

December 19, 1975

To the Leninist Trotskyist Faction Steering Committee

Dear Comrades,

Enclosed are the following items:

1. A report by Galois on the November 23-24, 1975, meeting of the United Secretariat.
2. Minutes of the same meeting.
3. A letter to the United Secretariat from Mary-Alice Waters concerning the character of the IEC meeting that was called by a majority vote at the last United Secretariat meeting.
4. A December 12, 1975, letter to the Political Committee of the League for Socialist Action/Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière from Walter; and a reply.
5. A report by Galois on the October 4-5, 1975, meeting of the United Secretariat.

Comradely,

Mary-Alice Waters

## REPORT ON NOVEMBER 23-24, 1975 UNITED SECRETARIAT MEETING

by Galois

The most important aspect of the November 23-24 meeting of the United Secretariat involved the discussion and decisions taken on organizational questions. There are four main decisions to single out in this regard, involving the following questions: 1. Intercontinental Press; 2. IEC convocation; 3. The question of the IT; and 4. Publication of documents.

### 1. Intercontinental Press

This point was placed on the agenda by a decision of the October 4-5 meeting, which, by majority vote, had objected to IP's coverage of world events in the past period and decided to discuss what measures to take at the following meeting. (See mailing to Leninist Trotskyist Faction Steering Committee, November 1, 1975).

At this November meeting, a five-part motion was adopted by majority vote. It included some suggestions to the editor of IP which were unobjectionable, such as the decision to instruct the Bureau to regularly submit editorials and background articles. It also included unrealistic suggestions to the IP editor, including one saying that articles "which do not present the line adopted on these issues [that is, issues on which official bodies of the FI have made statements or resolutions] should be identified as contributions which are not within the framework of the orientation of the FI. They should be presented in their totality in such a way that from the point of view of balance, layout, etc... no contrary inaccurate impression could be given as to the general line of IP..." [For the full text of the IMT motion on IP, see the enclosed minutes of the November United Secretariat meeting, or the attached motions.]

Comrade Pepe, in his counterreport, pointed out that this would amount to placing a kind of editorial stigma on writers who are part of the minority -- not to speak of the manifold practical difficulties that could arise in attempting to employ such criteria. He also explained the origins and continuity of IP, from the period prior to reunification up through today. He explained how IP's policy on coverage of world events has been consistent from the beginning, including public presentation of different points of view within the framework of world Trotskyism. Challenges to this traditional policy were raised only as important political differences developed and deepened. At bottom, the dispute over this policy reflects a political divergence over the norms of democratic centralism within the world movement and its application under present conditions. Comrade Pepe then submitted the following motion: "That we see no need to suggest considering a change in the way IP is being edited, which remains in accordance with the norms followed since its inception." This motion was defeated.

### 2. IEC Convocation

In view of the deep political differences over Portugal and the sharpening of organizational tensions, it has become clear that the forthcoming IEC will be faced with many important decisions. For this reason, LTF members on the United Secretariat

argued that adequate preparation was required in order to hold an authoritative meeting. Among other things, time was needed to raise the funds to insure maximum participation by IEC members.

The IMT rejected our arguments and voted a motion in the United Secretariat calling for an IEC meeting in the middle of February, 1976, with an agenda of Portugal, Angola, Spain, IT, world congress date, and election of the United Secretariat. Furthermore, the motion that was passed specified that participation in the IEC meeting would be restricted (to an as-yet-unspecified number of IEC members). We rejected this proposal, pointing out the difficulties in organizing an authoritative meeting for February, and stressing that the United Secretariat did not have the authority to limit attendance at the IEC, which is a higher body than the Secretariat. Our motion for an unrestricted IEC meeting as soon as financially possible (at the latest by the end of the summer) was defeated.

### 3. The question of the Internationalist Tendency

The report on the IT by Hovis attacked the good faith of the SWP leadership, charging that the number of former IT members readmitted into the SWP so far was too few, and that the process the SWP had decided upon (leaving it up to the branches to decide on the basis of their experience with the individual applicants) was taking too long. As a result, he said, there had been no implementation of the IEC decision, and at this point it had become impossible to carry it out. In the discussion under this point, other IMT leaders said that the highest tensions would exist in the international so long as any ITers who applied to join the SWP were not taken in; that the supporters of the LTF in other countries where they are in a minority would "pay for this;" and that there would be no clear political discussion on Portugal, because it would be obscured by IMT initiated discussion over the IT.

A three-part motion, written during the discussion itself, was presented at the end of the discussion. Among other things, it said that the United Secretariat "strongly condemns the attitude of the comrades of the SWP leadership..." [See minutes or attachment]. Faced with this surprise motion, we pointed out that it would constitute the first time since reunification that an organization in the world Trotskyist movement had been formally condemned, and we proposed to refer the vote to the next meeting, so that comrades could consider the implications of such a motion, and a countermotion could be prepared. Our proposal was rejected, and the condemnation was passed by majority vote.

### 4. Publication of documents

Several proposals for publication of documents were proposed under the Bureau report. In a significant departure from past norms, some proposals were rejected.

#### a) Public publication of the LTF resolution on Portugal.

This question came up as a result of a dispute that arose after the October United Secretariat meeting. At that meeting we had proposed that the LTF resolution be published publicly, given its nonpolemical character. No objections were raised, but some

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comrades wanted to think it over, so the proposal was referred to the Bureau for decision. Afterwards, the bureau discussed it, and agreed that the resolution should be published publicly, suggesting that IP publish it in English and Spanish, and Quatrième Internationale publish it in French. IP published it immediately. Afterwards, the IMT comrades claimed that a procedure for publication had been decided on in the bureau, and that this had been violated: that they had agreed to publish the LTF resolution only on condition that it first be presented to the United Secretariat or IEC for a vote. Comrade Johnson, the LTF comrade present at the bureau meeting in question, reports that no such procedure was decided upon.

Given the dispute over what had been decided by the bureau, and given the IMT leaders' assertion that they objected only to the procedure, not to the substantive question of whether or not to publish the LTF resolution, we submitted the question to a vote at this meeting. The IMT majority rejected the proposal to publish the LTF resolution in Quatrième Internationale, and voted to defer the question to the next meeting.

b) International Internal Discussion Bulletin.

A similar dispute had arisen since the October Secretariat meeting over the publication of the appendix to Jack Barnes' report to the August, 1975, convention of the SWP, "The Portuguese Revolution and Building the Fourth International," IIDB, Vol. XII, No. 6. Part of the report included a discussion on the overtures to the FI made by the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International. In his report and summary (at which IMT leaders were present) Comrade Barnes had stated that the correspondence with the OCRFI would be included as an appendix to the report when it was published. When the report was published, after being accepted for publication in the IIDB by the October Secretariat meeting, the IMT comrades objected to the appendix, saying this was never agreed to. So, to set the record straight, we proposed formally publishing the documents and correspondence relating to the OCRFI for the information of the membership of the FI. This proposal was rejected by majority vote. The motion passed by the majority said that publication was rejected "in order to clearly demonstrate to the minority that the practice of unilateral decisions and accomplished facts is not only inadmissible but also counterproductive..."

A statement for the minutes by Celso, commenting on the above motion, said: "The suppression of material that members of the Fourth International are entitled to read in order to 'teach the minority a lesson' tells much about the IMT's views on the norms of democratic centralism."

We also proposed for publication in the IIDB a letter to the SWP on Portugal by Murry Weiss and Myra Weiss, two former members and current political opponents of the SWP, and a letter to them by Pierre Frank. (See November 1, 1975 mailing to the LTF Steering Committee, or SWP Internal Information Bulletin, No. 3 in 1975.) In his letter to them, Pierre Frank says, "You are correct when you write to the SWP that '[their] methodology, analyses and political conclusions...propel you, however unexpectedly or

unwittingly, into the camp of American imperialism.'" Our proposal to publish this material in the IIDB was rejected. A motion passed by majority vote defined Frank's letter to the Weisses as private correspondence which could not be published without the consent of the author.

The decision by the IMT to suppress material such as the above marks a serious new departure from democratic norms. It is significant that not all IMT comrades could accept this completely. Comrade Jones voted to publish both the OCFI correspondence and the Frank letter, and Comrade Claudio abstained on both.

After these grave decisions were taken, the IMT comrades agreed to two additional proposals that we made: 1. It was decided to publish the Foley-Hansen-Novack article publicly in French (along with a reply). 2. The LCR leaders present agreed to publicly correct two errors which appeared in a French pamphlet on Portugal containing several articles by Foley and Hansen plus the first Frank-Maitan-Mandel polemic: namely that the selection of articles by Foley and Hansen was made without consulting them, and that the overall title given to the Foley and Hansen articles, "Military Dictatorship vs. Bourgeois Democracy," was not their title and does not reflect their point of view.

#### Other Questions at the Meeting

1. Invitation to attend OCI convention. The OCI has invited the United Secretariat to attend its forthcoming congress, scheduled for the end of December. It was decided unanimously to consult the leadership of the LCR, and to take a decision at the December meeting of the United Secretariat. It was also agreed to investigate and document the facts on the reported use of violence by the OCI against other political groups in the workers movement, reportedly including members of the LCR. (We suggested that it would be useful to raise this issue and to denounce such methods at the OCI congress itself if the facts bore out the accusations). Although there was agreement on the motion that was passed, several IMT comrades spoke in a very heated and factional manner under this point, suggesting that the tensions generated by the IMT were threatening to escape control.

2. The Political Discussion. There were four main political questions discussed at the meeting: Portugal, Angola, Britain, and Spain. No major new issues came up, and only two points need be singled out here.

a. Under the Portugal discussion, the IMT comrades continued to defend the LCI's participation in the FUR as a useful tactic to advance a workers united front -- despite political differences with many of the FUR positions. The next meeting will discuss Portugal further, and invitations to participate will be made to Portuguese comrades. Also to be discussed will be complaints made by the current LCI leadership about the factional activities of Comrades Aubin and Duret in Portugal.

b. Under the Angola discussion, the majority adopted a statement placing the FI in the camp of the MPLA in the civil

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war. Several LTF comrades argued that there was insufficient justification for taking such a position at this time, and that the FI should issue a statement along the axis of defense of the Angolan revolution and against the imperialist intervention in Angola.

c. LTF position on Portugal. At the beginning of the meeting, Comrade Domingo reported on a recent trip to Mexico and Central America. He said that in Costa Rica a debate had been arranged between him and a PST comrade in front of a group of Trotskyist sympathizers. He stated that he was surprised, because he was prepared to argue against the positions of the LTF resolution published in IP, but the PST comrade stated that he would not defend those positions, and that they did not represent the views of the PST.

December 3, 1975

Minutes of November 23-24, 1975 Meeting of the  
United Secretariat

PRESENT: Adair, Atwood, Aubin, Celso, Claudio, Domingo, Duret, Fourier, Galois, Georges, Hovis, Jens, Johnson, Jones, Julio, Marline, Pepe, Robinson, Roman, Rudi, Thérèse, Walter

IEC PRESENT: Ken, Melan, Petersen, Vergeat, Williams

Guests: Foley, Harney, Klein

- Agenda: 1. Domingo trip  
2. Spain  
3. Portuguese Solidarity  
4. Portugal  
5. Angola  
6. IT  
7. Britain  
8. Intercontinental Press  
9. International Executive Committee  
10. OCI Convention  
11. Bureau Report

Chairman: Robinson

Meeting convened: 3:20 p. m.

1. Domingo Trip.

Domingo reported on his trip to Mexico and Costa Rica and his discussions with comrades there.

2. Spain.

Walter reported on the political situation in Spain.

Discussion.

3. Portuguese Solidarity.

Vergeat reported on attempts to establish a European campaign in solidarity with the Portuguese revolution. Ken Coates has initiated a conference, which the FI is supporting. We are attempting to involve forces from the left wing of several Social Democratic parties. Some of the demands of the campaign should be "Solidarity with the revolutionary process," "Solidarity with the workers commissions," "Against NATO intervention," and material aid to revolutionary workers newspapers, Radio Renascença and occupied factories.

Discussion.

4. Portugal.

Aubin reported on the political situation in Portugal and the governmental crisis. The LCI is having a special convention in December. He reported on a letter from the LCI leadership concerning the activities of comrades Aubin and Duret and a reply by Aubin and Duret.

Discussion.

Session adjourned: 7:00 p. m.

Monday November 24, 1975, Session convened: 10:15 a. m.

Discussion on Portugal continued.

Motion by Walter: To prepare a resolution on Portugal for the next United Secretariat meeting and to invite to that meeting comrades from the major tendencies in the leadership of the LCI and comrades from the PRT pending the agreement of the leadership of the LCI.

Amendment by Celso: To invite comrades from the PRT to the next United Secretariat meeting.

For the amendment: 8

Full members: 1 (Adair)

Fraternal members: 6 (Atwood, Celso, Galois, Johnson, Pepe, Thérèse)

Consultative members: 1 (Julio)

Against the amendment: 11

Full members: 11 (Aubin, Claudio, Domingo, Duret, Fourier, Jens, Jones, Marline, Robinson, Roman, Walter)

Amendment defeated.

Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Celso: To place on the agenda of the next United Secretariat meeting, at which the Portuguese comrades are invited to participate, discussion and decision of the issues raised in the correspondence of the LCI and comrades Aubin and Duret.

Carried.

5. Angola.

Claudio proposed adoption of a statement on Angola. (See Intercontinental Press, December 15, 1975, Vol. 13, No. 45)

Motion by Thérèse: That the United Secretariat draft a statement along the axis of defense of the Angolan revolution and against the imperialist intervention in Angola; that for the present the Fourth International does not place itself in the camp of any one of the national liberation groups against the others.

For Claudio motion: 12

Full members: 12 (Aubin, Claudio, Domingo, Duret, Fourier, Georges, Jens, Jones, Marline, Robinson,

Full members (continued): Roman, Walter)

For Thérèse motion: 7

Full members: 1 (Adair)

Fraternal members: 6 (Atwood, Celso, Galois,  
Johnson, Pepe, Thérèse)

Abstentions: 1

Consultative member: 1 (Julio)

#### 6. IT.

Hovis reported his opinion on the status of the applications for membership in the Socialist Workers Party by IT members.

#### Discussion.

Motion by Aubin: Whereas the commitments made by the leadership of the SWP at the January 1975 IEC, contained in the resolution adopted at that IEC meeting, have not been lived up to; whereas to date only an insignificant number of comrades (3 or 4) have been reintegrated since the expulsion of the IT; whereas the National Committee plenum of the SWP and the last SWP convention did not reintegrate the IT comrades and did not even discuss the question seriously; Be it resolved that the United Secretariat:

1. strongly condemns the attitude of the leadership of the SWP;
2. renews its commitment (contained in its resolution at the IEC) to carry on a determined fight to enforce democratic rights for tendencies in the international and the reintegration of all IT comrades unjustly expelled from the SWP who are asking to be reintegrated and are actively and loyally collaborating with the SWP;
3. states once again its intention to respect the letter of the International Control Commission and IEC recommendations and thus to consider all these IT comrades as loyal Trotskyists who would be members of the FI were they not prevented from this by reactionary American legislation.

Motion by Jones: To postpone a vote on this motion until after the discussion on the date for the next International Executive Committee.

#### Defeated.

Motion by Celso: To refer this motion to the next United Secretariat meeting.

For: 7

Full members: 1 (Adair)

Fraternal members: 6 (Atwood, Celso, Galois,  
Johnson, Pepe, Thérèse)

Against: 11

Full members: 10 (Aubin, Domingo, Duret,  
Fourier, Georges, Jens, Jones,  
Marline, Robinson, Walter)

Fraternal members: 1 (Hovis)

Not voting: 1

Consultative members: 1 (Julio)

#### Defeated

Statement by Celso: The motion submitted by the majority faction constituted the first formal condemnation of an organization in our world movement since the reunification. It was written during the discussion and read to the United Secretariat at the close of this point on the agenda. Because of the grave implications of this motion, we asked that the vote be deferred until the next meeting of the United Secretariat so as to make it possible for the members to consider it seriously; and, if they opposed it, to draw up a counterresolution.

Vote on the motion by Aubin:

For: 11

Full members: 10 (Aubin, Domingo, Duret,  
Fourier, Georges, Jens, Jones,  
Marline, Robinson, Walter)

Fraternal members: 1 (Hovis)

Against: 7

Full members: 1 (Adair)

Fraternal members: 6 (Atwood, Celso, Galois,  
Johnson, Pepe, Thérèse)

Abstentions: 1

Consultative members: 1 (Julio)

#### Carried.

#### 7. Britain.

Walter reported a draft resolution on the situation in Britain for the United Secretariat to adopt and present to the IMG members at the coming IMG convention. The draft resolution will be discussed further and presented to the next Secretariat for a vote.

#### Discussion.

#### 8. Intercontinental Press.

Duret reported on the following motion concerning Intercontinental Press:

The US recommends to the editor of I.P. consideration of the following points:

1. Articles dealing with issues on which official bodies of the FI have made statements or resolutions (in particular those issues which are in the news, such as Portugal and Angola) and which do not present the line adopted on these issues by the leading bodies, should be identified as contributions which are not within the framework of the orientation of the FI. They should be presented in their totality in such a way that from the point of view of balance, layout, etc. . . no contrary inaccurate impression could be given as to the general line of IP.

2. Official documents of the F.I. should be presented clearly as such and not mixed in with various other texts under the heading of "documents."

3. The USec instructs the bureau to regularly submit editorials and background articles presenting the official line of the F.I., which will be signed by a body of the International or by its members.

4. In accord with the Leninist tradition, the USec reaffirms its intention to conduct a public discussion, the conditions of which are to be determined by the regularly elected bodies of the International. This discussion will be submitted to I.P. for publication.

5. None of these suggestions should be interpreted as implying any obligations for the editor contrary to the stipulations of the reactionary Voorhis Act.

Pepe reported on the following motion:

That we see no need to suggest considering a change in the way IP is being edited, which remains in accordance with the norms followed since its foundation.

#### Discussion.

For motion by Duret: 12

Full members: 12 (Aubin, Claudio, Domingo, Duret, Fourier, Georges, Jens, Jones, Marline, Robinson, Roman, Walter)

For motion by Pepe: 8

Full members: 1 (Adair)  
Fraternal members: 6 (Atwood, Celso, Galois, Johnson, Pepe, Thérèse)  
Consultative members: 1 (Julio)

#### 9. International Executive Committee.

Jens reported on proposals for the next meeting of the IEC.

Motion: The United Secretariat calls a restricted IEC to be held about the middle of February with the following agenda: 1) Portugal, 2) Angola, 3) Spain, 4) Balance sheet on the January 1975 IEC decisions on the IT, 5) Election of the United Secretariat, 6) World Congress call, and to refer the technical arrangements to the bureau.

Motion by Celso: To hold a full meeting of all the regular, alternate and consultative members of the IEC who are able to attend; to begin a drive to raise the necessary funds; and to set an outside date of late August or early September.

For Jens motion: 12

Full members: 12 (Aubin, Claudio, Domingo, Duret, Fourier, Georges, Jens, Jones, Marline, Robinson, Roman, Walter)

For Celso motion: 8

Full members: 1 (Adair)  
Fraternal members: 6 (Atwood, Celso, Galois, Johnson, Pepe, Thérèse)  
Consultative members: 1 (Julio)

Jens motion carried.

#### 10. Invitation to attend OCI convention.

Celso reported.

#### Discussion.

Motion: The U.S. has been informed of the invitation extended to the SWP by the OCI to attend its 20th Congress.

An exchange of letters between the leaderships of the SWP and the OCI seems to indicate that the United Secretariat is also invited.

Given recent physical attacks by the OCI against members of the LCR, the United Secretariat, in conformity with the resolution adopted on this subject, decides:

1. To do everything possible to document the facts on these aggressions.
2. To consult the Political Bureau of the LCR (sfqi).
3. To report the opinion of the PB of the LCR to the next United Secretariat which will take a decision on whether or not to send a USec delegation to the OCI convention.

Carried unanimously.

#### 11. Bureau report.

A. Motion: that Vergeat work on a day to day basis with the bureau.

Carried unanimously.

B. Motion by Walter: that we append to the minutes of this United Secretariat meeting the answer of the SWP PC to the letter of LCR PB concerning the invitation of the OCRFI to the SWP convention.

Carried. (Abstention Fourier)

C. Letter from the LCR PB concerning comrade Galois. The following letter was read from the PB of the French LCR:

Dear Comrades,

A little while ago, comrade Galois told us that he had just moved to Paris, where he would remain full time. We send you this letter to ask for some clarification on the status in Paris of comrade Galois. If comrade Galois has been released by the US, to which he is responsible, for some particular work in Paris, we would appreciate it if the US would inform us of the nature of this responsibility. If this hypothesis--the only one we could envisage--did not govern comrade Galois's moving, we ask the US to take a position and inform of it as rapidly as possible.

With our revolutionary greetings,  
The Political Bureau

Motion by Walter: The political bureau of the LCR (SFQI) has asked the United Secretariat to inform it of the reasons for comrade Galois's move to Paris and the nature of his responsibilities there.

The United Secretariat never decided such a move should be made. The United Secretariat is of the opinion that given the scope of the tasks comrade Galois is needed in Brussels as a full-timer for the U.S. bureau in order to integrate him in the bureau, to collaborate on a continuing basis, and to reinforce the center. The U.S. therefore asks that comrade Galois reconsider his position.

#### Discussion,

For: 12

Full members: 12 (Aubin, Claudio, Domingo, Duret, Fourier, Georges, Jens, Jones, Marline, Robinson, Roman, Walter)

Against: 8

Full members: 1 (Adair)  
Fraternal members: 6 (Atwood, Celso, Galois, Johnson, Pepe, Thérèse)  
Consultative members: 1 (Julio)

#### Carried.

D. Motion by Celso: To submit the LTF resolution on Portugal for publication in Quatrième Internationale.

Motion by Walter: To defer this question to the next United Secretariat or the IEC where this question of Portugal will be on the agenda for a vote.

For Celso motion: 7

Full members: 1 (Adair)  
Fraternal members: 6 (Atwood, Celso, Galois, Johnson, Pepe, Thérèse)

For Walter motion: 12

Full members: 12 (Aubin, Claudio, Domingo, Duret, Fourier, Georges, Jens, Jones, Marline, Robinson, Roman, Walter)

Abstentions: 1

Consultative members: 1 (Julio)

#### E. IIDB

Motion by Celso: to submit a letter on Portugal by Murry and Myra Weiss and a letter from Pierre Frank to Murry and Myra Weiss to the IIDB.

Motion by Walter: 1) It is unacceptable that private correspondence of a leading comrade of the international communicated to the leadership of a section in order to avoid the impression that he acts behind the backs of the leadership is inserted in an international internal bulletin without the authorization of that member.

2) This is independent from the question of a judgment on the contents of that letter.

For Celso motion: 9

Full members: 2 (Adair, Jones)  
Fraternal members: 6 (Atwood, Celso, Galois, Johnson, Pepe, Thérèse)  
Consultative members: 1 (Julio)

Against Celso motion: 11

Full members: 11 (Aubin, Claudio, Domingo, Duret, Fourier, Georges, Jens, Marline, Robinson, Roman, Walter)

For Walter motion: 12

Full members: 12 (Aubin, Claudio, Domingo, Duret, Fourier, Georges, Jens, Jones, Marline, Robinson, Roman, Walter)

Against Walter motion: 8

Full members: 1 (Adair)  
Fraternal members: 6 (Atwood, Celso, Galois, Johnson, Pepe, Thérèse)  
Consultative members: 1 (Julio)

Statement by Jones: I can vote for both motions because Pierre Frank's letter does not constitute private correspondence in any meaningful sense of the term, being written following an open letter of the Weiss's constituting a political intervention into the SWP, and Pierre Frank's letter agrees on sweeping characterisations such as that the SWP is propelled towards American imperialism. I voted for the motion to publish it as I consider that no one will interpret such a letter despite Pierre Frank's intention as a private personal

letter and it is irresponsible to make such a characterisation in such a letter.

Statement by Pierre Frank: Comrades Murry and Myra Weiss, to whom I wrote, were members of the leadership of the SWP even before the war and remained so until the 1960s. Comrade Myra Tanner Weiss was twice the vice-presidential candidate for the SWP. These comrades left the SWP not for political reasons but for reasons of serious ill health. They have never belonged to any group hostile to the SWP. Their letter shows their concern that the SWP avoid what they consider a serious error of orientation on the Portuguese revolution. I wrote to them in order to rectify their information on the MFA and the Portuguese CP. I vote against the publication of my letter not in order to hide its content but because the SWP leadership, to whom I sent a copy of the letter, published it without first seeking my authorization.

Statement by Celso: I voted against Walter's motion because by defining the letter of Pierre Frank to Murry and Myra Weiss as "private correspondence" such a "norm" cannot be supported.

Motion by Celso: to submit to the IIDB the appendix to Jack Barnes report to the SWP convention containing the correspondence with the OCRFI for the information of the membership of the FI.

Motion by Walter: The United Secretariat notes that the English language IIDB has published an exchange of correspondence around the issue of relations with the OCRFI annexed to comrade Jack Barnes report to the August 1975 convention of the SWP.

The USec further notes that while comrade Barnes report was regularly submitted to the international discussion at the October 1975 USec meeting as an oral report to be reproduced in an IIDB, the publication of these annexes was never proposed and therefore represents an irregular procedure. This is all the more regrettable as it involves a matter--the problem of relations with the OCRFI on which unilateral initiatives of comrades sympathetic to the minority have already unnecessarily increased tensions inside the movement.

In order to clearly demonstrate to the minority that the practice of unilateral decisions and accomplished facts is not only inadmissible but also counterproductive for its own purposes, the USec therefore rejects the proposal to include the exchange of correspondence around the OCRFI issue in the IIDB and calls upon all sections and sympathizing sections to strictly adhere to that decision.

For Walter motion: 10

Full members: 10 (Aubin, Domingo, Duret, Fourier, Georges, Jens, Marline, Robinson, Roman, Walter)

Against Walter motion: 9

Full members: 2 (Adair, Jones)  
Fraternal members: 6 (Atwood, Celso, Galois, Johnson, Pepe, Thérèse)  
Consultative members: 1 (Julio)

Abstentions: 1

Full members: 1 (Claudio)

For Celso motion: 9

Full members: 2 (Adair, Jones)  
Fraternal members: 6 (Atwood, Celso, Galois, Johnson, Pepe, Thérèse)  
Consultative members: 1 (Julio)

Against Celso motion: 10

Full members: 10 (Aubin, Domingo, Duret, Fourier, Georges, Jens, Marline, Robinson, Roman, Walter)

Abstentions: 1

Full members: 1 (Claudio)

Statement by Celso: The suppression of material that members of the Fourth International are entitled to read in order to "teach the minority" a lesson tells much about the IMT's views on the norms of democratic centralism.

Agreed: That the LCR will publicly correct two errors which appeared in the pamphlet they published on the discussion on Portugal: (1) that the selection of articles by Foley and Hansen was made without consultation with them. (2) that the title "Military Dictatorship vs. Bourgeois Democracy" is not their title and does not reflect their point of view.

Motion: To publish a pamphlet in French containing the Foley-Hansen-Novack article and the reply to it. To submit the reply to Intercontinental Press.

Carried.

Dates set for the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned: 7:10 p.m.

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December 16, 1975

Dear Ernest,

As you know from the discussions at the November meeting of the United Secretariat, we are deeply concerned about the character of the projected meeting of the International Executive Committee that was decided upon by a majority vote. Members and observers on the United Secretariat who support the Leninist Trotskyist Faction discussed this problem after the last meeting. We want to explain our opinion concerning the IEC, and urge the comrades of the International Majority Tendency to reconsider their decision.

The United Secretariat does not have the right to call a meeting of the International Executive Committee and at the same time arbitrarily deny some IEC members the right to attend that meeting. The United Secretariat is a body subordinate to the IEC, and accountable to the IEC. It cannot exclude members of the IEC from a meeting of the body to which they have been duly elected by a world congress.

This would be comparable to the political bureau of a section or sympathizing organization calling a meeting of their central committee with the proviso that only some of the members would be permitted to attend and that those would be selected by the political bureau. No organization adhering to the Fourth International would tolerate such a usurpation of authority by its political bureau.

Several leaders of the IMT have stated their opinion that the last world congress elected too large an IEC. This may be true, and the next world congress may elect a smaller one. But in the meanwhile, we are bound by a world congress decision that remains in effect until the next world congress.

When the idea of holding a restricted meeting of the IEC was first broached by you last summer, we agreed that the financial problems of the sections and sympathizing organizations of the international made it imperative to consider the possibility of organizing a gathering that would be smaller than the last IEC meeting. However, it appeared self-evident to us that the IEC meeting could not be reduced in size by the United Secretariat instructing certain comrades that they would not be permitted to attend. The only way attendance could be limited would be by strictly limiting the character of the agenda and the organizational authority of the meeting. There seemed to be agreement on this at the time, at least implicitly, since we were in initial agreement on a limited two-point agenda: 1. an initial discussion and balance sheet on Portugal in order to prepare written material for the opening of the internal discussion; and 2. convocation of the world congress. With such an agenda, some comrades

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might have voluntarily decided that it was not necessary for them to attend the gathering since they would be able to make their views known through the IIDB, and the problem of reducing the size of the IEC meeting would have taken care of itself.

The agenda now proposed by the IMT for the February 1976 gathering, which includes several highly debatable political and organizational points, is such that every member of the IEC will undoubtedly feel obligated to make the utmost effort to attend. Consequently the United Secretariat becomes obligated to find the resources to make this possible.

This holds all the more in light of the character of the organizational motions adopted by the IMT at recent meetings of the United Secretariat and the sharp tensions that were generated by these moves.

Under the circumstances, we believe that the only responsible decision is the one we proposed at the November United Secretariat meeting: to call a meeting of all full, alternate and consultative members of the IEC who are able to attend; to immediately begin a fund drive to raise the necessary resources; to set early September as the outside date for the convocation of this IEC.

We hope you will consider this problem carefully and adopt the necessary motions at the next United Secretariat meeting.

Comradely,

/s/

Mary-Alice Waters

COPY

December 12, 1975

To the Political Committee of the LSA/LSO, Canadian section of the F.I.

Dear Comrades,

We have been informed that you have decided to invite to the pre-convention discussion and the Christmas 1975 convention of your organisation the Canadian group affiliated to the so-called "O.C.R.F.I."

We don't know whether that information is adequate and whether it was taken in full knowledge of the October 1975 USEC decisions. Please let us know as soon as possible whether this is the case or not.

We wish to draw your attention to the fact that at the October 1975 USEC meeting, two motions were adopted in relation with the so-called "O.C.R.F.I.", one of which has the following content:

"That sections, sympathising organizations and organizations in political solidarity with the F.I. should take no initiative in relation with the O.C.R.F.I. or its sections, without prior consultation of and approval by the USEC".

If under these circumstances the Canadian group affiliated to the so-called "O.C.R.F.I." indeed is invited to your convention and (or) pre-convention discussion, without prior consultation of and approval by the USEC, in spite of the above quoted resolution and after your having unambiguously been informed about it, this would mean an open and deliberate defiance of the organisational integrity and structure of the Fourth International, and a clear breach of discipline.

Please let us know your opinion on the matter. We will put the question on the agenda of the December 22-23 USEC meeting, if the information indicated in the first paragraph of this letter shows itself to be correct.

For the USEC/Bureau,

Comradely yours,

Walter.

Copies to: RMG/GMR  
SWP National Office  
Jack  
Alain

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December 18, 1975

United Secretariat  
Brussels, Belgium

Dear Comrades,

As you know, we have been unable to attend the meetings of the United Secretariat in recent months. And we did not receive any record of its meetings until yesterday, when the minutes of the September, October, and November meetings arrived simultaneously, one day after the letter from Comrade Walter. The delay may have been caused by this country's postal strike, which has only now ended. In any case, we were unaware that the United Secretariat had adopted the motion quoted in Walter's December 12 letter. After reading his letter carefully, we believe that it can only be based on a misunderstanding of the facts of the matter.

Our invitation to members of the Groupe Socialiste des Travailleurs du Québec [GSTQ] has nothing to do with relations on an international level between the United Secretariat and the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International [OCRFI]. Nor does it involve relations between the Canadian section and the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste, the French affiliate of the OCRFI. We have been dealing with the GSTZ as a political organization within Canada. Often we find that we are working in the same areas as the GSTQ -- in the student movement, or in the unions, for example -- and that its members show interest in our activities. It is not a question of collaboration with another international current, but rather of a concrete opening for party building within Canada, a question of national tactics.

This opening has increased significance because of the GSTQ's weight as a political organization in Québec. It has a size and influence roughly comparable to that of the Groupe Marxiste Revolutionnaire and to the Québec forces of the Canadian section -- the two organizations of the Fourth International in Québec. In addition, the GSTQ has members in leadership positions in two major Québec unions, and it has broader influence in the organized labor movement.

To be sure we have many political differences with the GSTQ but detailing them is not to the point in this letter. More relevant is the fact that in the recent period, the GSTQ has collaborated with us on an increasing range of projects where areas of political agreement exist. This has made common work between us fruitful in a number of instances. To cite a few examples:

--The September 22 protest against the murder of eight members of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores in Argentina, signed by political groups and labor leaders in Québec. Signatories of the protest included leaders of the GMR, LSO, and GSTQ. (Although the signature of the GSTQ was

omitted in the text published in the English edition of the October 9 Inprecor, it was included in the French edition.) The editors of Inprecor considered the initiative to be exemplary, stating: "We urge other comrades around the world to follow this example of the Québécois comrades. . . ." It should be added that the collaboration of the GSTQ was indispensable in securing the signatures of the labor leaders.

--Our work with the GSTQ in winning support for a strike of Montreal public transit workers, a strike in which GSTQ union members played a leading role.

--The GSTQ's role in securing labor endorsements for a struggle against the rise in transit fares (a struggle in which the comrades of the GMR also participated).

--Opposing repression in Spain following the assassination of opponents of Francoist tyranny. In this case, once again, the protests carried the signatures of the GMR, LSO, and GSTQ among others.

--Collaboration in the labor movement in opposing supporters of the bourgeois Parti Québécois and promoting proposals for independent labor political action.

--We have also had a good experience with a few members of the GSTQ who live in English Canada.

We have kept the GMR informed of our initiative towards the GSTQ and have sought to work jointly with them in bringing the GSTQ closer to the Fourth International. We also pressed the GSTQ to invite the GMR to its coming convention.

While the development of common work in some areas has not eliminated other differences we have with the GSTQ, it has helped in Québec to cut across the slander that the Trotskyists are a group of warring sects, more concerned with fighting each other than with promoting the class struggle.

The participation of the GSTQ in some common activities has reinforced the positive image of Trotskyism for the radical public. In addition, practical cooperation has produced important concrete gains.

Our intent is to push forward this process. We want the GSTQ members to get to know us better and we seek more exchanges with their leaders and with their membership. The goal is to win them to membership in the Canadian section of the Fourth International. We believe that this is possible and that a positive beginning in this direction has been made.

We have invited a broad range of our contacts to attend our December convention. Our policy is to make available copies of our preconvention bulletins to all those invited to the convention.

Clearly, then, what is involved is our relation to a political organization inside Canada. Our actions are designed to strengthen the section, increase its effectiveness in the class struggle, and hopefully win new forces in Canada to the Fourth International. In other words it is a question of a tactical orientation of a national section.

Whatever our differences on other matters, all members of the leading bodies of the international have affirmed that these bodies do not attempt to dictate tactics to the national sections.

Since you cite the motion passed at the October Secretariat meeting concerning relations with the OCRFI, and since you include a reference to "the organizational integrity and structure of the Fourth International" we can only conclude that you thought that the invitation of the GSTQ to our convention is in some way connected to the United Secretariat's relation with the OCRFI. We trust that our outline of the facts qualifies that this is not the case.

Your letter arrived as we were making final preparations for our convention. It is not possible for us to participate in the December United Secretariat meeting, to be held four days from now. To insure that you receive this letter in time for the meeting, however, we are transmitting the text to Comrade Stateman, who will present it at the meeting.

Comradely yours,

Art Young  
for the LSA/LSO Political Committee

cc: GMR  
RMG  
Alain  
Jack  
SWP N.O.

REPORT ON THE OCTOBER 4-5, 1975, UNITED SECRETARIAT MEETING

by Galois

Organizational tensions dominated the October United Secretariat meeting. None of the major questions around which tension was the greatest were placed on the agenda prior to the meeting. They all appeared under "Miscellaneous." There were three other questions of interest on the agenda: Portugal, report on the Socialist Workers Party convention, and the situation in Britain.

1. Portugal. The IMT comrades explained that the events since the installation of the sixth provisional government confirms the previous analysis of the IMT. The main leaders of the IMT also stated that the LCI's participation in the FUR was correct. They argued that our aim should be to attempt to win the leadership of the FUR. However, it was incorrect to sign the August 25 agreement, and signing it had made it more difficult to win the leadership of the FUR. Similar formations will occur in other European countries in the future, they asserted, and we must be prepared for this.

The IMT leaders also reported on the internal situation in the LCI. At the LCI conference in early August, four tendencies appeared. The largest of the four, which received slightly over 30 percent of the votes of the delegates, received the absolute majority of the incoming Central Committee. This tendency is the only one of the four that does not support the IMT. The IMT leaders stated that they did not agree with nor accept responsibility for the political positions of the present leadership of the LCI. The two major disagreements they raised concerned what they claimed were illusions of the LCI leadership about the character of the Portuguese CP and a sectarian attitude toward the Portuguese SP. It was further stated that the LCI leadership had reported that the United Secretariat supported their political positions and this was not true. Comrades Aubin and Duret were attending a Central Committee meeting where they would attempt to correct this error.

2. SWP Convention. Alan Jones reported on some of the points in the convention which impressed him: The development of a large cadre, especially the Black cadre; the ability of the SWP to respond to political openings, for example, the desegregation fight and the developments in the NAACP; and an open attitude toward discussion where comrades could speak out and make criticisms and suggestions. He stated that the turn of the SWP was based on the American situation and was neither too soon nor too late. He said he disagreed with some of the positions of the SWP, but that he thought there was an atmosphere where you could have a discussion among revolutionists.

3. The situation in Britain. Jones reported on this and the preparations for the coming IMG national conference. At the September National Committee meeting of the IMG the differences between tendencies A and B became sharper. That NC meeting requested that the United Secretariat assist in preparing two documents for the IMG conference: one on the political situation in Britain and one on organizational norms.

The members of the Tendency at the Secretariat meeting opposed this procedure. Adair explained that a similar procedure was adopted in 1973 and did not help to lessen the divisions. The debate shifted to how to interpret the document and the document was used in the tendency struggle inside the IMG. He explained that the elaboration of the organizational norms of the IMG and its political perspectives are the tasks of the IMG leadership. The members of the LTF at the meeting voted against the proposed procedure of the United Secretariat drafting the key documents for the IMG convention.

The three items under Miscellaneous around which organizational tensions were heightened were: 1) the discussions between the United Secretariat and the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International, 2) the dates for the next meeting of the International Executive Committee and 3) Intercontinental Press. Since none of these items had been included in the agenda sent to the United Secretariat members prior to the meeting, we proposed that they be postponed until the next meeting. The correct leadership procedure is to inform all members of what will be discussed and what proposals are being considered.

1. IEC meeting. The IMT proposed that the next IEC meeting be held in February 1976. For financial reasons it would not be possible to hold so large a gathering as the 1975 IEC, and therefore some formula for limiting the size would have to be proposed. We proposed delaying the IEC for several months. The IMT rejected this saying that it was necessary to adopt a position on Portugal and to call the next world congress and therefore could not be delayed.

The IMT leaders said that the formal decision would not be made until the November Secretariat but wanted a letter to go to the sections stating the most probable date was February and to begin planning accordingly. They made it clear that they had decided on a February date.

2. The discussions between the US and the OCRFI. The IMT presented the motion which you received in the November 1, 1975 Steering Committee mailing. LTF members spoke against the motion for two reasons. First it criticised the SWP for its invitation to the OCRFI to attend the open sessions of the SWP convention, after the United Secretariat had refused to express an opinion on this question at its July meeting. Secondly the motion was an expression of weakness, stating that the mere fact of having discussions with the OCRFI threatened to create or deepen divisions inside the Fourth International.

However, the concrete proposal that the relationships with the OCRFI be handled through the United Secretariat after discussion and approval, rather than unilaterally, is correct. We therefore attempted, unsuccessfully, to get a common agreement and resolution on a course of action. To do this it would have been necessary to eliminate the motivation and criticism of the SWP contained in the first paragraph of the IMT motion. This they refused to do, so no common motion was adopted.

3. Intercontinental Press. The IMT presented the motion which was sent out in the November 1, 1975 LTF Steering Committee mailing. They stated that the motion had to be adopted to explain to people that they considered the situation with IP intolerable and were going to discuss at the next meeting how to correct it. Thus the decision that IP is not being edited responsibly was taken without discussion and without even informing the editor that this question would be on the agenda. They made clear that the discussion at the November meeting was not to be, is there something wrong with the editing of IP, but rather how will the editing of IP be changed.

We proposed that Intercontinental Press be placed on the agenda of the next meeting and that the editor be informed of this. The IMT rejected this proposal and adopted their motion.

The most disturbing aspect to these discussions was the character of the discussion itself. On each question the IMT had clearly had a prior discussion and decided what it wanted to do. There was no serious discussion at the meeting itself. They had decided on an organizational confrontation on each question.

We considered each worthy of serious discussion, and that the members of the Secretariat should have been informed that they were to be discussed and what proposals there were.

An example of the procedure followed occurred at the close of the meeting. With a part of the discussion on the OCRFI and all of the discussion on IP remaining, a leader of the IMT proposed that a time limit of twenty minutes be adopted for the rest of the meeting because people had to leave. An LTF member proposed that if that were true, then we should place the remaining items on the agenda of the next meeting and adjourn now so that we could have a thorough discussion of the two questions. The IMT limited the meeting and discussion to twenty minutes.

November 12, 1975