

To Political Committee Members

The attached is a rough translation of a resolution prepared by the Political Bureau of the LCR and submitted to the December 20-21 meeting of the LCR Central Committee. Due to lack of time it was not discussed or adopted, but may be placed on the agenda of a future meeting.

Mary-Alice

rough translation motion presented by PB, but not discussed or voted upon due to lack of time at last LCR CC
(all emphasis in the original)

Friday, 19 December

For the Central Committee

Once before the cc had been asked to "recognize" a faction -- by a part of the ex-T-4 right after the last national congress. Now, a French component of the LTF has been constituted, without even asking for the "rights of a national faction." The statutes of the Fourth International make mention of the "rights of factions" along with the rights of tendencies, whereas the statutes of the Ligue do not recognize this right. It is therefore important to specify what the regulations of our organization are on this subject.

1.) The normal unfolding of debates in a democratic centralist organization takes place ~~either~~ either without the setting up of internal formations or with the formation of tendencies. In all cases it falls upon the regular leaderships to organize discussion, and they cannot be bypassed, even if they are given help by a parity commission. The leadership has the duty to insure that within the framework of the statutes there is respect for the rights of minorities, equality for tendencies to express themselves in the discussion, and a democratic discussion, as well as the pursuit of the activity of the organization. In this regard, the formation (eventual formation, that is, because it is not something "obligatory") of tendencies in order to enjoy the rights accorded to tendencies is directly tied to the organization of the discussion on a local, regional, or national scale by the corresponding leaderships (in accordance with the specified criteria). Likewise, the functioning -- and thus the

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existence -- of tendencies ceases with the official end of the organized discussion, as sanctioned after the vote of a congress, a cc, ... It goes without saying that the end of a discussion does not mean the disappearance of the differences that were expressed, and therefore it does not mean the disappearance of informal ideological currents. But as to factions, they have no place in the normal unfolding of the life of an organization that is really democratic centralist.

2.) The formation of factions is the product and the symptom of a deep crisis affecting at least a section of the organization (at least, if one excludes the case of factions that are only the product of an "entrist" operation). The creation of a faction is in fact an extremely grave political act, because it implies the imposition of a particular discipline on its members. ^{effect,} In the members of a faction become obliged to vote as a "bloc" on the whole range of political and organizational questions, despite the eventual existence of differences, which are then kept internal to the faction; the members of a faction are submitting themselves to the faction's own discipline inside the organization. It must be emphasized that in no way can this internal discipline be extended to a discipline in the external work of the organization. This internal discipline is the principal difference between a tendency and a faction. Its consequences are grave, because it is obviously detrimental to the quality and freedom of discussion in the organization. It camouflages some of the issues and hardens up positions to the maximum. By contrast, at the time of our last congress the tendencies were given by the leaderships the means to assure their own discussion, ^{the} terms ^{of which} were known

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(the internal documents of the tendencies were not clandestine).
In these conditions, to form a faction amounts to an act of
generalized defiance of the leadership and to the ~~firm~~ affirmation
of the wish to overturn it. It amounts to a characterization of
the crisis in the organization to be of ~~such a~~ ^{a very sharp} degree; ~~only~~ that
could justify such a step, contrary to the normal functioning
of the Ligue. From this point of view, in an organization really
governed by democratic centralism, as is the case with the Ligue,
the setting ~~up~~ up of a faction in itself impels a dangerous logic
of regular cases of systematic parasitism, and of growing paralysis
in outside work -- the prelude to real infractions of discipline.

3.) As phenomena of crisis, as symptoms of an infinitely
unhealthy functioning, factions cannot have their existence codified
in the statutes! If members take the grave decision to establish
themselves as a faction the leadership is ~~not~~ ^{not then} bound to recognize
their existence in the same way as it is for tendencies. Our
statutes no more recognize the right of factions than ~~they~~ forbid
them. The establishment of a faction is therefore not in itself
cause for sanction, even if it is disavowed by the leadership of the
organization. To the contrary, the totality of the activity of the
faction must be under the control of the leadership (meetings,
financès,...) in order that it can make its opinions known in
advance and can also make known in advance its eventual decision to
proceed to sanctions if it considers there there is an infraction
of the norms of functioning of the organization.

The establishment of a faction does not imply any extra rights
over those of a tendency in the case of an organized discussion, and

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no particular rights in the absence of such a discussion. Let us make it clear that the possibility for members to freely meet and discuss among themselves is not a "right," but an ~~■~~ obvious norm of conduct! By contrast, what can be sanctioned would be the eventual breaches of discipline ~~■~~ towards which factional logic would impel members. A declaration of faction is a politically grave responsibility, seen ~~■■■■■~~ from this point of view.

4.) All of this is obviously ~~■~~ valid for an organization which has our conception and practice of democratic centralism. All the sections of the International do not necessarily function in the same way. The SWP, for example, does not have the tradition of financing the trips of spokespeople for minority tendencies, of assuring the holding of tendency conferences, of assuring the production of internal tendency material, of public debate in the Militant, etc. Furthermore, at its last congress, the leadership of the SWP decided to set itself up as the leadership of a faction, placing the finances of the organization -- including the dues of members of minority tendencies -- at the ~~■~~ exclusive service of the LTF. In such conditions there quite obviously remained no other recourse to minorities who wanted to organize themselves as tendencies than to set themselves up as a faction, just to have their own financial means. But this idea does not constitute either a model or an excuse for the setting up of a faction in our ~~■■■■■~~ section, which finances all tendencies equally from the budget of the organization.

5.) At the present time a faction exists within the International,

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declared as such: the LTF. This quite clearly corresponds to a phenomenon of crisis. But the existence of abnormal functioning on an international scale does not imply that it can be transposed to each of the national sections. There is no simple application of all the rules of international functioning onto the national scale, even if the statutes of the Fourth International are valid in all the sections. The point of equilibrium between centralism and the autonomy of sections and the exact form of democratic centralism are not the same. A fortiori, a state of crisis cannot serve as the model for functioning. To the contrary, the state of crisis that the Fourth International is going through is only relative, and is linked to the unequal development of the class struggle on an international scale.

6.) In these conditions, the cc ^{formally} notes the formation of the international minority faction (LTF) in France. The French members of this declared faction can participate in the international activities of the LTF, by informing the leadership of the LCR in advance. Since a national discussion has not been opened up in France, they can enjoy no ~~no~~ rights. Like any other members of the organization, they can publish discussion articles in the internal bulletins of the LCR on international problems under the responsibility of the international commission of the cc, and of the PB. The representatives of this faction must inform the PB and CC of any of their activity affecting the normal functioning of the organization (meetings, distribution of texts, lists of their members, etc...). This is the only guarantee that a grave crisis will not be precipitated ~~by~~ by the creation of a faction, which in itself creates an abnormal situation in the organization.

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