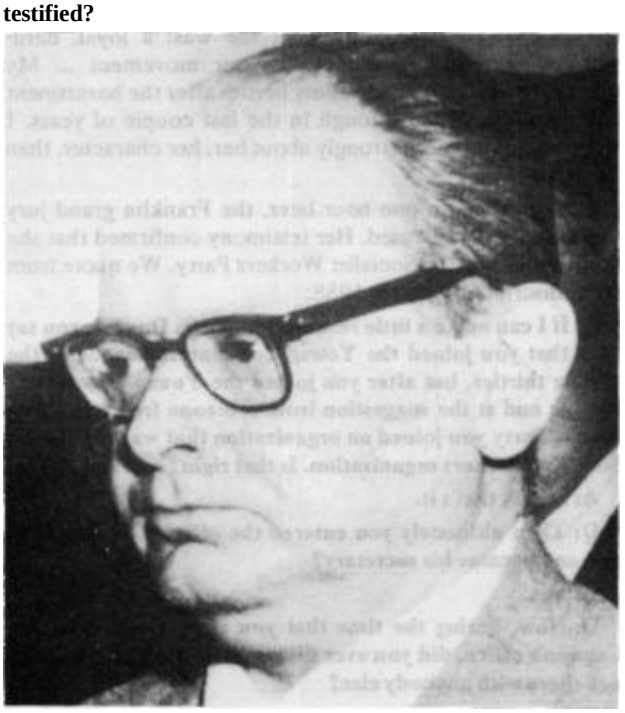
In September 1981, the 67-year-old Sylvia Doxsee (the latest identity of Franklin) was subpoenaed and her deposition was taken in Chicago. In the course of four hours, she claimed loss of memory more than 230 times.

In April 1982 Farrell Dobbs, a member of the control commission that looked into the allegations, exposed the paltry and inconclusive character of the investigation carried out by the SWP. His testimony under oath established that no serious effort was made by the control commission to establish whether or not Budenz's allegations were true.

Q: Did she testify as to her marriage to Zalmond David Franklin?

A: We didn't question her about her marriage. We weren't concerned about her personal life. It *was her own private business.*

Q: Did she say her married name was Franklin when she testified?



Marc Zborowski— GPU assassin

A: I told you that so far as I can recollect, we didn't ask her anything about her marriage.

Q: Did you ask her whether or not she was married?

A: I don't believe we did. I don't think we would have. I don't see how it would have been germaine. I don't believe we did.

Q: Did you take notes during her testimony?

A: I don't believe so.

Q: Was anybody taking notes?

A: Not that I know of. I don't think there was any record at all.

Contrast Dobbs's testimony with a 1966 letter, supposedly written by Cannon and constantly cited by Hansen to "prove" Franklin's innocence:

"In another case, a rumor circulated by the Shachtmanites and others outside the party against the integrity of a National Office secretarial worker was thoroughly investigated by the Control Commission which, after taking stenographic testimony from all available sources, declared the rumors unfounded and cleared the accused party member to continue her work."

As the International Committee gathered more and more information establishing the truth of Budenz's allegations against Franklin, the more important became the question of the SWP's vehement insistence on her innocence as well as their desperate efforts to prevent the facts from coming out.

In January 1983, at a federal court hearing in New York City, SWP attorneys pleaded with the judge to deny Gelfand's motion for the release of Sylvia Franklin's testimony before grand juries in 1954 and 1958.

On March 9, 1983, with the final decision on the release of the transcripts still pending, Barnes, testifying at the Gelfand trial, made this unrestrained tribute to Franklin:

"Her whole comportment not only when she was in the movement but everything that's happened since she left indicates that she is exactly what she was: a loyal, hard-working, and model member of our movement ... My opinion today is she is one of my heroes after the harassment and what she's been through in the last couple of years. I would even feel more strongly about her, her character, than I did then."

Little more than one hour later, the Franklin grand jury transcripts were released. Her testimony confirmed that she was a spy inside the Socialist Workers Party. We quote from the transcript of June 18, 1958:

Q: If I can make a little resume here, Miss Doxsee, you say then that you joined the Young Communist League in the middle thirties, but after you joined the Young Communist League and at the suggestion from someone from the Communist Party you joined an organization that was part of the Socialist Workers organization. Is that right?

A: I think that's it.

Q: Then ultimately you entered the office of lames Cannon and became his secretary?

A: Yes.

Q: Now, during the time that you were working in Mr. Cannon's office, did you ever discuss anything that you learned there with anybody else?

A: Yes.

Sylvia Franklin— an agent of the GPU while Cannon's personal secretary

Q: Do you recall who it was that you discussed that with?

A: Well, I used to go to my former husband's apartment, Zalmond's apartment.

Q: Did you meet anyone there?

A: I met — not every time I went up there — but I had met a man I called Jack. I don't know his name.

Q: When you did meet this man Jack in the apartment of your ex-husband, did you give him anything? Did you speak to him?

A: Well, I remember typing reports and bringing — 1 remember one thing I used to bring. I remember definitely, copies of political committee meetings that were mimeographed, I used to mimeograph. I always remember getting a copy and I must have brought it, I remember.

Q: Now, you described the mimeographed material which you gave, can you recall the contents of the material that you typed?

A: Well, I remember I used to just type up — it was mostly during the faction fights in the party and political committee meetings, who was fighting with who, and then if there was correspondence from Leon Trotsky that I saw, I would try to remember what was in the letters and write that all out, who's going with who and that kind of thing, personal things like that, I remember, how much money they had — I knew, you know, bank balances and stuff like that.

These transcripts confirmed everything which Budenz had written in his book *Men Without Faces* and testified to in his affidavit of 1950. Only one question remained unanswered: **Why had Hansen and the SWP leaders insisted, in**

the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, that Sylvia Caldwell had been an "exemplary" comrade?

The release of these transcripts coincided with another astonishing revelation: **that Louis Budenz had also identified Joseph Hansen as a GPU agent!** For the first time, the underlying significance of the seemingly incomprehensible insistence of Hansen and the SWP on the innocence of Franklin and their unrelenting denunciations of Budenz (despite the fact that prior to Budenz's exposure of Franklin in 1947, his statements relating to the role of the GPU in the assassination of Trotsky were given front-page coverage in *The Militant)* became clear: for Hansen and the SWP to acknowledge the validity of Budenz's denunciation of Franklin would mean to accept the validity of the same charges against Hansen.

This conclusion is all the more compelling in light of the fact that the SWP continued to defend Franklin even after the release of the grand jury transcripts, while confirming that Budenz had indeed named Hansen and other SWP leaders as GPU agents.

Banda now writes: "It is incredible that North should now point to Budenz's testimony that Hansen was a GPU agent. Applying North's own rotten yardstick how are we not to presume that Budenz was doing this as part of his own filthy deal with FBI and State Department?"

Banda has chosen to ignore one salient detail: **Unlike his exposure of Franklin, Budenz's identification of Hansen was never made public!** This fact became known only after Gelfand's attorneys obtained, on the eve of the trial, a letter written by one of Hansen's closest personal associates, Vaughn T. O'Brien.

Hansen knew that he had been identified as a GPU agent by Budenz (a fact which he never revealed in all his replies to *Security and the Fourth International).* But neither Budenz nor the FBI chose to go public against Hansen.

Zborowski in San Francisco, 1975

If one accepts the position of the SWP, i.e., that Budenz was simply a lying stoolpigeon seeking to disrupt the organization, it would follow logically that the information supplied by Budenz to the FBI about Hansen — a far more public figure in the SWP than Franklin — would have been made known. It would have been used to witchhunt the SWP.

Why, then, did the fact that Budenz had identified Hansen as a GPU agent remain concealed until March 1983? In this case, the answer seems to lie in the filthy deal with the FBI and the State Department made by Hansen himself in 1940.

Let us turn to the information uncovered in relation to Mark Zborowski. Virtually nothing had been written within the Trotskyist movement about the activities of this murderous provocateur until *Security and the Fourth International.*

The SWP did not cover his 1958 trial in New York City nor that of Soblen in 1961, where details of Zborowski's career inside the Fourth International were exposed. In August 1975 the International Committee located and photographed Zborowski in San Francisco, where he was working on the staff of the Mount Zion Medical Center. (Not one other organization claiming to be Trotskyist reproduced these photographs.)

In February 1982, Gelfand's attorneys subpoenaed Zborowski and set a date for his deposition. The opportunity now existed to question the man who had played a key role in the assassination of Leon Sedov, Erwin Wolf, Rudolf Klement and Ignace Reiss. **However, the Socialist Workers Party instructed its attorneys to file a motion aimed at quashing the subpoena!**

At his deposition in March 1982, Barnes was questioned about the SWP's defense of Zborowski:

Q: Is it your job to protect GPU agents?

A: It is my job to protect the rights of American citizens by fighting and working through the movement and defending the rights of our party, when they come under attack.

Q: Are the rights of your party coming under attack when investigations are conducted, within the confines of the law, into the activities of the GPU within your movement?

A: When individuals are harassed by organizations whose sole purpose is to harass them their rights are affected. You referred to Mr. Zborowski earlier. He is a person who stated, under oath, associations with agencies alien to our movement. Even Mr. Zborowski has the same rights as any other citizen in this country.

Several weeks later, Felix Morrow testified during his deposition that Zborowski "was a very important GPU agent who did untold damage.." When he was asked what he thought of the SWP's attempt to obtain a protective order to stop the deposition of Zborowski, Morrow replied: "I find that incomprehensible, astonishing."

The fight for Zborowski's deposition continued throughout the year. The SWP's motion for a protective order failed. Zborowski appeared for his deposition in April 1982 but refused to answer any questions by citing the Fifth Amendment.

The efforts to force his testimony reached their climax in

the autumn and winter of 1982. By this time, the SWP was collaborating directly with Zborowski's attorney to stop the deposition.

Parts of Zborowski's legal papers were written by the SWP's attorneys. In January 1983, a federal magistrate quashed the deposition order, accepting Zborowski's claim that any testimony he might give that led to the exposure of government agents inside the SWP would violate the statutes of the brand-new Intelligence Identities Protection Act of 1982.

In 1976 the International Committee originally indicted Hansen and Novack as accomplices of the GPU, specifically citing their role in the coverup of the activities of Sylvia Franklin and Mark Zborowski. This created an uproar amongst revisionists all over the world, who denounced this indictment as a "shameless frame-up."

But by 1982-83, as the Gelfand case moved toward trial, these charges were actually materialized in the practice of the SWP — in their efforts to prevent the release of the grand jury testimony of Franklin and their active collaboration with Zborowski to stop his deposition.

° ° °

"As for North's amazing revelation that the entire leadership of the present SWP was recruited from the same Mid-Western college, I can only retort: So what?"

If that, indeed, is Banda's "only retort," he has answered nothing at all. He is simply demonstrating his indifference to all the evidence which substantiates the allegations made by the International Committee against the leadership of the SWP.

In the context of the overwhelming evidence implicating Hansen as a US government agent, the discovery by the International Committee in 1979 that Hansen's successors in the leadership of the Socialist Workers Party consist almost entirely of ex-students from small Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota was certainly an "amazing revelation."

Anyone who is familiar with the history of the Trotskyist movement in the United States and understands the protracted and complex process of assembling a revolutionary cadre in the center of world imperialism would consider it highly implausible that one small school in the upper Midwest, catering to a largely middle-class student body, would provide virtually the whole leadership of what claims to be a Marxist organization.

Making this scenario even more improbable is the fact that during the period, some 25 years ago, when the influx of Carleton students into the SWP and the Young Socialist Alliance began, there existed no functioning party branch in Northfield, and the Minneapolis branch of the SWP, 30 miles away, did not conduct political work on the campus.

And yet Carleton was to produce the following roster of SWP leaders: Jack Barnes '61, Betsy Stone '61, Mary-Alice Waters '63, John Benson '63, Dan Styron '63, Doug Jenness '64, Paul Eidsvik '64, Caroline Lund '66, Larry Seigle '66, Margaret Brundy '66, Barbara Matson '66 and Cindy Jaquith '69.

Virtually all these individuals, beginning with Barnes, hailed from conservative, church-going and Republican families. Indeed, in 1960, just a few months before his sudden conversion to communism, Barnes favored the election of Richard Nixon over his Democratic opponent for the presidency, John Kennedy.

That was just one of many incongruities: Barnes's trip to Cuba, which supposedly produced the transformation of his world outlook, was financed by the Ford Foundation. As for his present-day colleague, Doug Jenness, a document discovered in his college file revealed that he privately funnelled information to campus authorities about students' political activities.

In 1981, when the International Committee conducted its last comprehensive analysis of the SWP leadership, it found that out of 16 members of the Political Committee, 7 attended Carleton College. The key positions in the party were all held by Carleton alumni. Barnes was national secretary, Waters was editor of *Intercontinental Press,* Jaquith was editor of *The Militant,* and Seigle was in charge of all the legal affairs of the organization. A few changes have taken

Three of the Carleton College students who became leaders in the SWP: Jack Barnes, Mary-Alice Waters and Betsy Stone

place since then: Jenness has taken over Waters's job as editor of *Intercontinental Press.*

The top-floor entrance of the Carleton group into the SWP came at a time of critical political changes in the organization. The SWP, under the leadership of Joseph Hansen, was in the process of breaking with the International Committee of the Fourth International. Its orientation toward the European revisionists led by Pablo and Mandel was opposed by the majority of the YSA National Committee, then led by Tim Wohlforth.

Hansen initiated a campaign to remove the pro-IC leadership of the YSA; and, beginning with Barnes and Stone, the Carleton group played a key role in this operation. The International Committee uncovered evidence that Barnes was in possession of internal SWP documents relating to the dispute over the class nature of the Cuban state even before joining the YSA. Within a few weeks of joining the organization, he was attending a national plenum of the YSA National Committee and was soon playing an active role in the fight to remove Wohlforth from the leadership.

Moreover, the International Committee investigated the extremely dubious origins of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee (FPCC), which served as the medium through which the Carleton group initially entered the Socialist Workers Party. The IC uncovered a previously unknown connection between the formation of this organization in April 1960 — through the behind-the-scenes activities of a wealthy New Jersey contractor named Alan Sagner with important connections inside the Democratic Party — and a sudden change in the political line of the SWP in relation to Cuba.

As government documents which emerged in the aftermath of the Watergate scandal established, the early 1960s was a period of intensive government surveillance and infiltration of the Socialist Workers Party. Between 1961 and 1974, approximately 1,600 agents and informants were either inside or providing information about the SWP.

In the course of the Gelfand case, it was clearly established that the aging SWP leadership was utterly indifferent to questions relating to the security of the organization. FBI agents were able to walk in and out of the offices to perform "black bag" operations at will. During his deposition in April 1982, the late Farrell Dobbs was questioned about the state of security inside the organization.

Q: Did the SWP have a night watchman in the National Office during the late '50s, early '60s?

A: No, we didn't.

Q: Did it have a burglar alarm?

A: No.

Q: Did you have a combination safe?

A: I don't remember whether we did or not.

Q: Were the files locked at night?

A: Possibly some, possibly not.

The political naivete of the leadership made the SWP easy game for the FBI.

Q: Were any measures taken to protect sensitive documents?

A: Against something that we didn't know was going on? We were proceeding on the basis we still had some constitutional rights in this country.

Q: Why?

MS. WINTER (SWP Attorney): I object to the question and direct —

A: Because we're citizens. We're supposed to have them.

According to the testimony of Barnes, Dobbs was one of the two party leaders with whom he worked closest and who had the greatest impact on his political development. The other was Joseph Hansen.

Though it was Dobbs who nominated Barnes to be his successor as SWP national secretary, he seems to have known virtually nothing about him.

When asked whether he knew that a large section of the party leadership had attended Carleton College, Dobbs replied: **"I had no reason to inquire just precisely who came from Carleton College. I worked with whoever I worked**

Doug Jenness, Cindy Jaquith and Larry Siegle— more SWP leaders who came from Carleton College

with in the movement on the basis of their presence there. If you say they all came from Carleton College and you have knowledge of that, I have no way to quarrel with you about it."

Q: Did anybody from the Minneapolis branch report to you as national secretary during, let's say, the years '60 to '63 or '64 that there was a large number of students who were promising who were coming into the movement?

A: I don't remember that, and I'm not at all sure there would have been a report to me, because, in general, the students that came into the party — or into the movement, rather, at that time first came into the Young Socialist Alliance and then, at one or another time, some among them came into the party. I don't remember anyone ever giving me an explicit report as the national secretary about the student youth at Carleton.

Q: Did Mr. Barnes work in the trade union movement?

A: Not that I know of. He may have, but I don't have any knowledge of it.

Q: Did he come into extensive contact with workers?

A: I suppose he came into contact with some, but I have no way of knowing whether it was limited or extensive. In the course of things, he would come into contact with some workers working within the party. How extensive it was, I don't know.

Q: Do you know whether Mr. Barnes was during this period of time able to communicate well with workers?

A: He's an articulate person.

Q: Was he able to obtain the respect of workers?

A: I have no idea.

Q: What working class struggles has Mr. Barnes been involved in?

A: I can't give you direct knowledge of any such matter.

Q: What were the qualities exhibited by Mr. Barnes which caused him to be the individual selected out to be your successor?

A: I don't know the reasons for the individuals. I only know that the membership felt that they had — that he had leadership qualities and he was elected to one or another leadership posts on the basis through the processes that I just described to you.

Q: Well, as national secretary, you were able to observe —

A: I didn't go around and ask each individual member what was their thinking about what views they expressed.

The long and short of Dobbs's reply was that he could not provide any specific explanation for the elevation of Barnes or any of his associates from Carleton College into the leadership of the SWP.

However "circumstantial" this evidence may be, it lends powerful support to the allegations made by the International Committee — with which Banda and Slaughter until only recently concurred — that the Carleton group was inserted into the leadership of the SWP through the machinations of the US government.

For those who evaluate the evidence **politically,** there is no legitimate explanation for the inability of Dobbs to provide a serious explanation for his decision to support the **elevation of Barnes into** the leadership of the SWP. Despite his age, Dobbs was in full possession of his mental faculties in 1982 — as his published historical writings from this last period of his life prove. It is obvious from his testimony, however, that from the mid-1960s on, Dobbs was nothing but a political figurehead and had no knowledge of what was going on inside the SWP leadership. He nominated Barnes as his successor because he was told to… by Joseph Hansen.

Banda is familiar with all this evidence, but does not bother to deal with it. We are supposed to be satisfied with his hollow, "So what?"

He does, however, ask, "Where is the concrete evidence of their work for the FBI?" and, he warns, "Put up or shut up, North!"

Banda is as forgetful as he is provocative. He himself answered this question a long time ago. In 1976, when the International Committee's investigation was still in its infancy, Banda wrote a lengthy analysis of the SWP's position on the Angolan Revolution which he entitled, *SWP: Apologist and Defender of Imperialism.* This was a devastating exposure of the SWPs opposition to the victory of the MPLA, its support for the counterrevolutionary forces of Savimbi's UNITA and Roberto's FNLA, and its justification of the latter organization's receipt of CIA cash. Banda wrote:

"The SWP's veiled support for the CIA-financed organizations and their overt hostility to the MPLA is inseparably tied up with the gross betrayal of Trotskyism which is expressed in the refusal of SWP leaders Novack and Hansen to answer any of the charges made against them by the International Committee of the Fourth International on the question of *Security and the Fourth International.* Their consistent refusal to do anything to rid the movement of the stigma of GPU intrigue and provocation today renders them just as vulnerable to the pressure of the CIA.

"This group's degeneration into chauvinism and anti-communism is now almost complete with its abandonment of the national liberation struggle in Angola. This reveals a

Fausto Amador — provocateur against the Nicaraguan revolution who wrote for *Intercontintental Press*

group of middle class skeptics which is being rapidly transformed — like the late Shachtman — into a counter-revolutionary agency of the State Department."

This analysis is especially relevant in as much as Banda relies primarily on political criteria to characterize the SWP as an agency of US imperialism. Even a decade ago, Banda was prepared to draw this damning conclusion based on a political analysis of the SWP's reactionary attitude toward the national liberation struggles of the Angolan people. For what reason, then, does he feign horror at the International Committee's factual substantiation of a political analysis which he made in 1976?

Banda demonstrated that the politics of the SWP served the interests of the US State Department; and in so doing drew the attention of the International Committee and the advanced workers to the insidious role played by Hansen's *Intercontinental Press.*

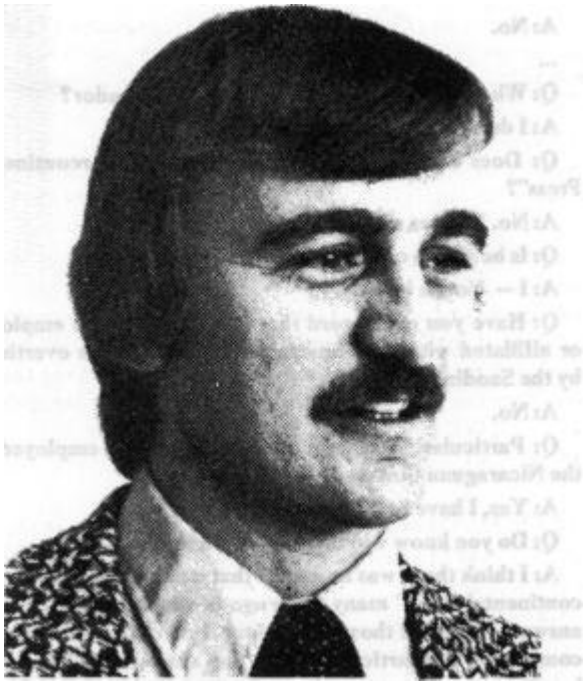
The role of Hansen's *Intercontinental Press* as a journalistic "socialist" cover for the infiltration of agents into the national liberation movements was exposed in 1979 with the publication of documents relating to the affair of Fausto Amador. This individual, a renegade from the Sandinista movement and an agent of Anastasio Somoza, was deliberately promoted by Hansen and Barnes into the leadership of the revisionist United Secretariat and appointed chief correspondent for *Intercontinental Press* in Central America.

When Amador's appointment was first announced in June 1977, in a six-page-long interview in *Intercontinental Press,* an angry protest was filed by Pabloite leader Livio Maitan, who wrote:

"I think that just reading this document must have raised questions in the minds of more than a few comrades about the kind of character to whom you give so much space."

Only three months before this interview appeared, the

Mary-Alice Waters



Ed Heisler— admitted FBI agent

United Secretariat had rejected the attempts by the SWP leadership to recognize Amador as a member. The European Pabloites passed a resolution stating that they considered "that the actions of Amador in 1969-73 objectively aided the Nicaraguan dictatorship in its struggles against the Nicaraguan people."

Hansen and his cohorts in the SWP leadership would not back down. Immense pressure was applied against the United Secretariat and its supporters in Latin America. In Colombia, where the majority of the Pabloite organization resisted the United Secretariat's demand that it submit to the SWP's dictates on Amador, Hansen, according to Nahuel Moreno, "attempted to threaten, intimidate and blackmail us." Finally, the SWP got its way — thus inflicting enormous damage to the credibility of Trotskyism in Central America.

During the coming year, in the midst of the most ferocious battles against the Somoza regime, *Intercontinental Press* carried numerous articles by Amador **denouncing** the Sandinistas and demanding that they call off the armed struggle. Just two months before the fall of Somoza, Amador denounced the offensive. He declared that "the masses' will to struggle has been broken," accused the FSLN of an "emotionalism" that "obscures political clarity," and stated that it is "necessary to resist such disastrous and suicidal conceptions."

After the victory of the Sandinistas in July 1979, the name of Fausto Amador disappeared from the pages of *Intercontinental Press.*

When Mary-Alice Waters was questioned about the SWP leadership's relationship with Amador during her deposition by Gelfand's attorneys in November 1982, she gave vague and misleading answers.

Q: Is he affiliated with "Intercontinental Press"?

A: No.

Q: Has he ever been affiliated with "Intercontinental Press"?

A: No.

...

Q: When was the last time you saw Mr. Amador?

A: I don't recall. Several years ago.

Q: Does he still contribute articles to "Intercontinental Press"?

A: No, he does not.

Q: Is he still in contact with the SWP?

A: I — No, he is not.

Q: Have you ever heard that Mr. Amador was employed or affiliated with the Somoza regime prior to its overthrow by the Sandinistas?

A: No.

Q: Particularly had you heard that he was employed by the Nicaraguan Consulate in Belgium?

A: Yes, I have heard that.

Q: Do you know whether or not that is true?

A: I think there was an article that was published in "Intercontinental Press" many years ago in which Fausto Amador answered some of those allegations. I do not recall the exact content of that article. I know he answered all those allegations.

Q: Do you have any information as to what the opinion of the FSLN is of Mr. Amador?

A: No, I do not.

Even more vividly than in Angola, the case of Fausto Amador exposed the **conscious** intervention of the SWP leadership in behalf of US imperialism **against an on-going revolution.** Following the victory of the Sandinistas, Amador was abandoned but new *Intercontinental Press* correspondents were flooded into Managua.

In the course of its investigation, the International Committee cited another example of the SWP leadership first promoting and then covering up for the activities of agents within the workers' movement — the case of Ed Heisler.

He had entered the SWP around the same time as Barnes, in mid-1961. Like Barnes, his initial contact with the SWP came through the Fair Play for Cuba Committee. He became a key leader of the SWP; and used his positions to provide the FBI with information contained in several thousand pages of reports.

In June 1980, Heisler voluntarily admitted his role as an FBI informer in a letter to Barnes. However, in front of its membership, the SWP leadership played down the importance of Heisler's work for the FBI. Larry Seigle declared in a report that it "is an illusion" to feel "as though you have just been dealt a blow." No objective evaluation was presented of the damage that had been done by Heisler.

Quite the opposite. Barnes and his associates attempted to play down the importance of Heisler's activities.

In December 1980 Gelfand's attorneys obtained Heisler's deposition. Here is how this self-confessed agent described his activities inside the SWP:

"In the early 1970s I remained very active in the UTU union, had various assignments, carried out various tasks as a member of the Socialist Workers Party. In 1974 my major activity was that as the Socialist Workers Party candidate for **US** Senator in Illinois. From early 1975 until 1976 I was the national chairperson for the Socialist Workers Party Presidential Campaign. I also wrote for *The Militant* newspaper.

"In 1977 I continued to work in the National Office of the Socialist Workers Party. My primary area of work was trade union. From 1975 until my recent expulsion from the Socialist Workers Party, I was a member of the Socialist Workers Party National Committee. In 1977 I was a member of the SWP Political Committee, a member of the Administrative Secretariat, a subcommittee of the Political Committee, a secretary of the SWP National Trade Union Steering Committee. That was in 1977."

And yet when Barnes was deposed in March 1982, he stated under oath that Heisler "was not a central leader at any time."

When challenged to justify this claim in light of Heisler's membership on the Administrative Secretariat of the SWP's Political Committee, Barnes acted as if it was of no significance.

Q: When Mr. Heisler was a member of the Administrative Secretariat, how many members were on it, roughly?
A: I don't know.

...

Q: Were you on it?

A: No, I was not. I don't think.

...

Q: You wouldn't call it a high leadership body in the SWP?

A: No, it has no executive or political decision making powers whatsoever.

In the course of Seigle's deposition, he also downgraded the importance of the Administrative Secretariat and denied that he had been a member.

However, SWP records revealed that both Seigle and Barnes were members of this subcommittee which made key decisions relating to the work of the Political Committee, such as determining its agenda.

The attempt to minimize the significance of Heisler was related to other crucial information uncovered by the International Committee. Jack Barnes worked extremely closely with Heisler for nearly 20 years and played a central role in his elevation into leadership posts. This relationship is given a sinister coloration by the fact that Heisler's elevation was strenuously opposed by the leaders of his branch in Milwaukee. In 1963 they implicated Heisler in events surrounding the theft of party funds and accused him of indiscipline.

Barnes played a crucial role in defending Heisler and turning the tables on the Milwaukee branch leadership, which included an outstanding veteran leader with more than 20 years standing in the SWP, the late James Boulton.

Not long afterwards, Heisler moved to Chicago and lived for a while in Jack Barnes's apartment — a documented fact which the SWP national secretary falsely denied during his deposition.

In light of the historical record, the following exchange between Gelfand's attorney and Larry Seigle is especially illuminating:

Q: Was the Control Commission convened to investigate the Heisler affair?

A: No.

Q: Has the Heisler affair initiated any investigation into security procedures within the SWP?

A: No.

Q: Have people who were in close contact with Heisler over the years been requested to furnish written statements on contacts between them and this informer?

A: No. That would be silly.

Q: Why would that be silly, Mr. Seigle?

A: Because there would be no reason to do so. It would be a waste of time. It would be the action of a cult group or a police agency, not a political party.

The truth is that it was not done because it would have exposed the promotion and protection of agents within the central leadership of the SWP, where they are provided with positions of authority and impressive "socialist" credentials to facilitate their intelligence-gathering operations against the labor movement.

After Heisler's exposure, the SWP made no effort to notify the trade unions in which Heisler had been especially active — such as the United Transportation Union. It even continued to publicize and sell a pamphlet on "union democracy" written by Heisler. This — I submit — is just one example of the SWP leadership's work for the FBI. In the final part of this series we will provide an even more compelling proof: its complete destruction of any semblance of party democracy and its systematic purge of all Trotskyists from the SWP.

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There is one other argument that Banda advances against *Security and the Fourth International.* "Never in the history of intelligence work of state bodies has any agent devoted **the whole of his life** — as Hansen did — to building a reformist party. That is **not** the style of the GPU or FBI. Hansen lived and died a revisionist. A GPU agent — never!"

We do not know from what historical or biographical investigations Banda derived this cheap, pseudo-psychological "insight." Unable and unwilling to deal with facts, Banda palms off his personal speculations as if they had the weight of historical law when it is obvious that they do not even correspond to the elementary realities of politics.

While working from different starting points and perspectives, both American imperialism and the Soviet bureaucracy devote considerable expense and energy to constructing reformist organizations. In the case of the CIA, they sponsor the creation of political parties and trade union organizations whose reformist programs strive to place limits on the anti-imperialist struggles of the working class.

We merely note this political fact of life to underscore the stupidity of Banda's argument. But aside from this, his point is meaningless in the present context. It hinges on one crucial distortion: the definition of Joseph Hansen as the **builder** of a reformist party rather than the **destroyer** of Trotskyist organizations!

To speak of Hansen as a man who "devoted the whole of his life" to building a reformist party — as if he were Norman Thomas — is to insult the intelligence of Trotskyists throughout the world. If Hansen set out to build a reformist party, why did he join the Socialist Workers Party in the first place?

As Banda knows, Hansen was politically responsible for the virtual liquidation of the Trotskyist movement throughout Latin America. His campaign of lies and disinformation directed against the International Committee, aimed at poisoning the political atmosphere within the world Trotskyist movement, contributed to the disorientation of Latin American Trotskyists and led directly to the bloody political catastrophes of the late '60s and '70s in Bolivia, Argentina and Chile.

In the United States Jack Barnes and his Carleton associates have completed the job for which Hansen recruited and trained them: the political and organizational destruction of the SWP as a Trotskyist party. *The* complete repudiation of the programmatic foundations of the SWP has been accompanied by a ruthless and thorough-going purge, carried out between 1981 and 1984, of anyone within the organization who claimed any residual allegiance to the ideas of Leon Trotsky and his conception of the Fourth International as the revolutionary vanguard of the working class.

The stamping out of any traces of Trotskyism within the SWP took place under conditions in which no form of democratic discussion was permitted. Hundreds of SWP members, many of them party cadre with decades of experience within the Trotskyist movement — including founding members of the SWP, were framed up on preposterous charges and thrown out of the organization.

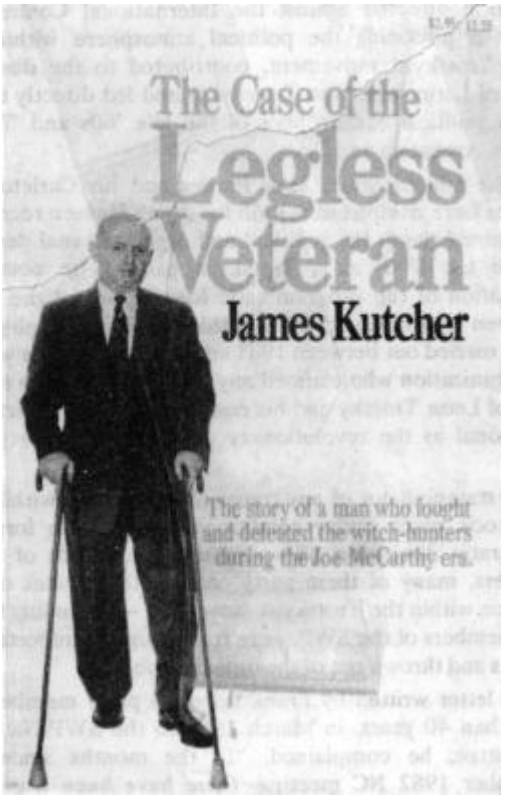
In a letter written by Frank Lovell, a party member for more than 40 years, in March 1983 to the SWP National Committee, he complained, "In the months since the December 1982 NC meeting, **there have been a greater number of trials in the party than during any similar time span in the** 45 **year history of the** SWP."

In September 1983 four suspended members of the National Committee of the SWP, including Lovell, sent a statement to the Pabloite United Secretariat in which they described the situation existing inside the SWP:

"Since the August 1981 convention of the US Socialist Workers Party, the current party leadership has been carrying out a revisionist course which threatens to destroy that organization as a revolutionary party. The open repudiation of the historic program of Trotskyism, in particular, the attack on the theory of permanent revolution, has been imposed on the membership in a step-by-step process — through the pages of the party's press and other public activities, as well as through an internal 'education' campaign of anti-Trotskyist classes, educational conferences and speeches.

"The content of Jack Barnes's public 1982 YSA convention speech, published in the inaugural issue of 'New International' six months after it was delivered; and the editorial attack on Ernest Mandel's defense of our program in the August 6, 1983 issue of 'Intercontinental Press' (Mandel's article was also published months after it was submitted) are the clearest and most recent expressions of the **programmatic** break with the Fourth International and with our Trotskyist heritage. These are policies promoted by the entire leadership, its editorial boards, and all party institutions. They are not simply the opinions of a few individual SWP leaders.

"The promotion of this new theoretical line of the Barnes leadership (actually a rehash of old slanders against Trotsky and Trotskyism, long ago thoroughly refuted) has been accomplished without any discussion or vote inside the party. This is true despite repeated requests by many comrades for



James Kutcher—one of the long-time members expelled from the SWP

such a discussion. Even when opening a discussion was constitutionally mandated for the regular pre-convention period, the leadership postponed it — first for three months, replacing it with an educational conference, and then for an entire year.

"Only spurious reasons were presented for this. The muzzling of the opposition through this process clearly reveals the complete unwillingness of the current majority leadership to allow any serious consideration of these questions by the party ranks, and exposes their lack of confidence in their ability to defend these policies before the membership.

"In order to assure that no discussion of these anti-Trotskyist, liquidationist policies will take place a massive slander campaign against the opposition, and an unprecedented wave of expulsions of party members with opposition viewpoints has been implemented. The right to internal party groupings (tendencies and factions) was suppressed. (Party members have even been denied the right to participate in an organized way in the pre-World Congress discussion of the Fourth International, in direct violation of the statutes of that organization.)

"The erosion of internal democracy reached a new level at the August 1983 National Committee meeting with the unprecedented suspension on the eve of the meeting of the four minority NC members so that they could not attend, and then their suspension — in fact their de facto expulsion — from the party itself, in an attempt to isolate them from party members.

"The opposition leaders were falsely accused of being responsible for the crisis in the party, which has in fact been created by the policies of the majority itself. Since the suspension of the NC members, the thinly disguised purge of other party members in disagreement with the central leadership has been accelerated.

"The expulsions, the ban on tendencies and factions, and the twice-postponed convention are merely the organizational manifestation of the anti-Trotskyist political course which the current SWP leadership has embarked upon."

The list of those expelled from the SWP includes virtually every member with ties to the Cannon era, including Harry De Boer, one of the 18 party leaders sent to jail during World War II; George and Dorothy Breitman, founding members of the SWP; Jimmy Kutcher, the central figure in the celebrated *Case of the Legless Veteran;* Jake Cooper, one of Trotsky's guards in Coyoacan; and George Lavan Weissman, editor of *The Militant* during the 1950s and founding member of the SWP.

Jimmy Kutcher, a 71-year-old paraplegic, was expelled from the SWP on the incredible charge of "violence." While sitting in his wheelchair during a branch meeting, Kutcher found his view of the speaker obstructed by another member, Berta L. He touched her on the back in order to attract her attention and asked her to move. This was observed by one of Barnes's lackeys who then filed charges against Kutcher, accusing him of having "punched" Berta L., an allegation strenuously denied by the supposed victim of this "attack."

Kutcher wrote, "I can't convey how shocked I was on August 21 when McBride filed his charges against me at the Manhattan branch meeting. It was like a nightmare. ... I couldn't explain what had happened, I couldn't believe what had happened, I didn't know what to do.

"What was happening to the party? Did the EC (Executive Committee) really believe the McBride fantasy? Would the members of the branch? I turned hot with anger, feeling under intolerable pressure, isolated, helpless, humiliated and in despair."

Extremely distraught, Kutcher requested that he be allowed to be assisted by another member during a meeting called by the SWP investigating committee. This was summarily denied. He then asked that the meeting of the investigating committee be postponed for a week. This was denied as well.

"I had the same feeling many years ago when the government was persecuting me," Kutcher wrote, "but at least some of the time the government witchhunters pretended I had some rights, including the right to ask for a postponement when there was a legitimate reason for doing so."

Kutcher's trial was a farce as it was based on entirely false evidence.

"Members on trial have the right to honest reports by the leadership," Kutcher wrote. "The members sitting in judgment at my trial and I were both cheated out of our rights by a lying leadership. ... For the second time in my life I was being declared a security risk.

"The first time was in 1948 when the government fired me from my clerical job with the Veterans Administration, not on the basis of anything I had done (other than belonging to the SWP) but on the basis of a bureaucratic decision, without a trial, that I **might** do something threatening security. Now the EC was taking similar action against me, without the slightest evidence in the world that I would ever

do anything to harm the interests or security of the party I have supported and tried to build most of my life."

Kutcher's document is but one among dozens which record the complete obliteration of any form of democratic centralism within the SWP. An unchallengeable political dictatorship exists within the SWP, in which absolute control is exercised by the Carleton group and their hand-picked cronies.

In another document, dated July 13, 1983, Milt Alvin, a 50-year veteran of the Trotskyist movement and founding member of the SWP, denounced the obliteration of all forms of internal party democracy by the "secret faction" grouped around Barnes.

"During the last year the revisionists have spent their time in an orgy of illegal and factional expulsions of members for the slightest reason they could dream up. Members and whole branches have been denied their democratic rights by arbitrary transfers of comrades in and out in order to create artificial majorities, as in San Francisco. ... All those who have been expelled so far have been guilty of nothing at all, except in the twisted logic of the revisionists. The recent expulsions of Carol S. and Ann M. in the Bay Area, on the most flimsy grounds, not involving violations of discipline or disloyalty, are a disgrace. The expulsion of Dianne F., a member of the Pittsburgh branch, of Michael S. of New York, Ann T. of the Iron Range and Don and Mojgan M. of the Bay Area, not one of whom was guilty of disloyalty, indicates an about-face from the way our party used to be.

"In order to carry out some of these expulsions certain comrades, who used to enjoy a good reputation in the party, who were effective workers in the cause of socialism, have been converted into stool pigeons spying upon comrades marked for expulsion and helping to entrap them with innocent-sounding questions. In one case, Comrade Peter B., who had received a document from Mike S., turned it over to the leadership who promptly proceeded to expel Mike. Just for mailing a document to someone he thought was a friend.

"Carol S. was expelled for asking a comrade in the presence of a member of the YSA if he had heard that his stepmother, Dianne F., had been expelled — that's all! ... Anyone can see that it is the aim of the secret faction to eliminate from the party, in any way, every critic of its policies. That much is obvious...

"The secret faction functions under a cover of legality provided by a party body of one kind or another, such as the political committee, secretariat or organizational bureau. In this way, those who belong to it can meet, discuss and make decisions in what appears to be a normal and legal way. **Only completely naive people will believe that the various revisions that have taken place in the party were spontaneous revelations that occurred to one or more members of the faction.**

"These decisions are arrived at beforehand in secret meetings where all kinds of plots are hatched, including those that involve expulsions of comrades from the party for ridiculously flimsy reasons. **Only people who are ready to believe anything can have confidence in the 'legality' of the way the secret faction functions. Anyone with eyes to see and ears to hear will understand that it is impossible to carry on the kind of campaign of liquidation of virtually all our ideas without secret meetings on the part of the revisionists."** (Emphasis added)

Alvin's points were absolutely correct, but he didn't go far enough. One more question must be posed: what legitimate explanation exists for the complete unanimity among the members of the Carleton clique on the total repudiation of the SWP's historic connection with Trotskyism?

If one were to assume that their political credentials are in order, it would mean that the Carleton students joined the SWP because they were won to Trotskyism — which, in the early 1960s, the SWP claimed to represent. How, then, is it possible, that all these ex-Carleton students, simultaneously, arrived at the decision that the theory of permanent revolution must be repudiated and Trotskyism abandoned?

Milt Alvin did not last very long after writing this document. In August 1983, he filed charges against Jack Barnes and Mary-Alice Waters, accusing them of conspiring to steal $5,000 that had been willed to him by the late Tom Kerry, a founding member of the SWP.

In his last will and testament, executed May 13, 1982, Kerry specified that this money, intended for Alvin and his wife, was being held by Barnes in New York. Apparently worried that Barnes and Waters would not observe the terms of his will and would attempt to keep his money, Kerry wrote to another old comrade, Sarah L., "One thing is certain: Barnes is no heir of mine."

Following Kerry's death in February 1983, Alvin wasn't able to get the money. Barnes and Waters claimed it belonged to the SWP. After Alvin brought charges against them, the SWP convoked its Control Commission. The results were predictable: it recommended the expulsion of Alvin.

Despite all the expulsions, which have decimated the membership of the SWP, the purge has not affected a single member of this Carleton group. Over a period of 20 years — an entire epoch in the history of the socialist movement — the Carleton students stick together.

The biographies of the radicals of the 1960s provide an astonishing record of the most unexpected transformations. But none of this is reflected in the central Carleton-based leadership of the SWP. Despite the repeated upheavals in the political line of the SWP, the unanimity of the Carleton group is preserved.

There is no record of any differences on questions of program or tactics within their ranks. This is compelling political proof that the Carleton group observes an internal discipline, independent of the SWP and its official program. Significantly, while the purge has wiped out virtually the entire older generation of surviving SWP leaders, there are two individuals who remain allied with Barnes — George Novack and Hansen's widow, Reba. While the purges were at their height, Reba Hansen returned to New York to work as Barnes's personal secretary.

Furthermore, the totalitarian regime which exists within the SWP is itself another substantiation of the charges made by the International Committee. During the Gelfand case, in an attempt to refute the charge that the SWP is controlled by agents, Barnes submitted an affidavit in which he declared:

"The SWP's structure and organizational principles, outlined above, ensure that the Party's policies and program

are determined, upheld and implemented by democratically elected leadership **bodies** and a **thoroughly informed membership.** Every individual member is subordinated to the decisions of the membership. **Thus, it would be impossible for an informer or group of informers to seize 'control' of the Party unbeknownst to the membership."** (Emphasis added)

The very conditions which Barnes cited as guarantees against the takeover of the SWP by the government are manifestly nonexistent inside the SWP. In his deposition taken by Gelfand's attorneys in March 1982, Barnes provided a revealing insight into the complete extinction of democratic rights within the SWP:

Q: Isn't the basis of democracy having a fully informed electorate, a fully informed party, a fully informed rank-and-file?

A: Yes.

Q: But you choose which facts to tell the rank-and-file and which facts to withhold from them, don't you, Mr. Barnes?

A: Yes.

...

Q: But is there any reason why information available to Mr. Hansen, to the US government, should be withheld from the Socialist Workers Party members?

A: There is no reason to have any different criteria for this than any other information. If it serves the needs of the movement, it can be organized and printed. If it doesn't, it doesn't.

...

Q: Mr. Barnes, are there reasons to keep information that you have, that Mr. Hansen has, and that the government has, from loyal party members?

A: The decision as to what information to release and when is a democratic decision made by the elected body of the Party.

The "elected body" is none other than Jack Barnes. He decides what the membership should or should not know about contacts between SWP leaders and the US Government!

Q: Do you have the right to withhold these facts from membership of your Party?

A: That's correct.

Q: Do you have the right to withhold these facts from the workers' movement?

A: Correct.

Q: Do you have a right to withhold these facts from the Fourth International?

A: Correct.

Q: Do you have the right to withhold these facts from members of the National Committee?

A: Right.

The SWP is an organization whose leaders are totally uncontrolled by any democratic constraints. The membership is told only what the leadership wants to tell them. The leadership even reserves for itself the right to meet secretly with the FBI, as Larry Seigle, one of Barnes's closest Carleton associates, made clear in his court testimony during the trial of Gelfand's lawsuit:

Q: Is there a policy about unknown contacts between Socialist Workers Party members and the government wherein Socialist Workers Party members furnish information, internal information about the SWP to the government? Is there a policy in your party about that, Mr. Seigle?

A: Unknown to whom?

Q: Let's say unknown to the political comntittee.

A: It would depend.

Q: On what would that depend?

A: On the circumstances.

Since the purge of all known and suspected Trotskyist sympathizers inside the SWP — a process which involved the elimination of scores of cadre — the Carleton group is now free to pursue policies which line up almost entirely with that of the "liberal" sections of the State Department.

This is most graphically illustrated on the question of South Africa, where the SWP has come out openly as opponents of any socialist perspectives — insisting that the working class must be subordinated to the bourgeois reformist leadership of the African National Congress and that there cannot be any struggle for a socialist program.

Insisting that "a mass revolutionary movement in South Africa today cannot and will not be built around a socialist program," Barnes writes that "all blueprints for a socialist state are sectarian schemes." Emphasizing the categorical opposition of the SWP to the struggle for socialist policies, Barnes declares: **"What is on the agenda in South Africa is a bourgeois-democratic revolution, not the democratic stage of the socialist revolution."**

Declaring that "The South African revolution today is not an anticapitalist revolution," the SWP states that the overthrow of apartheid means nothing more than opening the country for an extended period of capitalist development — in which large sections of the proletariat shall be returned to rural areas and converted into peasant capitalists! **"A task of the alliance of workers and peasants in South Africa is to conquer the right of proletarians who want to be farmers, to become farmers."**

This perspective cannot be described as "Pabloite." It does not fall within the broadest definition of revisionism. Rather, it is a consciously-conceived right-wing program that strongly resembles the "agrarian reform" policies traditionally advocated by such imperialist agencies as the AIFLD. It is the oldest of counterrevolutionary strategies: the creation of a prosperous land-owning class of peasant capitalists who can be used as a foil against the socialist proletariat.

Here we see the direct product of the purge of all class-conscious socialists from the SWP. The Carleton group — having freed their New York-based apparatus from any form of party control — is free to pursue a policy that directly serves the interests of the State Department.

In 1976, based on an analysis of its position on Angola, Banda was prepared to denounce the SWP as an agency of imperialism. Does he believe that its position on South Africa has invalidated that appraisal?

In the course of the past decade, the International Committee of the Fourth International assembled a massive case to substantiate all its allegations against Hansen and the SWP leadership. What we have presented above is only a brief outline of the evidence. At no time has this case been answered.

In denouncing *Security and the Fourth International,*

Michael Banda is leaving his political calling card with the SWP and the agents of the bourgeoisie in the workers' movement. Of course, he is now hailed by the Carleton group. "By renouncing the Healyite agent-baiting campaign," writes *Intercontinental Press,* "these WRP leaders have taken the first, necessary step toward having their views taken seriously as a legitimate part of the political debates that are occurring among revolutionists today."

This comment says as much about the SWP as it does about Banda. If, as Banda's attack on *Security* implies, he has been a conscious instrument of a slander campaign for the past decade, how could the views of such an individual ever again be considered "a legitimate part" of political debates, let alone taken seriously?

Only the foulest organization, whose actions are ruled by expediency and police cynicism, would welcome an alliance with a man like Banda — who has forfeited every claim on the credibility of the working class.

Security and the Fourth International has not been undermined by Banda's attack. Every class conscious worker will recognize that this latest denunciation is the by-product of Banda's break with Trotskyism and with the whole perspective of revolutionary socialism. They will see that his attack is directed against not the facts but rather the principled political foundation of the case: the struggle of the Trotskyist movement against all the agencies of imperialism.

As is demonstrated by his discussions with the LSSP, a party of the capitalist state in Sri Lanka, Banda is now in the process of crossing class lines. In this sense, his claim that Hansen's secret meetings with the FBI "prove nothing either" is really a justification for relations with the capitalist state.

Having revised his views on the significance of Hansen's relations with the FBI in 1940, he will soon announce that he has revised his views on the entry of the LSSP into the Bandaranaike coalition in 1964 and on its participation in the suppression of the J VP uprising in 1971. In politics, he who says "A" must also say "B."

When the *Security and the Fourth International* investigation was initiated in May 1975, its purpose was not to expose Hansen or anyone else as an agent. There was no way of knowing that incriminating documents would be discovered or that Hansen would publicly defend GPU agents.

Rather, the investigation began with the aim of reminding Trotskyists and advanced workers throughout the world of the bloody crimes which had been committed by imperialism and Stalinism against the revolutionary movement during the 1930s and 1940s.

Within this context, the assassination of Trotsky was an epochal event of world historical significance. The assimilation of the political lessons of that crime is as necessary today as it was to the Trotskyists in 1940.

The leopards of counterrevolution never change their spots. Indeed, as it confronts the rising tide of working class struggles internationally, imperialism, assisted by the Stalinist bureaucracy, will lash out savagely against those who fight for the mobilization of the masses against the capitalist state on the basis of a revolutionary socialist program. Those who oppose the exposure of the agents of imperialism and Stalinism serve only the interests of the counterrevolution.

Leon Trotsky

As a long-time colleague of Michael Banda and another ex-revolutionist, Cliff Slaughter, put it not so long ago:

"Security is not only an organizational question, but above all a fundamental political question of the struggle of the world party of socialist revolution against the capitalist state, against the intelligence and repressive agencies of the imperialist powers and against the Stalinist bureaucracy, the main counterrevolutionary force in the world arena, dedicated since its inception to the liquidation of the Fourth International.

"The training of revolutionary cadres for the revolutionary struggles of today cannot be carried out without a relentless fight to establish the historical continuity of Trotsky's life and death battles against the Stalinist bureaucracy."

Banda and Slaughter are gone — "Two men overboard" — but that life-and-death struggle continues, led by the International Committee of the Fourth International and the Workers League.

Resolution of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist League (Sri Lanka) on the Resolution of the Central Committee of the Liga Comunista

March 28, 1986

The CC of the Revolutionary Communist League is in receipt of the resolution passed by the CC of the Peruvian section of the ICFI at its meeting of March 9, 10 and 11, on the crisis of the IC. The RCL disagrees totally with the analysis as well as the conclusions of the CC of the LC regarding the crisis in the IC.

1. The CC of the LC does not recognize that the objective source of the crisis in the IC is the pressure of imperialism on the Trotskyist movement and that this pressure was definitively expressed by the attempt of the former leadership of the WRP, the Healy-Banda-Slaughter clique, to politically and organizationally liquidate the ICFI. It is not even mentioned in the LC resolution that the ICFI is faced with a liquidationist attack of the most fundamental kind. This dangerous indifference to the objective and political source of the crisis in the IC leads to the same liquidationist conclusions that the crisis was contained in the very formation of the IC. As the CC resolution nowhere defends the IC we fear that they themselves have entered upon this liquidationist path.

2. When the Peruvian comrades characterize the degeneration of the WRP as a "Healyite degeneration" they are indulging in politically hollow terminology in order to cover up the conscious liquidationist policy carried out by the old WRP leadership.

As it is now amply clear from M. Banda's "27 reasons to bury the IC," at least from 1975 onwards the Healy-Banda-Slaughter clique had been opposed to the very existence of the IC and its sections. The right-centrist line they followed in Britain compelled them to take the path of liquidating the IC. We would like to remind the Peruvian comrades that the attitude of the Healy-Banda-Slaughter clique towards every section of the IC that stood for the political independence of the working class was nothing short of perpetrating political provocations. If there had been a section of the IC in Iraq, the Healy-Banda-Slaughter clique would have supported Saddam Hussein to destroy it.

Once they realized that it was impossible for them to use the IC as a tool for their petty-bourgeois opportunist politics, the Healy clique broke away from the IC in October 1985 to be followed by the Banda-Slaughter clique three months later. Having broken from the IC, the Banda-Slaughter clique issued a public declaration that the "IC should be buried forthwith." Since then, renegade Banda has reconciled with the LSSP leaders in his search for gravedig¬gers to bury the IC and the RCL. They at the same time have lined up with the agent-run SWP for the same purpose.

To suggest, as the Peruvian comrades do, that we accept their documents as legitimate discussion material in the IC is to ask us to commit political suicide.

3. The assertion of the Peruvian comrades that "Healyism implies fundamental problems of strategy and methods of building the party and the international and therefore does not deal with simple tactical errors" is truly amazing. We do not consider Healy-Banda-Slaughter cliques to be leaderships directing the party on the wrong path. They are liquidators who work consciously on the basis that the existence of the International and its sections is an impediment and should be buried as they stand in the way of their petty-bourgeois course. Discussions regarding strategy and tactic are possible only with those who accept the IC and its sections. As Lenin pointed out:

"Of course, liquidationism is ideologically **connected** *with* **renegacy,** *with* **the renunciation of the program and tactics,** *with* **opportunism. ...** *But liquidationism is not* **only** *opportunism. The opportunists are leading the party on to a wrong bourgeois path, the path of a liberal labour policy, but they* **do not renouce** *the party itself. They do not liquidate it. Liquidationism is* **that brand** *of opportunism which goes to the length of* **renouncing** *the party. It is self-evident that the party cannot exist if the members* **include** *those who do not recognize its existence." {Collected Works,* Vol. 19, Progress Publishers, p. 151)

There is neither logic nor political justification in the demand of the Peruvian comrades that the legitimacy of the founding of the FI and the IC should be reexamined because the Healy-Banda-Slaughter clique reneged. This demand is a formula to avoid the struggle against the liquidationists.

4. To state that, "The task of the IC is to organize and direct the international discussion in the struggle for the political clarification of all the sections, and not to force a rapid international regrouping on the basis of a verbal agreement with the *Transitional Program* or the 'Open Letter' of 1953" is, to say the least, thoroughly confusing. In the first place, the IC has not called for any "regrouping" with any one.

If the Peruvian comrades consider that the united offensive by the legitimate sections of the ICFI against the renegades bent on liquidating the IC and its sections, is a "regrouping" then the implication is that they themselves reject the IC.

As far as the sections of the IC are concerned, the *Transitional Program* of 1938, the "Open Letter" of 1953 and the political capital of the struggle against the "reunification" of the Pabloites and their great betrayal of 1964 are not some optional "aspects" of program but are the very foundations

of their existence. Those who do not accept these foundations are not members of the IC.

If the Peruvian comrades demand that the IC should set aside the principles and history on which it is based in order to "direct international discussion in the struggle for the political clarification of all the sections" it is more than just an absurdity for it to demand of the IC that it should voluntarily come to a position bereft of any principle or history to be defended. That is exactly the position of the Banda-Slaughter liquidators.

5. The demand of the Peruvian comrades that Banda and Slaughter who campaign for "the burial" of the IC should be invited to the 11th congress of the IC contradicts the very existence of the IC. As Lenin said, "A party that wants to exist cannot allow the slightest wavering on the question of its existence or any agreement with those who may bury it." *(Ibid.,* p. 414)

On the above grounds, the CC of the RCL rejects **in toto** the arguments and conclusions of the Liga Comunista CC resolution.

Liga Comunista (Peru) Breaks with Trotskyism

Statement of the International Committee of the Fourth International

June 1. 1986

1. The International Committee of the Fourth International denounces the desertion from its ranks of the leadership of the Peruvian section, the Liga Comunista, and totally rejects the neo-Stalinist, pro-Maoist and petty-bourgeois nationalist perspectives with which these renegades now attack Trotskyism.

2. This split has been provoked by the Liga Comunista's explicit repudiation of the entire theoretical, political and programmatic foundations of the Trotskyist movement since its birth. Above all, this is expressed in their rejection of the theory of Permanent Revolution, the strategy of world revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the ceding of the leadership of the struggle against imperialism to the corrupt and venal national bourgeoisie in Peru and throughout Latin America.

3. In doing so, they have joined ranks with a virulent international trend of anti-Trotskyist revisionists, which stretches from Jack Barnes, the chief of the US Socialist Workers Party, who has explicitly repudiated Permanent Revolution; to the Australian Pabloites, who have renounced Trotskyism as a whole in order to seek alliances with the Stalinists and Labourites; to, of course, the renegades of the right-wing Healy-Banda-Slaughter clique in the British Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP), who have deserted the ICFI in order to defend their mercenary and opportunist capitulation to the bourgeois nationalist regimes in the Middle East and to the Labourite and trade union bureaucracies in Britain itself.

4. With the publication of their split organ, *Comunismo,* the Liga Comunista has broken all discipline, publicly attacking Trotskyism, the International Committee of the Fourth International and its leaders. Likewise, they have renounced the legitimacy of their own party's existence, thereby choosing the surest road to political oblivion.

5. This reactionary clique has revealed its foundations to be the rejection of internationalism and the revolutionary role of the working class. In particular, they have launched vitriolic attacks against both the proletariat and the Trotskyist movement in the advanced capitalist countries in the crude style of embittered petty-bourgeois nationalists.

6. While refusing to defend their positions within the Trotskyist movement, boycotting the meeting of the ICFI in May 1986, they are now calling for an open discussion and regroupment with every variety of revisionist, Stalinist and petty-bourgeois nationalist enemy of the movement. The political trajectory of this group is being driven by powerful class forces. Faced point blank with the responsibility and necessity to build the proletarian revolutionary party, independent of the fraudulent "anti-imperialism" of the bourgeois APRA party government of President Alan Garcia and the peasant guerrillaism of the Maoist Sendero Luminoso movement, the Liga Comunista has instead issued a series of documents justifying in advance its capitulation to precisely these forces and abandoning the struggle to resolve the crisis of proletarian revolutionary leadership in Peru.

7. Having been founded as a section of the International Committee on the basis of a principled break with the centrism of the French OCI and the lessons of the betrayal of the Bolivian working class in 1971 by the POR of Guillermo Lora, which subordinated itself to the military regime of Gen. J.J. Torres, the Liga Comunista has now been destroyed as a revolutionary organization by the degeneration of its own leadership.

8. This degeneration has been exposed in the unprincipled position taken by this leadership in relation to the struggle within the International Committee against the right-wing nationalist clique of Healy-Banda-Slaughter in the leadership of its oldest section, the WRP.

The secretary general of the Liga Comunista, Lucia Mendoza, had gained her position through an unprincipled personal relation established with G. Healy, who directly inserted her into the political vacuum left first by the exiling of Liga Comunista's founder, Comrade Sergio, under the military regime of Gen. Velasco, and later by the unprincipled desertion of his successor Emiliano Roberto. After being kept for a long period in England, where she was taken in tow by Healy, she was sent back to Peru as party secretary. Working together with her close associate Oscar Poma, her practice was largely centered on organizing showings of the film, *The Palestinian,* in Latin America and abandoning any systematic fight for Trotskyism in Peru.

When the crisis erupted in the Workers Revolutionary Party, she was initially reluctant to attend a meeting called by the IC and was engaged in discussions with the Spanish and Greek renegades who joined Healy in deserting the International Committee.

She was finally persuaded to come and after she heard a report from the IC members, changed her position. She supported the October 25 resolution in which the ICFI concluded that roots of the crisis lay in "the prolonged drift of the WRP leadership away from the strategical task of building the world party of socialist revolution towards an increasingly nationalist perspective and practice." Now she

herself has joined with an unprincipled clique in pursuit of just such a perspective and practice in Peru.

9. On December 16 and 17, the Liga Comunista secretary general again joined with the other IC delegates in voting for the suspension of the WRP on charges of carrying out "an historic betrayal of the ICFI and international working class" through "the complete abandonment of the theory of permanent revolution, resulting in the pursuit of unprincipled relations with sections of the colonial bourgeoisie in return for money." Not only did she vote for this position, but she participated in drafting the IC resolutions and defended them before the membership of the WRP.

10. At her request, delegates of the ICFI traveled to Peru in January 1986 to defend these positions before the Liga Comunista central committee. After a prolonged political struggle, the majority of the committee endorsed the IC decisions. Then Mendoza reversed herself and joined with those who had attacked the IC — led by Oscar Poma and Emiliano Roberto — to overturn the central committee's positions.

Emiliano Roberto, after deserting the movement for five years, had been brought into the meetings with IC delegates under the totally false pretense of being some sort of a "victim" of Healy. His real political background was consciously concealed. While out of the party, he had established the closest relations with such Stalinist union bureaucrats as Valentin Pacho, participating directly in the betrayal of the struggles of Peruvian state workers. This was endorsed by the Liga Comunista leadership, which sought to build up his reputation while covering up for the Stalinist traitors with whom he was allied.

One month before these proceedings, Emiliano had drafted a document which constituted his first response to the crisis in the IC. It constituted a vitriolic denunciation of the Workers League of North America for its defense of Trotsky's theory of Permanent Revolution. From the outset, Roberto identified his enemies not as Healy, Banda and Slaughter, but rather as those in the IC and the Workers League who were fighting for Trotskyism.

This document was deliberately concealed from the IC delegates only to be published by the Liga Comunista two months later in its magazine, *Comunismo.*

In it he portrayed the North American working class as an essentially counterrevolutionary force, allied to its own ruling class. This perspective is allied to his demoralized view of an all-powerful US imperialism. He attacks as "monstrous onesidedness" the affirmation of the North American Trotskyists of the Workers League that the class struggle in the US can disrupt the war plans of US imperialism, insisting instead that the American working class was the beneficiary of the invasion of Grenada!

In a subsequent document, Roberto adopted an openly pro-Stalinist position, denouncing the Fourth International for failing to liquidate into the Stalinist bureaucracies and its steadfast insistence on basing itself on the international proletariat: "In China, Eastern Europe, Albania, Yugoslavia, Vietnam, Korea, etc. . . . the Trotskyist movement was unable to integrate itself to these revolutions and learn something from this social practice. Instead, it developed a series of non-Marxist rationalizations to preserve its isolation and adaptation to non-revolutionary social forces."

Roberto was brought back into the leadership on the basis of these counterrevolutionary positions in order to utilize the crisis of the IC as the reason for the Liga Comunista leadership's break from Trotskyism.

Also published in *Comunismo* was a document by Oscar Poma, entitled "The Fraud of the Open Letter of 1953," in which the entire principled foundation of the International Committee and its subsequent struggle against Pabloite revisionism is attacked. "No one denies that there had to be a break with Pablo," he writes, "but the fundamental question which arises in light of the current crisis of the IC is if the sections which broke with Pablo in 1953 did so as part of the struggle for the construction of the World Party of Socialist Revolution. We believe that the answer is no."

As was the case with Roberto, at the meeting with the IC delegates, Poma had also concealed his real political views in a cowardly fashion. When he was directly asked whether he had any differences with the IC's positions, he denied this, claiming that his differences with the suspension of the WRP were merely "tactical" and motivated by his fear that action would cut across discussion required to "expose" the positions of Banda and Slaughter.

This was nothing but a pack of lies! The clique in the leadership of the Liga Comunista had a secret agreement to conceal their real views from both the IC and their own membership because they knew that in an open struggle against these positions, they would have lost their own membership in a split with the IC.

11. After repudiating its support for the IC's suspension of the WRP and its assessment of the split, the right-wing clique in the Liga Comunista leadership moved swiftly to break off international relations. In March, it refused to allow a delegate of the Workers League who had traveled to Lima to attend a meeting of its central committee and shortly thereafter formally broke off all relations with the secretary of the Comite Socialista, the Ecuadorian sympathizing group which had defended the IC's positions. In so doing, they ended what had been a long destructive and nationalist abuse of the Comite Socialista which the Liga Comunista leadership parasitically used as a source of funds for its operations in Peru.

12. Now the Liga Comunista has publicly attacked the entire history of the Fourth International, describing it as *"an infinite number of purely factional, sectarian and anti-Marxist splits, motivated by the mostly local and national interests of each sect."*

All these renegades make clear that for them, the degeneration of the leadership of the Workers Revolutionary Party and the crisis in the IC had as their source the principles of the Trotskyist movement with which they have now decisively broken. "It is in reality this false struggle for 'principles' which characterizes the historical development of the International Committee," writes Lucia Mendoza.

In his own document, Roberto writes that what he claims was the Trotskyist movement's isolation from the working class "was transformed not only into a natural medium but a virtue, necessary to maintain orthodoxy."

This spitting on the principles and history of the party, common to every right-wing opportunist justifying his own capitulation to imperialism, is combined with a reactionary "third worldist" perspective drawn from the Peruvian petty-bourgeoisie. It describes the Trotskyist parties in Europe

and America as *"isolated, both geographically and politically, from the living development of the world revolution,"* and as dominated by *"pseudo radical demagoguery by every class of opportunist who had never risked an inch of their skin in the revolution."*

The renegades conclude that the Trotskyist movement is *"rooted in social forces totally adverse to the social forces which are objectively revolutionary. Therefore it must be objectively destroyed."*

13. These crude slanders represent nothing more than the Liga Comunista renegades' open repudiation of the theory of Permanent Revolution and the strategy of World Revolution. Having rejected the international proletariat as a revolutionary force, they have explicitly declared their loyalty to the corrupt and servile national bourgeoisie in Peru and Latin America while calling for regroupment with all manner of revisionist, Stalinist and petty-bourgeois nationalist enemies of the proletarian revolution.

The Liga Comunista leadership now call for a public discussion with what it refers to as "Peruvian and Latin American Trotskyists," by which it means such revisionists as Hugo Blanco, Ricardo Napuri, Nahuel Moreno and the Posadasites. The aim of such a discussion, they indicate is a regroupment based on a "break with an entire period of the Trotskyist movement in an irreversible way," and the "orientation towards a revolutionary practice, the likes of which were indicated by Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky, the first four Congresses of the III International, as well as the later revolutionary experiences in China, Vietnam and others in Latin America."

This represents an explicit repudiation of Trotskyism. In its place this clique proposes abject capitulation to Stalinism, Maoism and Castroism and the transformation of the Liga Comunista into a secondary agency for the strangulation of the Peruvian working class.

Two years ago, Oscar Poma wrote an article which attacked the peasant guerrillaism of the Maoist Sendero Luminoso movement. In a sycophantic mimicking of Healy's **totally idealist distortion of dialectical materialism, Poma** sought to deduce the character of this movement from a statement made by one of its members on the category of contradiction. From this, Poma concluded that Sendero Luminoso had "imposed" guerrilla warfare on the countryside and the peasantry. This right-wing position on the peasantry could only discredit Trotskyism.

Subsequently, the Liga Comunista leadership has swung full circle to uncritical support for Sendero and calls for "maximum unity, through a policy of united front" with the Maoist guerrillas.

14. In their programmatic statement entitled "The Class Struggle in Peru" this is made abundantly clear. They declare that the Peruvian bourgeois government of Alan Garcia — a regime which has attacked the working class, imposed a state of emergency in the capital and continued a brutal "dirty war" in the Andean highlands — is the result of the "confluence" of the "three great classes that make up Peruvian society: the proletariat, the peasantry and finally, the native bourgeoisie, specifically those sectors linked to the internal market or so-called non-traditional exports."

It now repeats the same Stalinist theories which have led to bloody defeats of the working class from China in 1927 to the Chilean catastrophe of 1973 and the Argentine coup of 1976. On this basis, the Liga Comunista leadership has converted itself into nothing more than a secondary agency of Stalinism for the betrayal of the Peruvian socialist revolution.

15. The International Committee of the Fourth International calls upon all genuine Trotskyists in the ranks of the Liga Comunista to repudiate this counterrevolutionary policy, break with the right-wing petty-bourgeois nationalist clique and contact the ICFI to carry forward the fight for the construction of the Peruvian section in irreconcilable struggle for the perspective of Trotskyism and Permanent Revolution.