DOCUMENTS 1

THE LEFT OPPOSITION IN THE LRCI

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INTRODUCTION

In September 1995 the core of Workers Power (New Zealand) and all the Latin American members of the LRCI broke with the LRCI leadership. The New Zealand's Proletarian Faction resigned and the Latin American comrades decided that they can no longer recognise the authority of a leadership that broke the statutes and principles of the League.

In 1989 we participated in the foundation of the LRCI, whose name was proposed by one of us. At that time the LRCI had a relatively healthy and democratic internal regime and a revolutionary defencist position of the semi-colonies and degenerated workers states when they had conflicts with imperialism. Now all of them is gone. The LRCI from Dave Hughes times is very different from the actual one.

When NATO made its worst military attack in history, the LRCI decided that they could not defend the Bosnian Serbia despite the fact that they characterised it as a workers state. The International Secretariat (IS) decided that they would not defend any kind of Haitian military resistance against US invasion. The IS said that they can abandon revolutionary defencism inside a workers state against when they were threatened by internal or external social counter-revolution.

In every Leninist organisation the leadership had to fulfil the statutes, the programme and the congress documents. Nevertheless, inside the LRCI the International Secretariat (IS) constantly walked over them.

In August 1991 the IS wrote a statement on the Russian coup that was in contradiction with our international programme. According to the "Trotzkyist Manifesto" (TM) in a Degenerated workers state like in every unions we had to fight to overthrow their bureaucracies but we always considers the bourgeoisie as the main enemy. That is why we could not make any kind of united fronts with the capitalists against the Stalinists.

In August 91 the IS decided to change our programmatic line and they call for the defence of all the non-fascist openly bourgeois parties in the USSR and even they proposed to them to create a united front against the Communist Party and coup d'etat. When we received that statement we were the first section to translate it but at the same time we wrote a critique. We said that we were against the Yanayev-Pugo putsch because they wanted to attack the unions and workers freedom, but at the same time we can't make a block with world's capitalist social counter-revolution.

In the Trotzkyist Manifesto we said that in a Degenerated workers state we have to fight for a workers and socialist democracy. If Stalinist dictatorship is a terrible obstacle, capitalist democracy is even worst. That is why we should always have to be for democratic freedoms and right to the workers movements but we had to be against the creation of bourgeois parliaments which could be used by imperialism to overthrow post-capitalist property relations. In August 91, the IS decided to call for a block with the bourgeois parties for the defence of the restorationist parliament.

Four months later the LRCI had its Second World Congress. The US fraternal group (the RTL, now WV) was bureaucratically excluded two weeks before the congress. More than 40% of the delegates protested against that manoeuvre. The congress couldn't approve any of the public documents: Theses on party building, theses on world situation and theses on Latin America. The IS tried to impose a more centralist and less democratic statutes and they were defeated.

The Latin American delegates were around one quarter of the congress and they were the main opposition to the IS. After the congress the IS tried to continue pushing the LRCI towards a more right wing and bureaucratic direction. For that they need to defeat the centre of the opposition: the Latin American members.

Few weeks after the congress the IS decided to make a radical departure from our programmatical line on the national question. We always defended the Dave Hughes line that in the Degenerated Workers states: "the right to self-determination was subordinated to the defence needs of the fledgling workers' state". In January 93 the IS decided that this was wrong and they said that they will defend the right of every national or ethnic group to secede from a workers state even if they are led by capitalist pro-imperialist forces. At the same time they forbidden the membership to have any discussion with any member or sympathiser of the RTL (US).

That should be the constant pattern. Constantly the IS were trying to adopt new revisionist positions and to defend themselves with administrative manoeuvres.

Since 1992, the LRCI was polarised between the comrades from Latin America and the IS. In mid 1992 the IS, after receiving a lot of our pressure, decided to admit the New Zealand fraternal group as a section. Since then there was constantly a political block between the 4 Latin American delegates to the IEC and the New Zealand delegate.

The Latin American and New Zealand IEC members fought against the revisionist, right wing and bureaucratic growing IS tendencies. We fought against the popular front line in Algeria and in the brown-red demonstration behind Great Serbian Monarchists in Vienna. We opposed the Latin American theses and action programme because they were defeatist and passive and because they ignored the most important demands in that continent

(like the defence of Cuba, the battle against privatisations, etc.). We criticised the Theses of party building that had a receipt of building passive propaganda societies without making a priority intervention in the working class. We rejected the IS new position in favour of bourgeois parliaments and constituent assemblies in the workers states. We had a big fight against the positions that try to revise Trotsky on the character of the Degenerated Workers state. We constantly defended a democratic centralist regime against the conception of a bureaucratic sect led by a British clique that rule the international as a party inside the party and as a colonial commonwealth.

We are starting to re-reprint a selection of the DOCUMENTS that we wrote in the fight against the bureaucratic and right wing turn of the LRCI leadership. In this first volume, we are publishing:

* **Call to discuss the possibility of a Left Opposition in the LRCI.** A document unanimously adopted in a joint conference of the Peruvian Section (PS) and Bolivian Section (BS) in December 92.
* **A Criticism of the IS resolution on Algeria. Freedom to the fascists? Democratic United Front?** Adopted by Poder Obrero Peru (POP) in March 92.
* **The AST and the debate about the United Front tactic with Serbian Nationalists.** Wrote by c. J. in September 92.
* **Balance Sheet of one year's discussions since the "Call for a Left Opposition".** IS majority November/December 1993. This was the first and only reply that the IS made against the "Left Opposition" declaration.
* **One Year On**. Reply by the IS minority.
* **The differences on the National Question**
* **Observations about the IS' International Perspectives.** Both documents were wrote by the IS minority.
* **Observations on the last IEC**. Joint statement of the Latin American and New Zealand members of the IEC in January 1994.

We always put political arguments. The IS method was always to try to deviate the political discussion. They constantly apply for the not-politically based loyalty of the membership towards the leadership and its zigzags.

When we wanted to create a tendency they call us "factionalists" and they wrote to us and said please don't make them. When we produced joint statements we were called an "unprincipled block". When we wrote our disagreements we were call "Abernites". When we declare our tendency we were denied our right and all of us were sanctioned and put under direct threat of expulsion. Now the LRCI forbid the membership to talk with us and they are avoiding our right to appeal to their conferences or to go to their last WP public meeting. They said that we "walked without a fight". Instead of a healthy political open debate they constantly wrote that we are "disloyal", "cowards", "traitors", "rats" and other kind of Stalinists accusations. We will show with these volumes of Documents that we wrote hundreds of pages of polemics against them.

We apologised for the bad English of our materials. We constantly had to translate or re-translate the IS materials into Spanish and at the same time we had to be responsable for the elaboration of our own documents into English. We hope than the English-speaking audience could understand our limitations.

There were several protagonists in the polemic. Despite that we broke with the LRCI leadership we don't want to create any single problem to their members and we respect the names that they used in the debate. With the aim to clarify who are the different persons in the debate we have to say this: Comrades Mauro, Pedro, Johnson and Remigio were the Latin American IEC members. Leo was the delegate from New Zealand. Comrades Frankel and Lynch were the leaders of the IS that always push the LRCI towards the most revisionist policies. Comrades Victor, Boris and Mirko were AST and GAM IEC members and comrades Bodine and Sparkes were leaders of WP that some times tried to be in the middle between the IS right wing positions and the left opposition.

Call to discuss the possibility of a Left Opposition in the LRCI

A little after the Second World War new phenomena radically changed the world which the FI were unable to understand, as a result of which the FI entered into a period of confusion and degeneration. The events that followed the imposition of bourgeois regimes in the degenerate workers' states, the end of bi-polarity, the triumph of imperialism and the offensive of "demo-liberalism" has put to the test all those who claim to be marxist. We are in the middle of a situation full of new phenomenon and which require us to have complete clarity in order to avoid falling into confusion and deformation.

We live in one of the poorest and most isolated corners on the planet and our material resources and information—and thus our theoretical level—are limited. Nevertheless, we cannot let this get in the way of making it seen that we view with great concern that our leadership is responding to these changes by adopting positions distinct from the classics and from our *Trotskyist Manifesto*. (TM) We feel proud to have sown the seeds of the LRCI in the middle of a world so different to Europe. We are serving in the middle of the worst reactionary attacks against our class, during a harsh repression and tremendous materials difficulties. We have always listened to the advice and criticisms of our international leadership and we recognise our debt of gratitude to the IS for much of what we have learned from them and for the varied forms of support that has been presented to us. We hope that now the comrades of the IS, of the IEC and of the European and new Zealand sections listen to us and take into account our criticisms.

Our concerns are the following

1. Our TM repeats Trotsky's position that inside the degenerate(d) workers' states we only fight for proletarian democracy, that we are opposed to the return of bourgeois parliamentarism and that we are not for the freedom of bourgeois parties in the USSR. However, came to raise the demand for the freedom of the bourgeois parties in the USSR. This was timely and quickly questioned by the PO scarcely it knew the resolution of the IS concerning the coup of August 1991. Still more, our IS came demanding the creation of an anti-Stalinist united front with the bourgeois parties inside the degenerate workers states. If it's good for tactical reasons to not agree with repression against capitalist parties, it is another thing to fight for these to have freedoms to undermine the workers' states and worse still that we demand of them to make a united front.

   Comrade Lynch instead of calling on the masses not to bring down the Lenin statues and other symbols of the world proletariat and direct their hatred at the bureaucracies buildings or the imperialist embassies and companies, argued that it is possible to participate in the anti-communist crowds that toppled the statues of Lenin amid religious, chauvinist or pro-imperialist harangues.

2. Recently, comrade Frankel has written some theses on the national question in which he openly questions all the conceptions of Marx and Engels on the national question and and repeats the Bakunist arguments of the revisionist Rosdolsky. For comrade Frankel it is necessary to be against the division that Marx and Engels made between ahistoric reactionary nations and

revolutionary historic ones. But this conception was as central in the revolutionary epoch of capitalism as is today, in the epoch of imperialist decadence, the division of the world between oppressed and oppressor nations. To revise this is to question historical materialism and Marx's conception of revolution. For Lenin just as much as for Trotsky they always stood by this conception and were opposed to unconditional national self-determination. This questioning of one of the pillars of the strategy of Marx has as its aim the support of the mass nationalist movements that are fighting to destroy the planned economies in order to give birth to new semi-colonial bourgeois micro-states.

If it's good to defend national self-determination unconditionally in the face of imperialism our policy changes when we consider this question in the post-capitalist states. There that which has to come first is whether it helps the political revolution or not and if it consolidates or not the proletariat and its property relations. If it's good we can raise the demand for independent workers' republics this does not mean that we make an independent united front with the bourgeois governments that have come to power in Moldavia, Georgia, the Baltics and other republics for repressing national minorities, for destroying the workers' states and for creating new semi-colonial capitalists. We decline to fight alongside the Dalai Lam against the Chinese Stalinists. If it is good to be in favour of an independent or autonomous socialist Tibet as part of an international soviet federation, when Mao's troops enter Tibet we must have been on their side against the clerical-patriarchs of the Delai Lama.

We do not agree with calling on imperialism to support or recognise the formation in East Europe or the ex-USSR of new independent republics under bourgeois, anti-communist and chauvinist regimes.

3. Lenin, Trotsky and the TM have only raised the demand for the creation of workers united fronts and anti-imperialist united fronts.. Now appears the raising of the possibility of making united fronts with bourgeois and pro-imperialist parties. In the degenerated workers' states the IS has thrown out the line that it is feasible to make united fronts with reactionaries, and monarchists against Stalinism.

   In the case of Algeria the IS initially produced a document in which a united front was proposed with the FIS (a bloc of clerical ultra-reactionaries with fascists) and a democratic united front with a pro-imperialist bourgeois party (FFS). We are not for freeing the fascists from prison and even less to make a united front with them. We are opposed to a united front that only fights for demi-bourgeois demands and with pro-imperialist parties, since this is a popular front.

4. We agree with the demand for a sovereign constituent assembly. It seems to us an error to convert it into a panacea. In the case of Algeria we agree with the IS that this demand was necessary but we questioned it in only raising an exclusively demo-bourgeois programme, without class demands. We do not agree with

urging a boycott if there is no pre-insurrectional situation. The optimum thing to do was to seek workers candidates and a workers party, demands that were not in the IS resolution.

In the case of Peru POP was originally against playing the reactionaries game which called for a new neo-liberal constitution and an assembly that would draw it up. For this POP raised the demand, with the backing of the LRCI, to be found in the TM for the abolition of the presidency of the republic and for a single chamber assembly. Only when a turn to a reactionary constituent assembly prevailed did we demand that if it was seeking to modify the magna carta, it must be done in a constituent assembly.

For this IEC the IS has sent to us recently a new project in which it is suggested that inside the workers' states we are the champions in the fight for a constituent assembly, which is a form of bourgeois parliamentarianism. In the degenerate(d) workers states we only struggle for soviet democracy. We oppose the return to parliamentary institutions. We are for councils of workers and the oppressed where all the delegates are elected and recallable in assemblies fundamentally based in places of work, where the working class has more votes and hegemony and where the bourgeoisie cannot participate. We do not want to play imperialism's game that wants a new constituent assembly that liquidates the workers' state. Constituent assemblies and other parliaments are elected on the basis of universal suffrage and equality of all the classes, where the workers have the same vote and where they appear undifferentiated alongside other classes and where the bourgeois and its parties are able to participate.

5. Our IS presented a document on Latin America (LA) that revised the positions upon which we based our Andean groups. The IS has a defeatist outlook on the class struggle. The document does not study the great strikes, the mobilisations of the millions that brought Collor down, the "caracazo", etc. It support s the view that in Bolivia there has been a historic or strategic defeat. We believe that in Bolivia we have suffered a severe defeat but not one that is comparable to that which destroyed the German labour movement in 1933 or the one in East Germany that forced upon us a change of strategy (from the fight for political revolution to the fight for social revolution). The comrades of the IS have characterised the 1980s, which have seen important strike waves, as a decade of defeats. In sectarian manner they consider that if the bloody military dictatorship of Haiti is replaced by a popular front government it would be not a bi-product of the rise of the masses, but a severe defeat.

While he does not speak of the pre-revolutionary situation in Brazil, comrade Lynch tells us that in Peru since April there has been a counter-revolutionary situation. The reactionary offensive situation in Peru is very different from post-Allende Chile or post-Hitler Germany. Despite such a defeatist characterisation comrade Lynch raises as a demand for Peru the struggle for 'all power to the soviets' (when they do not exist).

6. In the 32 pages of the Thesis on LA and the programme of action there is not raised there key and indispensable demands in our preaching. While POP and POB are raising as central demands the fight against all privatisation and for the reopening of public companies under workers control, repudiate the external debt and attack the rich, these documents completely ignore these demands. While in the programme of action we do not find the demand for the expropriation of all the bourgeoisie it is proposed that we expropriate without compensation the small transport owners.

It does not call for the active and unconditional defence of Cuba. Worse, it formulates pessimistic perspectives to the effect that it is inevitable that in Cuba the bourgeoisie will come to power. For Latin American revolutionaries is indispensable to prevent imperialism from strangling Cuba. We oppose defending the democratic rights of the bourgeoisie or those that disseminate TV Marti. Still less we are for making a united front with them or raising a demand for a constituent assembly. We are for defending Cuba demanding the formation of workers councils and the passing of all power to them and giving an impulse to the world revolution.

7. In the last IEC there occurred a big debate over the construction of the party. The majority of the IS felt that it was necessary to concentrate on petit-bourgeois intellectuals and the centrists. Faced with these positions various comrades of the IEC emphasised the need to root and centre ourselves in the working class and stood back from many of the theses of the IS. We think that the IS comrades have a vision of party building very limited to the experience of discussion in small centrist groups of intellectuals, very common in the western European imperialist democracies.

8. Inside the IS there are many comrades who have elements of an authoritarian outlook with respect to internal democracy. We questioned the form in which we broke with the RTT (with whom we have disagreements and differentiate ourselves from their methods) only two weeks from the Congress (when there should be the broadest democracy) and vetoed the possibility of comrades of the LRCI being able to discuss with the RTT. This last part was rejected by the last IEC. We questioned the method of comrade Lynch who constantly tries to censure Andean comrades that differ with him and his proposal the remove the support of the Andean sections at the point when they were suffering form the effects heavy repressive reactionary offensive. We questioned the proposal to circumvent the statutes and avoid Mauro being an official member of the IEC.

9. We believe there has to be changes in the structure of the LRCI. We are for the mechanisms of the Communist International that held annual congresses and that had a resident IEC which contained the best elements of all the sections.

At the moment we have an IEC that, including full and alternate members, has a quarter of the members of the League and is bigger than that of the Third or Fourth Internationals, and whose delegates are not able to be recalled for three

years, that does not permit of a good participation of all the sections, and in which the comrades of one of our most promising sections and which has begun work in another corner of the world (WPNZ/A) does not have a vote. The IS, composed almost entirely of comrades from one section, has too much power to the point that they maintain that they have the authority to revise the TM and impose a line distinct from that of the Congress.

For all these reasons we believe that it is necessary to move towards an extraordinary Congress that lasts not less than a week and that resolves the points in dispute. The Second Congress did not adopt any resolution on the world political situation. Neither did it adopt the theses on party building or on Latin America. Still less did it resolve the discussion on the slogan on the Fourth International or the problem of the united front with Yeltsin. The Second Congress only adopted a balance sheet and organisational perspectives and amendments to the statutes. The IS, despite having lost various of its proposals, has stayed basically the same. The Congress was inconclusive and it is the IS which has been finishing and imposing a series of positions.

For the second Congress the IS proposed that the first priority must be Latin America. However, the form in which it this episodè was finished and the methods and positions that the IS has been coming up with, have contributed (together with our own weaknesses and mistakes and the difficulties of the repression and the consolidation of the bloody dictatorship of Fujimori) to the fact that this goal has not been reached. Inside the Andean sections there is a unanimous unease and discontent with our IS.

We have reached the conclusion that it is necessary to give political battle for the reorientation of the LRCI and to avoid keeping on imposing positions that manage to revise our TM. We call on comrades of the other European and New Zealand sections to discuss with us the possibility of forming a Left Opposition, a tendency that defends the Trotskyist Manifesto We implore our comrades of the IS to respect our statutory right, that they allow us to discuss with all comrades of the LRCI, that no sanction or intervention is taken against us and they develop the debate with the highest respect possible.

Aranales, December 1992

A criticism of the IS resolution on Algeria

FREEDOM TO THE FACISTS? DEMOCRATIC UNITED FRONT?

On 14 February our IS agreed an extensive resolution on Algeria's coup. In this document there are several positions that could open a dangerous route for our International. We Trotskyists have always demanded of the workers or anti-imperialist parties that they break with the world's bosses. Now, our IS is calling to form a united front for democracy with a bourgeois pro-IMF party, as is the FFS. Instead of being the most decisive in the struggle to smash the clerical-fascists, our IS is calling for their full freedom and the release of their prisoners, even more, it is putting forward a united front against repression in which they could participate. Instead of putting forward a program of transitional and class slogans our IS limited itself to raise a pure parliamentary-democratic one. We should try to reverse this dangerous path. We are calling on our IS comrades to rectify their position.

Just recently a military coup took place in Algeria. After nearly three uninterrupted decades in power, the former nationalist left guerrillas of the FNL are turning to the right and the IMF. In the economic sphere this has been expressed in several economic packages and privatisations. These measures has been opposed by popular resistance and confronted with repression and some murders.

To give themselves a popular mandate and to isolate the workers' movement, the FNL approached the reactionary muslim clergy. The most fundamentalist and leading sectors of the clergy have adopted positions and demanded more concessions to reactionary religious rule. On this basis the FIS was created. This party is financed by the Saudi monarchy, the most reactionary regime on the planet in which a despotic governing royal feudal family still rules, which forbids any party and even the rights of other religions (such as the Christians) to have their own churches or to celebrate Christmas; it considers women as semi-citizens (they cannot drive, they have to wear veil at all times, they can be sold, they are the property of the husband or the family etc), it has legalised polygamy and it allowed the selling of slaves and obliges all its citizens to obey the rules of the Koran etc. The FIS is calling for the destruction of "occidental" democracy and substitute it with a theocratic society. Like their Saudi mecenas, it demands the proscription of all parties and trade unions which are not based on the Koran and it calls for repression of the Berber minority (a nationality older than the Arabs who have less repressive customs in relation to women). The FIS constantly attack women that are not wearing repressive clothes, it demands that women should wear the veil and that the one third of women workers should abandon their jobs and return to domestic tasks at home. The FIS actively opposed the general strike of March called by the biggest federation of trade unions (UGTA) and it operated as strike breakers. The social base of the FIS is the middle class and the lumpen-proletariat.

The FIS is a xenophobic, obscurantist and reactionary party which is looking forward to an authoritarian dictatorship based in the reactionary mobilisations of the lumpen-proletariat and middle class masses against socialism and democracy. Nazi anti-semitism is substituted with a fanatical hatred against the "infidels". The declaration of the IS said that the FIS calls for the smashing of the "Franco-masonic plot" and that they are demanding "to destroy two third of the Kabila population (Berber territories) for Islamicising its people".

This is a clerical-islamic and semi-colonial version of something that in other latitudes meant nazism. Our IS tries to distinguish different wings that there are in the FIS. They point out two wings, a "moderate" one and a "clerical-fascist one with a mass base, led by Ali-Belhadj Abdlekader Moghni, known as the 'fundamentalists' ".

The FLN has been obliged to give way to a regime of restricted parliamentary freedom. It tries to derail the popular discontent within the capitalist multi-party system. Because of the discrediting of the left the FIS became the principal opposition force. In the latest general elections the FIS won almost the half of the valid votes and a bigger number of seats. The rising danger of this fascist or fascistic force is the main enemy that has to be confronted by the proletariat. The Algerian workers have to learn the lessons of the Spanish civil war. Fascism will not be defeated on the basis of a democratic program or by making a front with the democratic bourgeoisie. Parliamentary democracy does not provide food to the starving masses.

In a situation of acute misery and crisis the petit-bourgeoisie can have some inclinations to prefer a strong hand that establishes order and can guarantee, even with very reactionary means, stability, progress and jobs. The chaotic, showing-off bourgeois democracy that does not provide food, could in the end be repudiated by the wider masses (there is a strong tendency to this way in today's Algeria). To overcome a fascist temptation, it is necessary to mobilise the masses under a very radical program, we have to show to the petit-bourgeoisie that the only dictatorship that could bring progress is that of the proletariat.

The slogans that bring a SOCIAL REVOLUTION have a decisive importance. In front of the acute growth of unemployment in Algeria, the question is to fight for: Unemployed unions, Jobs or pay,

unemployment benefit equal to a family budget and the sliding scale of hours and work, and for a minimum indexed vital wage, to raise the banner of the repudiation of the external debt and break with the IMF (the economic packages are so the government can pay the $15,000 millions dollars of debt). To stop any privatisation and to fight for the expropriation of all the bourgeoisie under workers control, to occupy the land, plots and mansions of the bourgeoisie for giving land to cultivate and houses to live in to the poor masses, etc. Also we should energetically defend the rights of women, and non-arab minorities non-sunnitas, and all democratic freedoms.

The slogan for a CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY is the correct one, but it has to be NECESSARILY linked to the formation of militias and workers' and poor people councils.

To confront the clerical-facist threat, the FLN has made more concessions to Islam and to get near of the imperialist democracies. The FSS, a bourgeois split from the FLN is the third electoral force, and only tries to democratise the political regime and i is in favour of a closer integration to the private market economy promulgated by the IMF. The UGTA is the biggest trade union federation led by the trade union bureaucracy link ed to the FLN; but due to the pressure of the rank and file it has been obliged to call limited actions of struggles against the measures of the IMF. Within the bureaucracy and Stalinism, forces have looked for military coup that could stop the FIS.

In this situation, it is essential to make a strong demarcation from these currents and to make fundamentaly a call to the UGTA and other worker, peasant and nationally oppressed organizations to build a CLASS AND ANTI-IMPERIALIST UNITED FRONT to defeat fascism through an aggressive mobilisation of the masses and a program of social revolution. We cannot reject help from the democratic bourgeois sections, but it is essential not to build blocks with them, and never under programmes that do not put in question their class privileges.

Nevertheless, our IS has agreed an extensive resolution with a different line. In the four pages of their document THERE IS NOT ONE OF THE SLOGANS THAT WE ARE RAISING HERE WITH CAPITAL LETTTERS. It is not calling for a fight for the sliding scale of wages and working hours, to break with the IMF, to repudiate the external debt, to give land to the poor peasants, to defend state enterprises under workers' control, nationalization without compensation of the bourgeoisie, etc. Instead of raising a class program, our IS only agitates for pure bourgeois-democratic slogans. Instead of fighting for a united workers' and anti-imperialist front, our IS calls for a fight for a parliamentary bourgeois democratic front.

In all the document we do not find any slogan in favour of building a workers' and peasant councils and militias. These are the only weapons able to smash fascism and capitalism. The document correctly raise the slogan of the constituent assembly, but if we are only to be content with that, and we do not try to use that demand for opening the way to soviets, the only thing that we are doing is to tail the democratic bourgeoisie and its project for strangling the mass mobilisation. In its declaration says:

"We are going to fight for a United Front of all the forces committed to a genuine democratic assembly, full democratic rights for the political parties, freedom of the press, democratic control of the media, right to strike and to demonstrate, freedom for women to participate in all these struggles without being repressed, etc. This front which could possibly be FORMED WITH THE FFS, and other parties should actively seek to expose the non-democratic policies of the FNL and the FIS which have issued joint declarations for a second electoral round. This position is not going to rule out the fact that is possible to make specific and limited UNITED FRONTS with all the forces against a military repression . . . "

We have reproduced an extensive quotation to show several important mistakes.

The IS puts forward a united front for a "genuine democratic assembly'. We Bolsheviks only fight for workers' or anti-imperialist united fronts. We call on all the parties based in the workers' movement or in the anti-imperialist struggle to mobilise the masses for its social demands, and to break with the bourgeoisie or imperialism, and to open the way for the formation of soviets and militias. The concept of a united democratic front does not have any precedents within Marxism.

In this so called "united democratic front" the main force should be the FFS, a force that has been characterised by our IS as a "bourgeois democratic formation" which "is fully behind the economic privatisation reforms of the Chadli government". It is obvious that it is impossible to make a united front with a bourgeois force. More than that, a Marxist should call on the workers' organizations to break with that party in the same way that in Latin America we have to call to break with the Velasquistas, movimientistas or Peronistas. The FFS is a privatising and pro-imperialist party and as a result it would be incorrect to demand of it nationalization of the imperialist companies or the renunciation of the external debt. The only united front possible with such a bourgeois democratic formation would be under a totally bourgeois democratic programme which does not so much as question imperialism. The platform of the democratic United Front put forward by the IS is adjusted to this framework.

A front which limits itself to ask only for a genuine democratic parliament (believing that one could exist), that only puts forward measures to reform the neo-colonial capitalism, that excludes any demands against imperialism or the bourgeoisie, that does not point towards soviets and militias, and that tries to make a bloc with the bourgeois FFS, is a popular frontist bloc of class collaboration.

It has been suggested that we constitute a joint propaganda bloc with bourgeois democratic parties in order to denounce the two main parties and to create a genuine democratic pole.

Both the bourgeois FFS and Stalinism are not in favour of a "genuine democracy", but simply want to make sure they obtain the biggest freedoms within the anti-democratic dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Trotskyists should constantly repudiate any attempt to constitute a third democratic force against the FIS and the FLN and reject any popular front in which the opposition to the government and the fascistic opposition is limited to a programme that does not try to change semi-colonial capitalism.

The IS makes a clear distinction between this "democratic united front" with bourgeois democratic parties and other types of repressive united fronts in which the FIS and the FLN could have a place. Instead of opposing any platform with fascism and to trying to smash it, the document is calling on us to fight for all freedoms for the FIS and the "release of all its prisoners".

"We are against the illegalisation of all the parties INCLUDING THE FIS and for the release of all prisoners (...)". The IS does not reach the conclusion that the FIS is fascist party. Nevertheless, in the same document, it maintains that the FIS is a bloc between the extreme reactionary right wing and the openly fascist sectors. Since when does a Marxist fight for the freedom of a fascist party? Can we agree, for example, with the sector led by Ali Belhadj that the IS itself characterised as "clerical fascist" and give them full freedom to smash leftists, trade unionists, women and non-arabs, and so that their leaders can then walk off free from jail? Did the German Trotskyists fight to release Hitler when he was in prison? Did the Bolivian Trotskyists fight for the freedom of the Unzaga Falange when it is was conspiring against the workers' movement and the Bolivian revolution or when they orchestrated coups against Paz, Siles or Torres?

Our IS is going even further than that; they are telling us not only about the right for the fascists to enjoy full freedom and to release all their prisoners, but even to make "a specific and limited united front with all the forces that are against the military repression". If tomorrow the European fascists attack immigrant workers or leftist militants and the police came and arrested some of them, it would be criminal if a party would ask the effected people to oppose such arrests and make a common cause with the attacking fascists against the repression.

We are not in favour of demanding of the State that they should disarm all the armed groups or to replace the proletariat in its job of smashing fascism. We say that the workers' and popular movement itself, armed can directly smash fascism. Nevertheless, we cannot say that the State should release the detained fascists, and we can never make a common united front with them.

In the IS document we find the idea that we should oppose the coup. But what could be done when it happened? The FIS built barricades and developed struggles. The IS allows the possibility for making "united fronts" against the repression with the FIS. Did we have to stay in the barricades with the FIS in a united front against the coup makers and demand the release of all their prisoners?

We believe NO. During the coup we should had called for INDEPENDENCE AND CLASS OPPOSITION not only against the coup makers, but also against the FIS. Never could we be in the same trench with the clerical-fascists. We should have supported all kinds of resistance and action against the coup makers and the fascists. In front of the workers and non-arabs—who could had some sympathy for the coup because it could stop the FIS—we would have said that the coup, instead of stopping the FIS and protect it from the opposition, that the coup would be the big enemy of the workers, and it could inevitably bring an agreement between the coup makers and the fundamentalists. That is because the way to stop the FIS and the repression it is to deepen the mobilisation of the masses. This should be done via the general strike and the formation of soviets and militias (something that is absent in the declaration of the IS).

In the extensive document of the IS, there is a very dangerous line. We did not find in all the text the concept of the POLITICAL CLASS INDEPENDENCE and neither a class program. The thesis to adheres strictly to a bourgeois-democratic program, rejects any transitional and class slogans and also the soviets and militias, poses the idea of constituting a democratic united front with bourgeois parties which are in favour of privatisations and under programs that do not question imperialism, and holds to a thesis which calls for the freedom for the fascists and even the possibility of making a united front with them against state repression. All these are elements which are evidence of an adaptation to bourgeois democracy and we should pull it up by its roots.

Document agreed by the Secretariat of POP.

March 92

THE AST AND THE DEBATE ABOUT THE UNITED FRONT TACTIC TOWARDS SERBIAN NATIONALISTS

1.- Today we received the IS minutes of the 1st of september in which it is printed the IS resolution on "Ast's UF work against nationalist war..." Since the end of July we didn't receive untill now any other IS material or any IIB. We didn't receive any of the documents of the differents positions inside the Ast. We didn't have any document of any other group that criticise the Ast. With this deficiences we will try to make some observations. We don't have all the elements that could lead us to raise a clear position. What we want to put is some standpoints and some questions that we need to be answer.

The debate in the Ast is very serious and, as the IS recognise, it divides our most dinamic section. The question in debate is the UF tactic, an old source of differences that we have inside the LRCI and that constantly go to the surface in different crucial moments (Irak war and anti-invasion tactics, the Yanayev and the Yeltsin coups d'etat, Argelia, etc.). It is important to try to adopt a clear understanding of the UF tactic in all the LRCI.

The Ast is a very important section for us. We receive a lot of help of them and we learn many things from them. We hope that our austrian cc. try to understand that we make our observations in the most comradely and loyal way.

2.- The debate is centered in relation to the UF that the Ast made with the Milatovic's "Serb National Rebirth" bourgeoise reactionary force that is linked with the monarchist and restaurationist Draskovic's Serbian Renewal Movement. The serb nationalist as the main force and the Ast as the only small partner organize together a common demostration that "was attended by 1,500 people". Most probably the Ast's members and supporters where less than 5% or 3% of that number. In that demostration was an active "presence of about 50 or 70 Cetnik-supporters". The serbian fascists where probably between 2 or 3 times bigger than the Ast supporters. In the middle of the demonstration one Ast speecher where phisically attacked by the serbian nationalist and was defended by the austrian police. The Ast's allieds, the Milatovic's forces where accomplices. They "instead of defending freedom of criticism, handed the microphone over to a Cetnik speaker and gave him a propaganda forum".

The demonstration raise great serb chauvinist symbols and the pictures of the king and serb reactionaries. Some days before that demonstration we have in the middle of the IEC an slight exposition in which c. Sedov show to us how the stalinists made common demonstrations with great russian chauvinists and all the IEC share the position that it is impossible to make any common action with such forces. Our IS have to recognize that this demonstration was a "defeat" for us and was a "manifestation of bloody Greater Serbian chauvinism with the assistance of our united front 'partner'".

Cdes. Rome and Xeno had heavely criticise this UF as an "oportunist-unprincipled block trought to throught". We didn't read his document and neither the ASt-leadership reply.

3.- The Vuk Draskovic's Serbian Renewal Movement is the main opposition party in Serbia. It is a clear bourgeoise and reactionary force. They demand the restauration of the old monarchy and a radical restauration of capitalism. They are against the actual nationalist was for the same reasons that have the "democratic imperialism": they think that this war weak the capitalist restauration and create to much social tensions in all the region. They want the reconstruction of a capitalist constitutional monarchy in a serb dominated Yugoslavia. This war create obstacle to that war and is used by the serbian stalinist to retain the power.

"Draskovic has surrounded himself with an assortment of nationalist, christian democrats and monarchists, who celebrtaed the return of Crown prince Alexander to Belgrade on June 28 with a mass demonstration which lasted an entire week but failed to secure its main aim, Milosevic's resignation." (Misha Glenny ***Yugoslavia: The revenger's Tragedy***. New York Review, August 13, 1992). Draskovic is so extremely rightist that he broke with his former partner Dragoljub Micunovic (now the second opposition force inside Serbia) because he was republican "whom he denounces as a Social-democrat, bolchevik and liberal..."

The Karageorgevic monarchy (that the Draskovic-Milatovich's nationalists wants to restaure) was a reactionary constitutional kingdom that repress unions and leftists, mantain the oppression of the minor nationalities, protect the landowners, monopolies and imperialist interests and that was linked to anglo-french imperialism. The prince Alexander that wants to be now the new King declared that "now only the Crown could maintain united Yugoslavia". He said that the restauration of a monarchy (like the one that have Britain, Spain, Belgium, Netherlands or some Scandinavian countries) is the only guarantee for a peacefull tyransition from communism to a western neo-liberal capitalist regime. Alexander said that "I am in favour of the imposition of a humanitarian corridor and the protection of the (Sarajevo) airport." He criticise all the nationalists sides inside the Bosnia war as

cruels and that are organizing concentration camps. He want to be the king that conciliate all his sons. He ask for an imperialist support to him with the aim to overthrow the stalinists from Belgrad and to impose him as the new King thjat could lead to a pro-western peace. (Interview in *Il Giornale*. Rome, 17/Aug/1992)

4.- It calls our attention the fact that the only force in Austria that make a united front with the serbian monarchists where the Ast. In the 18/7/92 demonstration didn't want to participate (as we know) any serbian leftist or republican force, any other force from any other nationality inside Yugoslavia (macedonians, albanians, croats, muslims, slovenians, etc.) or any other asutrian force. Any section of the SPO, the KPO, the greens, the autonomists, the mandelites, the "militants", the RKL, the maoists, the turkish and kurdish exiles or any other leftist or austrian group participate in that action.

The Ast organize the demonstration with the aim to protest against any possible imperialist intervention, to try to movilice the yugoslavian refugees and to establish links with them. The aim of the serbian monarchist was different. They organize that demonstration some days after the development of the pro-monarchist mass demonstration campaign that started at the end of June and the beginnings of July with the aim to produce a capitalist coup inside Belgrad that could open the door to the restauration of the Kingdom.

The serbian monarchist accept the Ast presence as a minor partner with the aim to have an austrian, left and antimperialist cover. But they wanted to use the Ast as lemon. After they make the lemonade (the demonstration) they try to take away the squueze lemon.

The IS said that "our UF approach towards the Serb Rebirth is a weapon against the centrists of the RKL, the Vorwats and the Soal". But, in fact the RKL is now launching a big offensive against the Ast accussing him and the LRCI of promoving united fronts with restaurationists and that we are going in a rightist direction. The Ast is now divided under that tactic. The IS said that cc. Roma, Xeno and Anton has sectarian positions while Marc have some oportunist adaptations to serbian nationalism.

5.- Our IS said that in the future it will be correct to create a new UF with the same monarchist forces only if we could establish a previous compromise that the Cetniks where previously forbidden to participate in a common demonstration. The Cetniks where a fascistic paramilitary force linked to the some Crown that Milatovich and Draskovic try to restaure. There are different kind of Cetniks. Any monarchist movement in Serbia should have pro-cetnik and cetnik wings.

The best way to exclude them is launching anti-fascist slogans. But there was any of this in the platform. There was any condemn of the etnic-cleaning campaign. In the Platform there was one slogan against foreign intervention but was not any condemn to the serbian attack to Bosnia.

6.- In the platform of the UF with this reactionary monarchists we didn't see any support to the self-determination or any attack against the great serbian chauvinism, the oppression and massacres against albanians, muslims, etc. or against capitalist restauration. The first slogan is "Support all the organizations who fight against nationalist war!". This demand could meen that we support the Prince Alexander and all the agents of imperialism that are against the nationalist war with the aim to impose a restaurationist peace.

7.- We think that is correct to organize common anti-far right demonstrations with the inmigrants. For example, it was correct the action that the Ast co-organize in Salzburg when they movilize austrian leftists with turkish and yugoslavian to stop the speech of a far rightist party inside the university. Probably some of the yugoslavian workers that participate in that action where nationalists. But the fact was that this was an anti-fascist clear action with a proletarian method (no platform for racists).

We think it is incorrect to fight for the freedom of the monarchist in Serbia. We will not defend Prince Alexander if the stalinist kill or put him in prision or kill. We will not make never any UF with the monarchists. We could make some concrete and limited common actions in mass demonstrations with all nationalist that defend workers or oppressed freedoms or Yugoslavia against an imperialist attack.

We could make some common demonstration with all the forces that are against inmigrations controls or against an imperialist invasion. But it is indispensable that we participate with our own contingent with clear class and antinationalist demands and with our own self-defence. We need to prepare for a possible clash or split in the middle of the demonstration.

What it calls our attention is the fact that the Ast was the only group that accompanied the serbian monarchists and under a confuse common platform in which the Ast openly support all the organizations who fight against the nationalist war (in which could be since the UNO to the pro-capitalist and monarchist) and that clearly open the door to great serbian chauvinists and the pro-imperialist strategy of a pecefull solution to the war under a pro-western constitutional capitalist new Kingdom.

It also calls our attention the position of the Ast's PC majority that said that in Serbia "Every UF must be focused against the bureaucratic dictatorship as the main enemy" and "UF with bourgeoise forces could be possible on some questions."

The LRCI traditionally fight against stalino-phobia. We don't think that every UF have to be against the burocratic cast and that we could make a UF with pro-imperialist forces to overthrow a workers degenerated State. In a degenerated Workers State it is excluded any UF with any bourgeoise party. We could not exclude a UF with the stalinists against capitalist restauration, a monarchist coup or an imperialist invasion.■

Johnson, 22/09/92

Balance Sheet of one year's discussions since the "Call for a Left Opposition"

Last December the comrades of PS and BS signed, in whole or in part, a "Call to discuss the possibility of a left opposition in the LRCI". It claimed this was necessitated because "our leadership"—the IS—was "adopting positions distinct from the classics and from our Trotskyist Manifesto". Finding little support in that IEC the comrades decided not to form a tendency or faction. The IEC agreed to elect comrade Johnson to the IS and see if, during his year as a fulltimer on the IS, it would be possible to overcome these objections and reach agreement on the main issues at stake. One year later it is time to draw a balance sheet of these differences. In the last twelve months the IS and IEC have not received any further documents, letters or platforms from the two sections; indeed, the two sections have not re-raised any of the criticisms or repeated them in documents during the last year. Comrade Johnson also put his signature to the platform and it summed up his criticisms of the IS; since that IEC he has raised most if not all of the criticisms contained in this platform. The IS is now in a position to make its views clear on the issues raised one year ago and with the benefit of many discussions on related topics with comrade Johnson. For the IS this balance sheet sums up our political characterisation of the criticisms and, necessarily, a defence of its record. In this document we take the criticisms one by one and give the IS response. It forms an appendix to the IS report and we submit it to the IEC.

The death agony of Stalinism and the response of the IS

The following passages from the platform sum up the criticism of the comrades, including comrade Johnson, concerning the errors of the IS on Stalinism and tactics in the degenerate workers' states.

"Our TM repeats Trotsky's position that inside the degenerate(d) workers' states we only fight for proletarian democracy, that we are opposed to the return of bourgeois parliamentarism and that we are not for the freedom of bourgeois parties in the USSR. However, the IS raised the demand for the freedom of the bourgeois parties in the USSR . . . . Still more, our IS came demanding the creation of an anti-Stalinist united front with the bourgeois parties inside the degenerate workers' states. If it's good for tactical reasons to not agree with repression against capitalist parties, it is another thing to fight for these to have freedoms to undermine the workers' states and worse still that we demand of them to make a united front. . . .

. . . In the degenerated workers' states the IS has thrown out the line that it is feasible to make united fronts with reactionaries, and monarchists against Stalinism . . .

. . . If it's good to defend national self-determination unconditionally in the face of imperialism our policy changes when we consider this question in the post-capitalist states. There that which has to come first is whether it helps the political revolution or not and if it consolidates or not the proletariat and its property relations. If it's good we can raise the demand for independent workers' republics this does not mean that we make an independent united front with the bourgeois governments that have come to power in Moldavia, Georgia, the Baltics and other republics for repressing national minorities, for destroying the workers' states and for creating new semi-colonial capitalists. . .

. . This questioning of one of the pillars of the strategy of Marx (i.e. a-historic peoples) has as its aim the support of the mass nationalist movements that are fighting to destroy the planned economies in order to give birth to new semi-colonial bourgeois micro-states.'

These were not new charges. It was a continuation of the debate that erupted during 1991, the crucial year of the collapse of the Kremlin bureaucracy. This was an event which clearly disoriented the comrades. They had imagined Stalinism to be both stronger and more capable of progressive resistance to imperialism than had the IS or indeed the rest of the League. Comrade Johnson, at the 1990 IECs, had criticised as a dangerous revision the idea that there could be a peaceful overthrow of a degenerated workers' state. This was the first sign of his clinging to a dogmatic interpretation of Trotsky. He was rapidly proved wrong both in theory (Trotsky, had allowed for the possibility of a "cold stroke") and in practice with the absorption of the DDR into imperialist West Germany. He then went on to object to the position the IS took on the hardline putsch in Lithuania. We declared ourselves for the unconditional recognition of the right of Lithuania to secede from the

USSR, and for "strictly limited united front actions (joint demonstrations against nationalist oppression and for the withdrawal of Soviet troops, limited military agreements in the case of armed confrontations with the Kremlin) with the nationalist forces"(IS, 11 April 1990). Comrade Johnson wanted to condition our support for secession. We advocated the defence of planning, the creation of a Lithuanian workers' state, a fight against Sajudis taking power. But we refused to make support for self-determination conditional upon the nationalist influenced Lithuanian workers first declaring their support for our political revolutionary goals. If they already supported these goals then we should hardly need to support separation at all. We proved in debate with comrade Johnson at several IECs that he was wrong theoretically; his conditional self-determination was not the position of Lenin and Trotsky. Moreover, subsequent events have shown that state independence was not *ipso facto* restoration, did not even make restoration more likely in an independent Lithuania than it would have been in the USSR and has even led to the ousting of Sajudis at the last elections and the return to power of the former CP leader. Is Russia less far down the restorationist path? No. In both theory and practice comrade Johnson's fears have proved groundless. Though he never clarified and systematised his ideas it is clear that he believed (still believes) that the national movements within the USSR were part, indeed the main part of imperialism's plan to destroy the workers' state; that its character as a workers' state was closely, if not totally, bound up with the preservation of the USSR intact. In a recent criticism of the theses on the national question in IIB 63 Johnson states "that if some nations are used by imperialists or capitalists to undermine a degenerate workers' state we should not side with them."

Those of us who identified the workers' state fundamentally and essentially with the planned property relations not with the Stalinist regime, including its character as a prison house of peoples, were not a bit surprised that the former survived the collapse of the latter. We saw the destructive force of the national question not as a cunning policy of the imperialists but as part of the powder magazines built into the foundations of the Thermidorian state in 1923/4. As in so many other aspects the imperialists need to do little. The Stalinists' crimes, once recognised collectively by the masses, brought the whole structure down about their ears.

The position the IS took in August 1991 should have been no surprise since it was prepared for in resolutions and articles before in which we declared we would defend the workers' democratic rights, the right to political life, against the hardliners when—as we predicted—they would attempt a coup. At the same time we promised that we would fight alongside the Stalinists if they took action against a restorationist coup. We have just made good that pledge too. The IS, supported and assisted by the overwhelming majority of the IEC, has analysed the restoration process, the political changes and developed tactics and action programmes to deal with each major turn. We have, in line with the overall perspectives of the League (confirmed and endorsed in an IEC resolution in December 1992) deployed revolutionary democratic slogans whenever they were needed to shatter the widespread illusions of the masses in bourgeois democracy.

We have addressed the enormous upsurge of national struggles and aspirations which have been a key feature of the last five years or more. We believe that comrade Johnson, seeing the reactionary use that the restorationists and the imperialists were making of these slogans wanted to turn his back on them, minimise their significance, or place scholastic conditions on their use. The IS, on the other hand, set out to use them in a revolutionary and indeed a transitional way and to integrate them at all time with class demands—never for one minute obscuring the goal of a workers' council state.

Democratic demands in the workers' states

. . . For this IEC the IS has sent to us recently a new project in which it is suggested that inside the workers' states we are the champions in the fight for a constituent assembly, which is a form of bourgeois parliamentarianism. In the degenerate(d) workers states we only struggle for soviet democracy. We oppose the return to parliamentary institutions. We are for councils of workers and the oppressed where all the delegates are elected and recallable in assemblies fundamentally based in places of work, where the working class has more votes and hegemony and where the bourgeoisie cannot participate. We do not want to play imperialism's game that wants a new constituent assembly that liquidates the workers' state. Constituent assemblies and other parliaments are

elected on the basis of universal suffrage and equality of all the classes, where the workers have the same vote and where they appear undifferentiated alongside other classes and where the bourgeois and its parties are able to participate."

If there has been any progress over the last year it is that comrade Johnson at least recognises now the validity of deploying the constituent assembly demand in Russia if nowhere else in the degenerated workers' states. He has renounced his objections in principle to the demand and voted for it twice in resolutions this year on Russia.

We recognised from the outset that there were certain formulations of the TM, as adopted by the first congress which were wrong. We took the initiative in pointing out that these positions were inoperable. Neither the IEC nor the 1991/92 Congress reversed the IS's position or accepted the argument of the Andean comrades that the IS had done something beyond its powers in ignoring the letter of the programme whilst respecting and developing its spirit. Therefore, there can be no sincere talk of the IS trampling on the programme, imposing positions. The IS has acted in concert with the vast majority of the League as represented at its congresses and IECs.

The national question

> *"Recently, comrade Frankel has written some theses on the national question in which he openly questions all the conceptions of Marx and Engels on the national question and repeats the Bakunist arguments of the revisionist Rosdolsky. For comrade Frankel it is necessary to be against the division that Marx and Engels made between a-historic reactionary nations and revolutionary historic ones. But this conception was as central in the revolutionary epoch of capitalism as is today, in the epoch of imperialist decadence; the division of the world between oppressed and oppressor nations. To revise this is to question historical materialism and Marx's conception of revolution. For Lenin just as much as for Trotsky they always stood by this conception and were opposed to unconditional national self-determination."*

Apart from the gross hyperbole that Frankel's draft theses questioned *all* Marx and Engels positions on the National Question it is curious that comrade Johnson wants to make the question of the non-historic peoples the litmus test of orthodoxy. Not so Frankel, who is perfectly happy to allow LRCI members to hold different opinions on this question. Why ? Because it has no direct programmatic significance for us in the last seven years of the 20th century , that is, nearly one century, (1896), after this position was replaced in the Marxist programme by the *general* recognition of the right of oppressed nations to self determination. Presumably, Johnson and the comrades who signed the Platform believe there is a continuity of method between the early Marx and Engels and the method of Trotsky in the DWS on the national question. The need to defend Marx and Engels in 1848 arises out of the desire to champion the cause of *conditional* self-determination on the national question and dress this up as the Marxist position. They wish, although they have been less than frank on this score, to have an analogous category of reactionary national questions to the non-historic peoples but for the imperialist epoch. Of course, there is such a category—oppressor nations—but then these face no national question as such. Comrade Johnson would perhaps like to put the national questions of the degenerate workers' states into the conditional category; to be recognised only on condition they have already accepted the defence of the planned economy. A nation or a nationality for whom the yearning for independence was paramount, such that a mass movement involving the great a majority of the workers was demanding it, ipso facto, does not have at the front of its consciousness the class struggle or the attainment or defence of planned property relations. Hence. to make agreement to the defence of them a condition is to try to leap over the very problem that freely recognising the RNSD is aimed at solving. Comrade Johnson has failed to prove that Trotsky and Lenin ever used such a self-contradictory slogan as a the conditional right to self -determination. Indeed, we have cases (Ukraine, Finland) where decrees signed by Lenin explicitly recognise their unconditional right to secede. All he has been able to come up with are cases—which Frankel and the IS majority themselves pointed to—where the Bolsheviks violated or subordinated the R of S D to help preserve the workers' state. We can not only accept these historic cases but point to one which we ourselves took—Azerbaijan in 1990.

We have always said that we make no universal or absolute promise to recognise the R to SD. What we said is that where we do recognise this right in the interests of breaking the workers from their petit bourgeois or bourgeois nationalist leadership then we will not ruin any possibility of this slogan having the effect it is meant to have (to prove to the proletariat of the oppressed national that the revolutionaries have nothing in common with their oppressors) by attaching one or a whole series of conditions to it.

Of course, the national question has proved a weapon of restoration in breaking up the USSR. What he underestimates is that it is a weapon handed to the forces of reaction by Stalinism. Moreover, it is a double-edged sword for these reactionaries. Comrade Johnson thinks too formally and mechanically on the national question. He sees it purely as a bourgeois democratic question, relegated into the background once you have a achieved a workers' state. But the NQ was the third most important element of the permanent revolution in Russia, behind the agrarian question and the question of the war. It is one of those democratic demands that are not simply 'solved' by the existence of a workers' state. Like women's equality mere legal enactments do not settle the matter. We have to prove by deeds to the workers of the oppressed nations that their rights are safe with the revolutionary proletariat who will defend them against the oppressor bureaucrats unconditionally. As Trotsky recognised over the question of the Ukraine the political revolution must positively address this question not line up behind the Stalinist oppressors or stand in a neutral position, mumbling "we would support you if only you would promise to defend the plan".

Comrade Johnson has a strong tendency to see the national question as overwhelmingly a weapon used by imperialism to subvert the workers' states and possibly of "anti-imperialist" semi-colonies too. We think comrade Johnson has a tendency to see the national question, and the right to secession in particular, as rather a dangerous demand, at best neutral unless it is linked to something unambiguously progressive like the defence of a DWS or a struggle against imperialism. The fact that the comrade repeatedly expressed disquiet over our line on Bosnia illustrates that unless he can be shown a clear anti-imperialist, or anti-restorationist content to a given struggle by an oppressed people he would prefer to stand aside. This is to us a very poor appreciation of Lenin's general support of the right of oppressed peoples' to self-determination and consequently to the progressive character of such a struggle and the duty of Marxists to support it. This position neither obliges us in all circumstances to *advocate* secession, nor does it in other circumstances prevent us from recognising that an in-itself-progressive national struggle can become a tool of reaction and therefore lose the basis of our support. But this does not alter our positive attitude to national liberation struggles one iota.

Comrade Johnson has a related tendency to fetishise the slogan of socialist federation as though it were an alternative to RNSD or supporting justified struggles against national oppression. In reality the federation slogan is in no general contradiction to this as can be seen from the fact that Lenin insisted that the constitution of the Russian Federation guaranteed the right to secede with not a word of conditioning. It is not the IS who is rejecting "our teachers views". Our teachers for this epoch are Lenin and Trotsky. Any attempt to "return to Marx" is a retreat to less developed programmatic positions and will lead in the end to more revisionist conclusions by far than any supposedly embodied in the National Question Theses. We stand unashamedly on our practical record of assessing concretely various national struggles world wide and having taken an unfailingly revolutionary position on them. If we are revisionists where have we taken a wrong position?

The balance of class forces; pessimism or objectivism?

> *"The IS has a defeatist outlook on the class struggle. . . . .The comrades of the IS have characterised the 1980s, which have seen important strike waves, as a decade of defeats (i.e. in LA). "*

It has been a persistent feature of the comrades' political method that they have failed to give a realistic account of the state of the workers' movement and draw up an accurate balance of class forces in their own country and continent. In the BS Fourth Conference document this August on the international situation and Bolivia we see this method

repeated. We are told that the imperialists are running scared of the failure of neo-liberalism, that the USA is weak and getting weaker; meanwhile, the workers' movement is reviving. Worryingly, the comrades do not even publish an agreed IEC position on some of these questions such as the nature of the defeat suffered by the Bolivian workers in the mid 1980s. Comrade Johnson shares this method. It is unscientific and subjectivist. Its deepest roots, we are convinced, are to be found in his neglect, even disparaging of political economy as a science. A concrete study of the tendencies of development in the economy is at the very least a conditioning factor upon the class struggle, illuminates the parameters of concessions that the bosses or their government can afford or the scale of what they may be seeking to take back from the working class. For comrade Johnson the question of consciousness is the beginning and end of the question. For Trotsky, consciousness can only be judged in terms of organisations of the class—the type, strength—and such reflected expressions as electoral support. The discussion on international perspectives revealed recently that comrade Johnson wishes to ignore the evidence of the size of the working class, the shrinkage of trade unions. The only real defeats are held to be those which destroy workers' organisations as in 1933 in Germany; short of this the workers' movement is in relatively good shape and resisting. This is a shallow Kautsky/Pablo type optimism which betrays a fear of recognising defeats and the damage they do and fear of taking the appropriate defensive tactics in the face of such defeats. The best that comrade Johnson has been capable of is using the term "reactionary offensive" to describe such savage poundings that the workers in Peru have recently experienced. This is used, moreover, in counterposition to the idea of defeats. But "reactionary offensive" is a mere description of what the bourgeoisie is doing not a conclusion about the balance of class forces.

Party building and the petit bourgeoisie

"In the last IEC there occurred a big debate over the construction of the party. The majority of the IS felt that it was necessary to concentrate on petit-bourgeois intellectuals and the centrists. Faced with these positions various comrades of the IEC emphasised the need to root and centre ourselves in the working class and stood back from many of the theses of the IS. We think that the IS comrades have a vision of party building very limited to the experience of discussion in small centrist groups of intellectuals, very common in the western European imperialist democracies."

This charge is a series of non-sequiturs peppered with a dash of arrogance. Like Trotsky himself we recognised that in the earliest stage of building an organisation, that is, when you are assembling the comrades who must write and produce a small paper heavily weighted towards propaganda we must win intellectuals. These are people capable of writing articles and capable of Marxist theoretical analysis. If we do not win some then the group will not get beyond this stage. Are such intellectuals necessarily "petit-bourgeois"? No. They could be of bourgeois or working class origin. That is not the main question. They must adopt the class standpoint of the proletariat, engage in the class struggle and have the goal of creating a workers' organisation. Such intellectuals are likely to be found in the schools and the colleges or amongst cadres trained by the workers' movement—centrist or reformist parties or the trade unions. This leads to the tendency of organisations in their earliest stages not to have a predominantly blue collar, unskilled working class composition. Is this a danger? At the stage where the fighting propaganda group ought to step beyond the propaganda circle milieu this will present problems as many of its cadres experience problems of regular mass agitation.

The statement that the IS members are limited to the experience of centrist organisations made up of intellectuals is simply untrue. We believe that every one of the IS members, and the previous IS members, have as extensive an experience of workers' organisations, trade unions membership, participation in long mass strikes—in some cases as strike leaders—as comrade Johnson. The workers' movement does exist in the imperialist countries. It is true that aside from Stefan none of us has experienced a revolutionary situation. On that we are only too ready to defer to the comrades experience. But when it comes to experience of party building we do not feel ourselves to be children. Some of us are nearing the end of our third decade in subjectively revolutionary organisations. We have moreover the experience of both building and helping others to build fighting propaganda

groups which are in the here and now the indispensable road to future revolutionary parties.

During a whole year on the IS no fundamental differences have emerged between Johnson and the IS majority when it came to giving the sections' advice on orientation, although is is true that comrade Johnson has repeatedly stressed remedies for each section that overemphasise the breakthroughs that can be achieved by mass leaflets and agitational weapons. In some cases—ES—where they are appropriate they have long been in the armoury of the section; in some cases (IrS) their absence is not the root of the problem. But these onesided stresses have had to adjust themselves to the reality of the life of propaganda groups in Europe. The IS has in Britain, Ireland, and Germany advised the sections to take very seriously an orientation to the large centrist groups, the SWP and their fraternal groups and the militant/YRE. We have yet to see where comrade Johnson's orientation to the workers rather than to the centrist has any practical results. We believe that his experience in Britain is that you cannot orient to workers in struggle without coming across and having to combat the centrists. Indeed, a large number of the most politically advanced workers, blue as well as white collar, actually are centrists or are influenced by the centrists especially during strikes. Moreover, the Andean comrades should consider two things from their own recent experience. In Paddington the comrades they are recruiting now come precisely from a centrist organisation. At the same time a continuing weakness of Balham is its failure to polemicise against the main centrist organisation in their country. Experience in countries and continents so far apart indicates that a tiny nucleus of revolutionaries cannot turn their back on the centrists, nor can it do without a few capable *proletarian* intellectuals.

The difference the IS has with comrade Johnson on party building lies in the fact that (a) he cannot bring himself to recognise in theory what he has in the past recognised in practice but rather he goes off into flights of workerist polemic against the IS which of no use to anyone (b) he underestimates the importance of building a stable collective leadership cadre. But to present himself as embodying a proletarian orientation and experience and the rest of the IS as having a petty bourgeois intellectualist outlook is nonsense. It would be very dangerous nonsense in an international tendency of fighting propaganda groups if it had any more influence than it now has.

Alienated from democratic centralism

"We believe there has to be changes in the structure of the LRCI. We are for the mechanisms of the Communist International that held annual congresses and that had a resident IEC which contained the best elements of all the sections.

At the moment we have an IEC that, including full and alternate members, has a quarter of the members of the League and is bigger than that of the Third or Fourth Internationals, and whose delegates are not able to be recalled for three years, that does not permit of a good participation of all the sections, and in which the comrades of one of our most promising sections and which has begun work in another corner of the world (WPNZ/A) does not have a vote. The IS, composed almost entirely of comrades from one section, has too much power to the point that they maintain that they have the authority to revise the TM and impose a line distinct from that of the Congress . . .

. . . Inside the IS there are many comrades who have elements of an authoritarian outlook with respect to internal democracy.

. . . We have reached the conclusion that it is necessary to give political battle for the reorientation of the LRCI and to avoid keeping on imposing positions that manage to revise our TM. We call on comrades of the other European and New Zealand sections to discuss with us the possibility of forming a Left Opposition, a tendency that defends the Trotskyist Manifesto. We implore our comrades of the IS to respect our statutory right, that they allow us to discuss with all comrades of the LRCI, that no sanction or intervention is taken against us and they develop the debate with the highest respect possible.

At the December IEC the IS took the initiative in debating this platform pointing out that *if* its basic charges were true; programmatic revisionism, tactical opportunism, a petty-bourgeois orientation, and bureaucratism (including actual violations of the spirit and the letter of democratic centralism); then this necessitated not a tendency but a

factional struggle. A tendency is formed to change particular policies, rather than the leadership whereas a faction attempts to remove a *mis*leadership, dangerous to the organisation, replacing it with a consistently revolutionary one. The *factional* character of the proposed platform was absolutely clear. Firstly, from the charges aimed at individuals (primarily Lynch and Frankel) and the IS as a whole, with the near explicit demand that they must be deprived of the "power" they were misusing.

Had the comrades openly and clearly taken the course of forming a faction no one would have characterised their position as factional. It is only wrong to be factional when you are not willing to fight honestly and clearly to change the leadership. Otherwise you only seek to weaken and discredit it. No Leninist wants an organisation with a weak and discredited leadership. Instead, however, of proposing the dangerously revisionist or bureaucratic comrades' removal by the IEC or if the IEC would not do it by the Congress they demanded a series of structural changes that would "control" the IS or reduce its powers virtually to those of the present AdCom. This has been a consistent theme of comrade Johnson, and be it said, the Bolivian comrades too. The fact is that they know they can provide no alternative leadership available and willing to take over from the present one. The IS is not so arrogant as to imagine that is the only possible leadership for the League. Of course, there are other comrades who could form such a leadership. But they did not and do not accept scarcely a single one of the propositions of comrade Johnson and the proto-tendency. So the next best step is to prevent the existing leadership doing what it was elected to do—lead.

Before the last congress raised the call to "decentralise the LRCI". More recently in defensive response to the characterisation of this position as federalist comrade Johnson calls for "more democracy and less centralism". This seems to be embodied in the call for annual congresses, a small resident IEC. What would such congresses be? Small and less representative and in practice far less well prepared. In fact the comrades who propose this are not so concerned about what would be debated at such a congress but rather that the re-election of the whole IEC would keep the leadership from consolidating. There would be a nearly year long undeclared struggle for leadership or rather against it. These are harmful and impractical proposals. They are made in the name of the tradition of the mass Third International with the resources of huge workers' state behind it; they ignore the rather less frequent congresses of the Fourth International, of propaganda groups dispersed across the globe and with not a few material difficulties.

But this debate will not be decided by sterile a-historical analogies. The proposals of the comrades have been rejected because they would confine a congress to part of the leadership of the sections, except for the smaller sections where the *majority* of members could be congress delegates. It would be very conservative, and even bureaucratic, in its effect, denying younger and less experienced leaders the opportunity to participate in a Congress.

Running as a consistent thread through all the proposals on democratic centralism is the desire to check the authority of leading bodies. The annual congress will check the IEC; a resident IEC will render any IS virtually meaningless: Comrade Johnson also proposed at one IEC that the IS should be banned from making any changes to Congress decisions and that the sections would be free to choose whether the IS decision had contravened a Congress decision and therefore whether to implement it or not.

In an earlier version of his proposals comrade Johnson proposed that no IS should be made up of a majority of members from one section, the IS should only be allowed to meet monthly when such a majority of non-mother section comrades could be present and even to rule out any one from being on the IS who does not speak two languages. Some of these proposals may no longer figure, or they may be resurrected. But they are all permeated by a fear of and alienation from democratic centralism.

The idea that the IS "is entirely comprised of members of one section" has been a constant criticism of comrade Johnson. It is one that the IS has not only recognised but tried to do something practical about. Indeed, even between the first and the second congress whilst we were concentrating on the difficult task of separating it off from the leadership of the British section, we planned for Victor to come onto it. We were only obliged to abandon this plan in order to intervene in what all of us thought was a crucial opportunity in the GDR. In retrospect maybe we were wrong but our motives were internationalist ones

not those of preserving an exclusively British IS. Since the second congress we have had Swerdlow and will have Marc from the AS on it; we proposed that Johnson be on it for a year. We will move further in the direction on non-British members in the future. But what is an indispensable necessity is a regularly and frequently meeting leading body made up of experienced cadre with the power to make and take decisions.

Why do we insist on this? Not because we are power hungry bureaucrats seeking to boss the sections about. The number of orders or instructions we have issued in five years of the LRCI could be counted on one hand and either concern very secondary issues (except the attempt of the BS to defy the decision of the IEC on Abel) or have been taken at the express request of sections. In the overwhelming majority of cases the IS has restricted itself to advising and taken any questions that required a decision seriously affecting a section to the next IEC. This is what we did at the last IEC over the question of the P section ceasing to a formal section.

The would-be Left Oppositionists have raised various charges of bureaucratism or authoritarianism against the IS over the past three years. Not a single one has been supported by an IEC; many have been withdrawn with apologies at the time. The comrades have a record of believing the worst of the IS, even though their suspicions are repeatedly proved to be unjustified. It might be argued that it is the IS's duty is to be above suspicion. If the LRCI wants an IS of saints it will have to look elsewhere. We suggest you make do with sinners but keep a good eye on them.

Conclusion.

The IS majority has been obliged to conclude that Johnson's time on the IS has not the objectives which the great majority of IEC members voted for. In part we think it is because he did not fully share those objectives. The task we set ourselves as an IEC and IS was integration. Since the Platform was unveiled this integration—into the established and developing method of the MRCI and LRCI—has made little progress or seen at best some movement at the margins.

How does the IS explain the political differences with comrade Johnson and the misleadership he has given the Andean sections? We believe the comrade's political evolution towards the method of the MRCI after 1986 and the LRCI after 1989 was seriously disrupted by the collapse of Stalinism after 1990. This, rather than organisational errors and communication breakdowns, let alone some kind of vendetta against Johnson was the root cause of the suspicions, accusations and mistrust which erupted in 1990 and reached a crescendo at the congress in 1991/92. It revealed we believe a deep shock at the sudden collapse of Stalinism. Deep and very understandable dismay at what this would mean for the ant-imperialist and class struggles of the semi-colonial world, for Cuba. It also revealed flaws in Johnson's political make up; a scholastic, mechanical and undialectical method based on analogies, using quotations like scripture, counterposing categories in a wooden and dogmatic manner. These were fatal weaknesses in a period of historic change and convulsions. At bottom his objection to the IS and indeed the visit majority of the IEC is that they analysed and changed positions. They re-elaborated our tactics and our programme in the light of events. Johnson could and can see this as nothing but rampant revisionism. Anyone who knew the proto-MRCI in 1979 to 1984 would recognise exactly the method we used then as the one we use now. Anyone who wanted an "orthodox", dogmatic, organisation should not have joined us but the Spartacists or the Bordigists.

Despite comrade Johnson's repeated and sincere admiration for the Degenerated Revolution we believe that he did not, and does not fully and completely enough appreciate the responsibility of Stalinism itself for the destruction of the workers' states. He is not a Stalinophile in any vulgar sense of the word. No one could accuse him of being soft on the Castroite bureaucracy for example. But he tends to under estimate the damage done to the consciousness of the working class by Stalinism in all its forms. Just as he under estimates the effects of defeats in general seeing recognition of them as merely indicating a lack of revolutionary will, This is an aspect of his methodological subjectivism. What is at stake in discussing these questions is not our possession of or lack of the revolutionary will, to make the revolution, to build soviets, but an objective assessment of the condition which the proletariat finds itself in as a result of defeats and victories, what can be expected of it, and therefore what demands and programmatic re-orientation is needed to address this

situation. Comrade Johnson is a stopped clock with the hands set at five minutes to the revolution.

With such a method he was not at all ready for the revelation of enormous scale of the democratic illusions, the disillusion with a decrepit bureaucratic planned economy and the illusions in an idealised "market economy". Thus, he has resisted systematically or dragged his feet over the deployment of demands which could outflank and expose the undemocratic and anti-working class character of the restorationist regimes and their market reforms. Instead, he has shown a fear of developing demands to separate the nationally oppressed from their restorationist leaders, a fear of utilising the full range of democratic demands first of all within the opposition movements to Stalinist dictatorship and later against the new bourgeois governments. It has to be said that his resistance has weakened as the regimes became more nakedly bonapartist and restoration moved closer.

His fears and doubts about the line of the IS and IEC on these issues reopened old scars of centrist origin gained in Latin America. It revealed itself in an espousal of federalism as a one-sided reaction to the unrestrained bureaucratism and cliquesim of the Lora's of this world, now projected onto the LRCI's leadership. It revealed itself in his criticism of the passive propagandism of the IS a code for the critique of the party building theses with their necessary present emphasis on the tasks in the earliest stages of party building. It is reflected in the solutions he prefers to the problems of the ES and IrS—more and better banners, leaflets and stickers; the paraphernalia of the mass party, a preference for mass agitational weapons as a way of reaching the larger audience first.

The majority of the IS to the extent that comrade Johnson has a coherent overall method different to it has nó confidence in it. This does not mean that we see no virtues in him. He is utterly committed to revolutionary politics. He has a very important experience of revolutionary mass struggle. He has maintained a small nucleus of comrades in very adverse political and economic conditions. He is a good public speaker. He can research and write polemical and historical material. He is clearly has agitational, contact making, literature selling skills.

We do not believe that the IS must be monolithic. We have individually and collectively had differences with other IEC members, on the party building theses for example with comrades Victor, Sparkes, Mirko. We are not saying at all that comrades like these would not be very good IS members and have clear differences with various of the present IS. But we believe these differences would be particular or tendential. We believe that their discussion would be fruitful and not frustrating. We have good reason to belive this because that is how they are on the IEC. But we do not have the same opinion about the discussions with comrade Johnson.

This is not always the case. We have outlined areas and items of fruitful discussions in the IS Report, examples of collaboration. But we cannot in all honesty say that there has been any real movement towards integration which is what the IEC wanted. The expectations which comrade Johnson has of a constant priority for us to discuss fundamental differences means we cannot meet and fulfil our other duties as we feel we should. When we seek to put any limits to this he always accuses us of bureaucratism and violation of his rights.

Had the comrade himself drawn a positive balance sheet or showed any sign of political movement then we might hesitate to say this. But on many occasions he has indicated how negatively he regards the experience. Of course, he thinks it is our fault for not integrating him. That is not how we see things.

What is comrade Johnson rally seeking to do; to wage a permanent oppositional struggle within the leadership, even within its executive and administrative bodies or to re-integrate himself into a collective leadership whose programme and basic method he agrees with. Possibly, he does not know the answer to this, possibly he simply will not tell us. But the rest of the IS as presently constituted are unwilling to go on in this way. Nor do we think the IEC should let things go on like this. We would like an answer from comrade Johnson to the following questions ;

Do you now think all the tendencies you characterised in the platform (bureaucratism, revisionism etc) existed then and still exist today? Have they got better or worse over the past year? What is the scale of their seriousness for the political health of the League?

Given the fact that the IS apart from yourself rejects these criticisms in their totality what do you propose to do about it?

Because we have not had unequivocal and encouraging answers to these questions we are not proposing to the IEC that he should be re-elected onto the IS. This is not a threat. We appreciate the distrust the IS majority aroused at the last IEC when it proposed an IS without comrade Johnson when it had started the IEC with the opposite view. We are now completely sure of our stance. The IEC must elect those comrades it sees fit but the outgoing IS has the right and the duty to make its views known. We do not believe that comrade Johnson can be elected under the same terms or under the same conditions as the IEC did a year ago and confirmed six months ago. Then it was to explore and resolve differences to seek integration. If the IEC gives it a different meaning—the representation of an oppositional 'tendency'—we believe that the preoccupations of an executive committee would be once again skewed into a debate, this time even sharper, that will in any case take place in every section of the League and be resolved by the congress. We believe that the IS in its weekly meetings for the next six months should have other priorities.

Adopted by the International Secretariat

Nov/ Dec 1993

ONE YEAR ON.
(The discussion over the criticism of the LA comrades to the IS)

In December 1992 all the members of POP and POB adopted the "Document adopted by unanimity" in the second joint meeting POP-POB. This document was the continuation of POP's "Our criticisms to our IS" (see in this IIB "An antecedent...") wrote in May 1992 and of our documents presents at the December 91/January 92 congress.
In that document we try to formulate in clear political terms our differences with the IS. The translator put the title "A call for a left opposition". Our aim with that document was to try to clean the discussion from personal accusations and concentrate in the real political differences. Because we do that we had the best IEC since the 2' congress.
After the discussion inside the IEC we realised that there were produced some changes. Initially the IS raised the demand for a United Constituent Assembly in Germany 89 and in China. We said that this will mean that in 1989 we will be in favour of a pan-german united parliament in which the Western capitalist parties will dominate and accelerate the process of capitalist restoration in the east, and that in China we will be in favour of joint elections between China's DWS and capitalist China (Taiwan) with freedoms to the Kuo Min Tang and all the anti-communist forces to help in the distruction of the DWS. This demans were rejected by the IEC and the CA was only accepted in that DWS that had openly capitalist "democratic" parliamentary regimes (Russia, Czechoslovakia) in which the bourgeois parties already rule the country and the masses had great illusions in them. In the latest countries the IS and the majority of the IEC were correct in insist that, because of the new nature of the regime and the consciences of the masses, was possible to raise that kind of bourgeois-democratic demands. We establish the basis for an agreement in that question.
The national question theses were not adopted. The "democratic" UF never appear any more and now the IS change their position. The original LAAP that had all the mistakes that we criticised was not adopted or use as a basis for a new document. The later action program demands was adopted in six month time and it incorporate all our criticisms and suggestions. Comrade Lynch never said any more that he will participate in demonstrations with reactionary forces like the ones that overthrow Lenin's statues. In organizational matters the IS proposition that Mauro should not be a full member of the IEC was abandoned.
As I will show later several of our criticisms served to improve the line if the LRCI. In the discussion we saw that some of the points that we rejected more were withdraw and that the differences could be overcome with a comradely discussion without producing factional "civil wars".
After one year we can see that the differences were reduced. The IS modified their previous positions and also we modified our positions.
In the last IS plenum it was adopted a "Balance sheet of the LO". Despite that I disagree with that document I think it is a good step forwards that the IS majority start to answer in writing form our criticisms. It is a pity that this document was wrote one year later since we adopted our POB-POP document.
The best thing would be if since the beginning of 1993 we could received a written answer and we could develop the discussion in a high profile way. Unfortunately this process was constantly unbalanced with wrong accusations ("factionalist", "disloyal", "slander", etc.) made by some comrades against Johnson. Until now I didn't received any reply to several critic documents that I wrote supporting my standpoints (on the National question, on Historical Materialism and the Indian peoples, on the LA action programme, the state, etc.)
The IS majority adopted its balance sheet without any amendment and containing several false polemics. For example, I was accused to be against our line on Lithuania and, as I prove in other document ("The differences on the national question") it's not the case.
In the last IIB one member from WP wrote a long document on one of the points in debate. He finished his paper with this:
"At least by the last congress and since, there have been a series of very sharp disputes among the international leadership...All of this issues are political, and all of them are vital. The existence of so many strongly contsted disputes, over such a range of issues, indicates the possibility that the existing differences may be elaborated into coherent errors if we fail to resolve it properly...Unsubstantiated accusations that Frankel, or

Johnson, or Lynch, or whoever, are already revising the fundamentals of marxists are demagogic. They have nothing in common with a sharp but scientific debate of the real differences. They serve only to create a poisonous factional atmosphere which would waste the opportunity presented by the next World congress in a tragic re-staring of the last one. If that were to happen, it would lay the ground for the formation of real revisions."
The rank and file membership of the LRCI is demanding to its leadership an honest and political debate without exaggerations and demagogy. I will try to fulfil that claim.
In this document I will not deal with the discussion over organization and party building. The major criticisms that the comrades formulated to me are this:

*** Capitalist restoration.-**
The "Balance sheet" said: *"Comrade Johnson, at the 1990 IEC's, had criticised as a dangerous revision the idea that there could be a peaceful overthrow of a DWS. This was the first sign of his clinging to a dogmatic interpretation of Trotzky. He was rapidly proved wrong both in theory (Trotzky, had allowed for the possibility of a "cold stroke") and in practice with the absorption of the DDR into imperialist West Germany. He then went on to object to the position the IS took on the hardline putsch in Lithuania."*
First, this was not a point raised in the POB/POPs Document. Instead of answer many of our points the comrades try to create new polemics.
Second, this was not my position. As I prove in "The differences on the national question" we didn't have disagreements on Lithunaia and, even more, I criticized the IS for not adopting the same line quickly in Slovenia.
The comrades could not prove that I said it was a *"dangerous revision that it could be a peaceful overthrow in the DWS"*. I didn't deny the possibility that capitalism could take power peacefully in Germany. I said: *"It is possible to get to a capitalist state may be relatively peaceful but when the capitalists impose their economic changes etc. then the resistance will be by civil war methods. Look at Yugoslavia, Rumania" (IIB 29, IEC March 1990)"* My view was influenced in the pre-1989 view of the LRCI and WP. In December 90 a supporter of WP ask for clarification in a letter to the paper: *"WP has insisted many times that no peaceful or gradualist restoration of capitalism was possible in these states -an argument based on Trotzky's view that it is not possible to simply 'wind the film of reformism backwards' towards capitalism in the Soviet workers' state. Events seem to have proven otherwise."*
WP answer that capitalism had been peacefully restored only in east Germany because West Germany was the most powerful European imperialism. But we can't generalise that experience. It is unlikely that a capitalist restoration will happen in the other countries.
The majority of the IEC adopted the position that *"In those countries of Eastern Europe with soviet garrisons (DDR, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland) a peaceful, reformist capitalist restoration is not impossible because their ruling bureaucracies are not independent."*
In the vote I abstain and the rest of the IEC supported that position. After more than 3 years I have to admit that the majority where more near to a correct position than my self. When I am reading the minutes I realised that Lynch criticism to me was correct in that point. He said *"I think that the particular balance of forces mean that it is possible to have a restoration of capitalism without a civil war. But after the restoration of capitalism working class resistance would clearly occur -but it would be dangerous to say in advance that this will assume the levels of a civil war."*
In the discussion, the comrades from the Ast (that are sorround by DWS) had the advantage to see more near what is happening in central Europe. At that time any of the PO cc. had been in that region. In our experience we always saw how the working class ferociously fought against neo-liberal politics. But I was wrong to try to generalise from our experiences.
Several comrades believe that in Germany and eastern Europe have to produce a civil war soon or later. After 4 years it is not happening. Nevertheless we are looking the worst focus of violence in the region since the 1940's. Because of the crisis of leadership the discontent is expressing several times not around class against class, but around nation against nation. In Tadjikistan, ex-Yugoslavia, Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and some regions inside the Russian federation there are bloodiest civil war. This war have in total more than 100,000 dead. In Russia Yeltsin needed 3 coups to consolidate its power and now, after the

elections, the country has tendencies to polarisation between fascistic solutions (Zhrinovsky) and stalinists.
In all this debates, the comrades could remember well, I always said that stalinists will recover in the opposition. Of course it should not be the same.
I was not so integrated with the Eastern European reality. Despite that I recognize my mistake it is also important to show that the IS went in another direction. They were a little beat impressionist and fatalist in relation to Cuba. *Four years ago they predicted that Castro soon will be overthrow by a capitalist regime like in Eastern Europe. In that point the LA comrades, that were more near to the continental reality, were correct* when they insist that the relation between the Cuban CP and the masses was completely different than in Eastern Europe.

National question.-
In deal with this particular in another document (The differences on the national question). Now, I will synthesize the conclusions about it.
Every body agree in the right to self-determination to all oppressed peoples. All of us agree with the national question in the Gorbachev Theses, The death agony and the resolutions on Lithuania, Azerbaijan, Eslovenia, Yugoslavia and Bosnia.
There were 3 differences:
* Debate about historic and non-historic nations. This is something in which c. Frankel and Lynch are not in majority. They don't want to impose its position. We can debate it openly in TI.
* If the secession is the democratic starting point of the permanent revolution in the multi-national semi-colonies. I think it depends and it could also be the starting point of a bloodiest counter-revolution. Cde. Frankel accepted to change his position. There is no more differences about that point.
* The important one is the position of "unconditional self-determination (including right to secede) to ethnic groups and nations even if they want to restore capitalism." The right to self-determination (including secession) could only apply to nations or nationalities. I don't agree that the tens of thousands of ethnic groups (racial, religious or tribal groups) should have that right. In the DWS we put some conditions to support a secession: that they should not repress other nations, and that they should not be a tool of imperialism aggression against a DWS.
In Bosnia the IS accepted my suggestion that they need to correct some of their formulations in their December 92 resolution. They agree to say that we will only support the Muslims to recover their historic lands and not to control or Bosnia against the will of the Bosnian Croats and Serbs, that we should not demand the imperialism to arm the Muslims and that when we support the Bosnian allied we are not supporting the Islamic regimes.
In all the actual problems in which we need to have position on the national question we had unanimity in the IS. The Caucasus question is a very complicated question and the IS adopted in 10 minutes a resolution that I drafted. The fastest resolution to be passed in this IS!

*** Balance sheet of class struggles.-**
The comrades try to accuse me for what POB said in its last conference that happened few months ago. When the POB document arrived I was the first to criticized it. I said in the IS that the critics that c. Stefan and Lynch wrote about that conference were not deep. It was Johnson, and not the c. in charge to the BS, that discovered and criticized the mistakes of POB over anti-semitism, national situation, CA in Russia, ELASPE, etc. I a don't married with anybody and I don't establish cliquish relations with any person or group. I have many points in common with POB cc. but I could also be very critical to them.
The IS majority said that for Johnson *"The only real defeats are held to be those which destroy workers' organizations as in 1933 in Germany."*
This is not truth at all. In the POP/POB Document that they criticized we clearly said that we recognize that we suffer a very strong defeat.
We recognize defeats in Bolivia, Peru and Britain. Non of the LRCI sections experience the terrible conditions that we experience in the Andes after the neo-liberal victories. We know in our skin, and not only in theory, what is a defeat. We know what mean that the working class suffered terrible reductions in their wages and social conditions and, at the same time,

conservative ideas replace former radicalism, that all our members could become unemployeds, to loose ten of our supporters, to experience isolation, to see demoralisation in the left, etc.

The differences between the LA comrades and comrade Lynch is not that the IS recognizes defeats and the LA cc. are so blinds, that for them the only defeats are like when Hitler destroyed the most important workers movement in the world. The differences are in how can we characterise the different KINDS and DEGRESS of defeats.

Around the LA perspectives we have a discussion about the characterisation that Bolivia suffered in 1985-86 an "historic defeat" and that the 1980's was "a decade of defeats" in all the continent.

About the first discussion we explained to c. Lynch when he come to visit us in 1990 that the MRCI wrote a Theses on Bolivia. This document had a very *detailed* analysis of the 1978-86 period in Bolivia. For producing that document we delay at least one year and we had several discussion between POB, J, and the IS. This MRCI's document characterised what happened in Bolivia 1985-86 like this:

Between 1978 and 1980 Bolivia had a revolutionary period that was interrupter by a temporary and unstable victory of a Bonapartist counter-revolution. In 1982 the masses push down the dictatorship and inaugurate a revolutionary period whose climax was march and September 1985. After September the reaction took the counter-offensive an impose a super-shock (In September 85 the government defeat a 5 weeks national general strike and impose 1,400% price increase with wage freezing)

"historical defeat". Between may and August 1986 the Bolivian masses started to produce massive and combative demonstrations and opened a pre-revolutionary situation. In August 86 about 15,000 miners and other workers and students march 200 miles to La Paz. This huge march was supported by an indefinite general strike of two departments and, if it could arrived in La Paz, could create the basis of an insurrection. When this march was defeated the revolutionary period was definitively closed and it was open a new period of democratic counter-revolutionary victories in which the exploiters suffered significative defeats but the working class organization still existed and maintain their capacity to organize massive strikes and demonstrations.

When Stefan was in Bolivia some days before the August march he deny the existence of a pre-revolutionary situation and he said that Trotzky's conception of that was wrong. Few days later we proved in practice to be right and one year later the MRCI by unanimity accepted our resolution.

At that time we had a terrible split with OTI. The OTI was a right wing moving group that said that Bolivia in 1985 entered in a "historic defeat". For that reasons we need to concentrate in pure democratic points and not to raise transitional demands, we have to make democratic united fronts and we have to abandon our work in the mines and privilege our work with intellectuals and in the universities.Now, several leaders of the OTI, like different groups that said that Bolivia suffered an "historic" or "strategic" defeat, have the position that because of that the working class is not any more the vanguard. Because it is an "strategic defeat" we need to change our strategy ("proletarian revolution") and adopt new ones (peasant populism like the GT La Paz, peasant insurrection like EGTK, popular frontism or electoral reformism like the majority of the left, etc.).The term "strategic defeat" don't have precedent in Marx-Lenin-Trotzkyists terminology and its confuse. If we want to emphasise that it was an important defeat that open a new historic period WE AGREE. But the term is always associated in Bolivia with the idea that because the working class has a strategic defeat it is indispensable to adopt a new strategy. That is something absolutely incompatible with POB.

The European comrades have to be sensitive with the history of a section. All the sections were created around political battles. For WP was central to attack the SWP for its position on Ireland. For POB one of its starting points was the fight against the OTI and the reformist characterisation that Bolivia entered in a "historic" defeat.

If you read the document "When comrade Lynch and the LA comrades could work very good together despite the differences" you can see how sympathetic was c. Lynch with our observations about that definition and about the LA and International perspectives. When he wanted to work fraternally with us (and not to transform us in scapegoats) he said about the "historical defeat":

"This was felt to be important otherwise the 'pessimism' of the document could be the next stage of the working class resistance, something that degenerate Trotzkyism fell into."
"On this core I never felt that the differences were that great"
In the question of characterise the 1980's as a "decade of defeats" in LA we proved to the IS that this was wrong and they modified its position. The 1980s was a decade that start with the Nicaraguan revolution, the huge political massive strikes In Brazil, Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, etc., the end of nearly all military dictatorships, the development of strong guerrilla movements in Central America and the Andes and the creation of new working class unions and organizations. After 1978 the small "trotzkyists" groups in Peru, Brazil, Bolivia, Argentine and Mexico became parties well known in their countries and with significative audience in the masses.
In most of the cases the pre-revolutionary or revolutionary situations, because of lack of proletarian leadership, were contested with not-very stable counter-revolutionary' demo-constitutional settlements.
We recognize that in the majority of LA the "informal" sector (unemployeds, street sellers) increase very much, that the percentage of industrial proletariat and peasantry is probably lower, that the left and the nationalist are much more right wing, that the guerrilla movements are in process of being defeat, than privatisation and neo-liberalism destroyed the previous pseudo-welfare state and industrial protectionism and that we are living in a period in which neo-liberal and militarised democracies are in the agenda.
But, at the same time, we can't ignore (like the IS' LA theses made) the other side of the picture. In Chile and Paraguay the workers won several freedoms after the downfail of the dictatorships and now in this countries the unions are much stronger. In Brazil the PT is advancing. In Venezuela the workers parties are advancing (Causa R obtained more than 20% in last elections). In Guyana the "Marxist leninist" took power (see Guía 2).
In LA we don't have a revolutionary or pre-revolutionary situation. We have a situation in which neo-liberal democracies are imposing not stable victories in a framework of working class resistance in which we need to concentrate around defensive demands.

The Balance sheet said that Johnson mistakes over this point has *"to be found in his neglect, even disparaging of political economy as a science. A concrete study of the tendencies of development in the economy is at the very least a conditioning factor upon the class struggle, illuminates the parameters of concessions that the bosses or their government can afford or the scale of what they may be seeking to take back from the working class. For comrade Johnson the question of consciousness is the beginning and end of the question. For Trotsky, consciousness can only be judged in terms of organisations of the class—the type, strength—and such refracted expressions as electoral support."*

We don't deny political economy. The problem is that c. Lynch has the tendency to concentrate every thing in the pure economic aspect of the situation. He diminish the concrete balance sheet of the class struggle. For Trotzky was central to try to understand what is happening inside the workers movement, its consciousness, its fighting methods, etc.

In the July 1992 IEC c. Lynch presented an extremely long theses "Where is Europe going". In all this big document was not develop a balance sheet of what is happening in the working class movement. All was concentrated in economic figures and projections. It's extremely good to analyse the political economy, but we need to see ALL the picture.

Comrade Lynch, our differences is not because we don't see the political economy or the defeats, it is because we try to be not one-sided and see the complete picture.

In 1991 we produced a very long document on LA economy (that until now was not translated) that we use as part of the basis of our position. Because we know a little beat of political economy I can disagree with the position that c. Lynch raised in the "International Perspectives" when he said that in most of the semi-colonies it is a process of de-industrialisation that could finally destroy the working class

In my "Observation on the International perspectives" I said that this position could lead us to abandon any perspective in the majority of the semi-colonies and to adopt the criteria that the socialist revolution will be arrive to this countries from outside or under local non-proletarian leaderships.

If we have capitalism we will always have proletariat. Neo-liberalism don't mean destruction of industries, it means privatisations and a new model of industrialisation based in massive unemployment and small subsidiary workplaces.

When the Bolsheviks took power in Russia the proletariat were less than 10% of the population. In the great majority of the "Thirld world" the proletariat could be the minority but its the class that will lead the revolution.

In the last weeks I was reading several Bourgeois economic projections for the "third world". The majority of them coincide to say that the best places to invest are the semi-colonial countries. Japan and Europe are in recession and the ex-Socialist block is in a chaos. In the "Thirld world" the countries that had neo-liberal changes could offer good possibilities for investments. The figures show that the region of the world that is growing more faster are the east Asian semi-colonies. LA will growth this year 3%. The semi-colonial world will growth as a whole in a higher rate than the imperialist countries.

"The discussion on international perspectives revealed recently that comrade Johnson wishes to ignore the evidence of the size of the working class, the shrinkage of trade unions."

It is not my position. I recognize that numerically the industrial proletariat is shrinking and the white collar and "informal" workers are growing. The level of unionisation change. In UK, according to the Economist 1994 Year Book, it is growing another time. It is possible that the level of unionisation as a general went down in western Europe and the Americas. But, now we are experienced a wave of important strikes in France, Italy, Belgium, etc. WP is talking about a "revival of militancy".

The last WP conference made a self-criticism: *"our assertion that 'today there is less receptive and smaller audience for revolutionary ideas' and "we are faced with an overall decline in the size and confidence of the left' was wrong"*

At the same time that I recognize that we are living in world's situation characterise by counter-revolutionary victories, working class backward movement and the beginning of strategic/historic defeats in the DWS, it is important to say that after 1989 tens of countries that were under strong dictatorships (Black Africa, South east Asia, Eastern Europe) were overthrow or renounced and this open situations in which new working class organization start to develop and make strikes.

"Johnson has been capable of is using the term "reactionary offensive" to describe such savage pounding that the workers in Peru have recently experienced. This is used, moreover, in counterposition to the idea of defeats. But "reactionary offensive" is a mere description of what the bourgeoisie is doing not a conclusion about the balance of class forces.

. In Peru c. Lynch had initially the position that this country after the fuji-coup was under a **counter-revolutionary situation**. He change his position after we said that we need to explain the difference between a situation like in Chile post-1973 in which the working class and its vanguard is smashed, and the situations, like Peru 1992, in which the working class suffer a strong defeat but it remains with their own freedoms, unions and parties. That is why we use the term "situation of reactionary offensive" or "victory of a political "democratic" counter-revolution". With this term we want to indicate that the reaction is having constant victories but that the working class can have different degrees of open resistance (not like in Germany post-33).

*** Democratic demands in the DWS.-**

I don't deny the fact that we need to raise democratic demands in the DWS. At time of the Slovenian referendum when more than 90% of the Slovenian workers were in favour of independence Johnson and Boris were in favour of raising the slogan "Independent Workers Republic". The majority of the IS raised that demand much later.

In the "Degenerated Revolutions" and in the "Death Agony of stalinism" we say that when inside the DWS the bureaucracy organize fake parliaments we should try to launch demands with the aim to open the road to a soviet democracy. We should demand that the MP's should be elected in workplace and could be revocable, that they don't earn more than a skilled worker, etc.

Now we start to have an agreement in which, as c. Frankel wrote, *"we formulate democratic demands with key elements of workers (soviet) democracy which restrict the power of the bourgeoisie to manipulate the CA for its counter-revolutionary purposes".*

In Cuba, as we adopted in the Theses on Fidel Castro (March 1993) we said that we are against freedom for the counter-revolutionary bourgeois parties and that we should block with Castro's CP against them.

THE CRITICS THAT THE IS DIDN'T ANSWER OR THAT THEY NOW ACCEPT.

The comrades said that *"In this document we take the criticisms one by one and give the IS response"*. The truth is that the GREAT MAJORITY of the points that we raise in that platform were not answer and I could think that the IS accept some of our criticisms.

THE UNITED FRONT DEBATE.-

The question of the UF was always a matter of tensions inside our current. We had debates about it in relation to the ex-DDR and later about the coups in Russia, Algeria and Peru. In fact I think that this is a problem that it's not resolved.

United front with capitalists parties in the DWS.-

In the MRCI theses on Poland we had a correct position in relation to the bourgeois parties. We clearly stand against the coup d'etat at the same time that we raise the slogan "No blocks with the church!" and don't defend the KPN against the repression.

In August 1991 the IS correctly called for a general strike to stop the coup d'etat. The IS' position on UF in the coup was objected by several comrades inside WP (the Tendency wrote a paper about that). Sparkes and Johnson wrote a small piece about that point to the congress but we didn't have time to discuss it. The RTL had a confuse position that could mean that they would prefer Yanayev victory. The

When the IS made its resolution on the August coup d'etat, POP was the first section that translated, printed and distributed it. At the same time we sent a fax in which we showed our disagreements in two points. We thought that the situation was revolutionary (and not pre-revolutionary as the first resolution said) and that we should not fight for freedoms for the bourgeois parties and make a united front with them. POP had the same position than the "Theses on Poland". We should be with the workers against the coup d'etat organizing a general strike but without making a front with the Russian KPN's and openly bourgeois forces and without defending their freedoms.

It was a mistake to suggest that the Yanayev's putch was a coup d'etat like the one that commanded Kornilov and that Yeltsin was a sort of Kerensky. Kornilov represented the capitalist/monarchist counter-revolution and a phenomena similar to fascism. Yanayev represented the conservative bureaucracy that wanted to stop the disintegration of the USSR, the radical marketeers and possible social explosions.

In an article in TI 8 it is a polemic against Morenoism. They said about August 1991 that "The only serious Marxist definition is that we are faced with a revolution". The TI reply is that "to describe Yeltsin's seizure of power in this way was CRIMINAL. What had occurred in the aftermath of the failed coup was not a proletarian but a bourgeois political revolution." (p. 52) In fact, Yeltsin represented bourgeois **social counter-revolution.**

In August 1991 we had two coups d'etat; the one lead by the "hard-stalinist" wing of the cabinet and the one lead by Yeltsin. We should be against both coups d'etats. At the beginning we should block with the pro-Yeltsin unions and workers against the Yanayev's coup but without making any united front with the bourgeois parties.

Now we are calling for a vote for the CPRF (the same party that organized the August 1991 coup). We are demanding that they take power and stop restoration. In 1991 we should opposed their coup because it was against the workers freedoms. But, now how can we explain that we prefer Yeltsin than them when the CPRF try to take power in 199? and that we made a united front with all the Gaidars and neo-liberals?

In their "Balance sheet of the Call for the LO "the IS majority said "we promised that we would fight alongside the Stalinists if they took action against a restorationist coup". . In August we have in reality two coup d'etats. Gorbachev was a Bonaparte in between the Yeltsinite Restorationist wing and the Conservative wing. To avoid a victory of the Restorationists and the chaos, the hard wing made a coup that was answer by a another coup d'etat headed by Yeltsin and the most pro-imperialists sectors of the bureaucracy, the army and the KGB. When Yanayev was defeated, Yeltsin imposed his coup and dictatorship. he replaced Gorbachev, dissolved the USSR, persecute the Communist Party, he established for the first time after October 1917 an open capitalist regime, four month later he launched the worst anti-popular economic shock in all the history of Russia and after he accelerate the

destruction of the plan economy,and the monopoly of foreign trade and allow privatisation and huge concession to MNCs.
How can we make a united front with the open bourgeois parties and at the same time we could make another UF with the stalinists against the restorationists? In August 1991 we should be against the coup and made a united front with the Yeltsinite unions at the same time that we should demand that the workers should maintain their class independence and opposition to the bourgeois parties.
We didn't discuss that question in the 2' congress and in any IEC. In Peru, when Lynch POP, c. Lynch tried to modified his position in a progressive way (see "When c. Lynch and the LA comrades could work very good together despite the differences). I think that our position was correct and I will propose a short resolution for the next congress.

Algeria.-
On 14 February the IS adopted a resolution on Algeria. If PO should not criticize it the IS should published a resolution that should damage the LRCI and its profile. I am glad to here c. Frankel when he recognize that POP were 90% correct in his criticisms about Algeria. The methodological mistake that have that resolution is that it didn't raise any class or even antimperialist demand and demand to pro-imperialist bourgeois forces (like the FFS) a "united front of all forces committed to a genuine democratic assembly". A front with pro-imperialist bourgeois forces that don't defend any working class or antimperialist demand and that only want to fight for a bourgeois democratic assembly it could be a popular front. Also the document raised the demand for the legalisation of the FIS and for "United Fronts with all the forces against a military repression". The FIS has strong fascists wings and we are not in favour of fighting for his legalisation and even worst for making a united front with them.
We didn't disdain the democratic demands. But, the opposite we were in favour of raising as key demands the constituent assembly, the democratic freedoms, etc., but at the same time we raised class and antimperialist demands, we called to the workers organizations to launch a fighting class and antimperialist united front and we admitted the possibility to participate in joint demonstration with bourgeois forces in defense of democratic freedoms and the Bereberes.
Now in Algeria the FIS is organizing protest and terrorists attacks against the dictatorship, but one of their main targets are the socialists, leftists, feminists and unionists. We should be in favour of a general strike and a mass insurrection to smash the dictatorship, but we can't make a anti-militar united front with a semi-fascist movement that is killing left activists and that want to destroy the union, women and laic conquests.

Vienna demonstration.-
In the second half of 99 we had another discussion about UF. It is correct to try to organize a massive demonstration with all forces that are against immigration controls. But the famous Vienna joint demonstration between Draskovites (Serbian Royalists) and the Ast was not one like that and was a serious mistake that our enemies tried to take advantage against us. The Draskovites are ferocious anticomunists, pro-UNO and pro-USA, anti-albanians and his programme is for the re-establishment of the Serbian reactionary Kingdom. They supported the Chetniks against Tito in the 1940's and they worked with ultra-nationalists, Chetniks and fascists. They are completely against to give any concession to the Kosovo population. Draskovik was always a great Serbian chauvinist. In the last elections he roared "Sarajevo, Mostar and Pakrac will all be part of Serbia." (The Independent 17-12-93).
The Vienna demonstration was a monarchist, great Serbian and reactionary demonstration in which the Ast was the only Austrian group that participated. The Ast was used by the reactionaries. The platform of that demonstration reflects adaptations to that forces and the central speak in German (as it is printed in Ast) didn't criticized directly Drakovite, his party or his King. This action weaken the Ast, created an internal crisis and produced loses of member(s).

Progresses in the discussion.-
In Algeria the IS withdraw its confused positions. In Peru the IS didn't insisted or asked POP to raise the demand for a pro-CA united front with the bourgeois opposition. The IS and

IEC vindicated openly as principist our position in relation to the Fuji-coup. POP clearly say we are against the closure of parliament and we can make some limited common action with the bourgeois opposition but we call to the workers and poor peasants organizations to break with the capitalists forces and to fight for a workers united front.
In relation to the Vienna demonstration the IS accept several of my criticisms. Different comrades inside the Ast (including comrades like Marianne that generally not always vote with me) said that my criticisms were correct. After that demonstration none of our sections tried to make a united front with bourgeois reactionary forces.
In 1993 we had two coup d'etats in Russia. In both opportunities the IS adopted correct resolutions. In none of them appeared the call for a united front with bourgeois parties. In the Cuban resolution we not only are against any united front with bourgeois forces but also we say that we should support Castro and make a united front with him when he will repress bourgeois counter-revolutionary forces.
In the discussion about UF we are making some progresses. The LRCI is starting to differentiate what are a united front, a common action and a coincidence in the battle. Comrade Frankel openly recognized my contribution in that sense. Several comrades started to put in question the idea that is possible to make democratic UF's or UF's with Hussein or Galtieri.
Inside the IS the comrades that are less open to re-think his conception about UF are cc. Stefan and Lynch. When we discussed the coup d'etat in Venezuela c. Stefan had the position that we should support Carlos Andrés Pérez and made a united front with him. He also said that in the Spanish civil war it was correct to make a united front with the republicans against Franco. In Venezuela when it was produced the last coup d'etats Pérez was the most unpopular president (90% of the population consider him a corrupt that need to be sack) and it should be impossible to fine any sector of the workers or student vanguard that should try to make a united front or even support so pro-IMF and bloodiest regime. We should be against the coup d'etat demanding to the unions and popular organizations to launch an independent action and general strike. In Spain Trotzky openly made a campaign against any united front with the republicans and he demanded to the reformists to break with them.
Comrade Lynch had the position (I don't know if he now change) that it is possible to make united fronts even with Republicans or Democrats in USA. For him a UF could be make with anybody. This position don't understand the importance of the persistent call for unite the class and put it independent in relation to the bosses, and also could lead to opportunist actions.
In the discussion that we have about NZ we could arrived to a better understanding about the UF. The NZ Labour Party is a BWP and for that reason we need to demand him to break with the bourgeoisie, to fight for the working class interests and to fight for be an independent government. But we can't demand to the rest of the opposition to unite with the aim to beat the Conservative NP. We need to call for a WUF between the LP, the unions and probably the NLP (if we consider it as a BWP) with the objective to fight against the bosses agenda. The idea of an anti-NP and oppositionist UF could develop popular-frontist wrong ideas. In the last letter that Johnson and Frankel drafted to the WPNZ (and that Lynch edited expanded and sent) we make a very positive common agreement in the IS and AdCom).

CUBA.-
In the "Call" the LA sections criticized the IS attitude in relation to Cuba. We didn't agree with the 1991 Theses when it said that Castro will not survive or that he will be overthrow, like in Eastern Europe, by bourgeois counter-revolution. For us it was a passive pessimistic attitude. In the LA theses, instead of promoting an action's plan to rescue Cuba, it is said that it will fail. In the extremely long Lynch's LA Action Programme there was not any demand to defend Cuba.
In the Americas one of the centrals demands of the workers movement is the defense of the Cuban revolution conquests against imperialism and the blockade. The absence of that demand, combined with fatalistic predictions and passive answer was one of our main criticisms.
In this year the IS try to assimilate our criticisms. It was produced a long resolution that was translated into Spanish.

BOURGEOIS FORCES IN THE DWS.-

In the DR and the TM we clearly said that we don't support the right of bourgeois parties to be legalise and participate in parliaments and/or governments. We always demand to the stalinists: break with and expropriate the capitalists. We can't say now: recognize the right of the capitalists to promote a bourgeois democratic counter-revolution. In several circumstances when the working class masses are behind pro-Western and pro-market ideas the best way to overcome their illusions in the market we need to raise democratic and transitional demands and condemn an stalinist's attack against them.

In the Cuba's document we said that we are against freedom for counterrevolutionary bourgeois parties. We don't raise freedoms for capitalists parties in Indochina, Korea or Korea. In the last Yeltsin-coup we defend the freedom of the parties against a bonapartist capitalist putch (not against a regime that try to defend the workers state).

LATIN AMERICA.

In the discussion on Brazil we had a better understanding. Initially c. Lynch said that Collor was misplaced because of an action from the ruling class. I explain to him that there were big mass demonstrations. At the beginning the Brazilian capitalists only wanted to change his cabinet, but it was the mass pressure and that they were afraid to be challenge by the masses, the thing that press them to sacrifice Collor. The same happened in Venezuela. At the end the IS accepted that combination.

Also the LAAP realise the importance of the defense of social conditions (and not mainly raise democratic demands) and the fight against privatisation and for defending Cuba.

Until now we didn't resolve our differences about the estimation of class forces in LA. I hope that in the debate over International Perspectives we could resolve that problems.

CONCLUTIONS.-

Despite the difficulties I think that we make progress in this year. It was impossible to resolve all the problems. But we make many advances.

The LA sections feel more integrated. There is a better understanding of the problems. For me it was a very important experience.

In LA we need to learn many thing from the style of WP (the importance of the leading team, the intellectual collective elaboration, the order in the administration, and to see the world more cosmopolitan and less provincial, etc.). As I said I modified some of my positions on Eastern Europe. I also could have better knowledge of the problem of the LRCI and its sections.

I also think that the IS make some small, medium or big modification in their line. In Yugoslavia we change the idea to demand the Muslims to re-take all Bosnia. In Russia the IS demanded the general strike, the formation of workers councils and the political revolution in the coup. We correct the article of WP that didn't raise this demands and that put a confuse slogan (for a democratic constitution). We didn't call for a united front with all the fascists, Rutskoites and all the forces for defending the parliament. We said that we will be against its closure and that we will be in the anti-Yeltsin barricades but without supporting a parliament's government or making a popular front around it.

In South Africa we correct our position on the Workers Party. In the first half of the year I was alone in my disagreements of why we abandoned that demand and later we adopted that demand by unanimity.

The Cuban resolution and the LAAP are good steps. In the National question and the UF there are some positive changes.

Nevertheless I think that they remain some differences. My impression is that around the state debate turn a lot of the problem of how we undertsand the relations between bourgeois democracy and workers states. Despite the fact that I think it is a key issue I didn't have time or space to wrote about it in this time. I suggest to the people that are intested in my observations to read the questions that I raise in a previous IIB and that until now I didn't received any answer.

There is an important obstacle in the relations between the IS and the LA sections. I am convinced that they are to much subjective barrier and some spirit of vendetta that we need to overcome.

We need to try to put all our forces to create a collective trans-continental leadership.

The points that was not answer in the IS majority's "Balance sheet of ... (the) Left Opposition"

In it's "Balance sheet of one year's discussion since the 'Call of the Left opposition'" comrade Lynch, backed by the former IS majority, said that he will answer **all** the criticisms that POP and POB adopted in their Document adopted unanimously in their second joint meeting (December 92).

I want to clarify that nobody in LA or the LRCI wrote a document called " Call to discuss the possibility of a Left Opposition in the LRCI". This title was put by the translator (c. Lynch). The real document was very loyal and sincere. We wanted to have an honest discussion with the IS. It starts: *"We have always listened to the advice and criticisms of our international leadership and we recognise our debt of gratitude to the IS for much of what we have learned from them and for the varied forms of support that has been presented to us. We hope that now the comrades of the IS, of the IEC and of the European and New Zealand sections listen to us an take into account our criticisms."*

The "Balance sheet.." started promising that:

*"In this document we take the criticisms **one by one** and give the IS response"*

In "One year on" and in the "Differences on the national question" I deal with the few points that c.Lynch, backed by the IS majority, answer. Now we want to reproduce all the criticisms that in it's ten pages "Balance sheet.." they didn't answer **at all**. The real thing is that they take into account several of these criticisms, but they don't want to recognise them openly.

The original POP/POB's Document has 7 points.that deal with pure political (and not organizational) points. In their "Balance sheet.." c. Lynch didn't answer at all points 3, 5 and 6 and several paras in points 1, 2 and 4. The LRCI will be favoured if they could could answer these points.

1. Comrade Lynch instead of calling on the masses not to bring down the Lenin statues and other symbols of the world proletariat and direct their hatred at the bureaucracies buildings or the imperialist embassies and companies, argued that it is possible to participate in the anti-communist crowds that toppled the statues of Lenin amid religious, chauvinist or pro-imperialist harangues.

2. We decline to fight alongside the Dalai ~~Lam against~~ the Chinese Stalinists. If it is good to be in favour of an independent or autonomous socialist Tibet as part of an international soviet federation, when Mao's troops enter Tibet we must have been on their side against the clerical-patriarchs of the Delai Lama.

   We do not agree with calling on imperialism to support or recognise the formation in East Europe or the ex-USSR of new independent republics under bourgeois, anti-communist and chauvinist regimes.

3. Lenin, Trotsky and the TM have only raised the demand for the creation of workers united fronts and anti-imperialist united fronts.. Now appears the raising of the possibility of making united fronts with bourgeois and pro-imperialist parties. In the degenerated workers' states the IS has thrown out the line that it is feasible to make united fronts with reactionaries, and monarchists against Stalinism.

   In the case of Algeria the IS initially produced a document in which a united front was proposed with the FIS (a bloc of clerical ultra-reactionaries with fascists) and a democratic united front with a pro-imperialist bourgeois party (FFS). We are not for freeing the fascists from prison and even less to make a united front with them. We are opposed to a united front that only fights for demo-bourgeois demands and with pro-imperialist parties, since this is a popular front.

4. We agree with the demand for a sovereign constituent assembly. It seems to us an error to convert it into a panacea. In the case of Algeria we agree with the IS that this demand was necessary but we questioned it in only raising an exclusively demo-bourgeois programme, without class demands. We do not agree with urging a boycott if there is no pre-insurrectional situation. The optimum thing to do was to seek workers candidates and a workers party, demands that were not in the IS resolution.

   In the case of Peru POP was originally against playing the reactionaries game which called for a new neo-liberal constitution and an assembly that would draw it up. For this POP raised the demand, with the backing of the LRCI, to be found in the TM for the abolition of the presidency of the republic and for a single chamber assembly. Only when a turn to a reactionary constituent assembly prevailed did we demand that if it was seeking to modify the magna carta, it must be done in a constituent assembly.

5. Our IS presented a document on Latin America (LA) that revised the positions upon which we based our Andean groups. The IS has a defeatist outlook on the class struggle. The document does not study the great strikes, the mobilisations of the millions that brought Collor down, the "caracazo", etc. It support s the view that in Bolivia there has been a historic or strategic defeat. We believe that in Bolivia we have suffered a severe defeat but not one that is comparable to that which destroyed the German labour movement in 1933 or the one in East Germany that forced upon us a change of strategy (from the fight for political revolution to the fight for social revolution). The comrades of the IS have characterised the 1980s, which have seen important strike waves, as a decade of defeats. In sectarian manner they consider that if the bloody military dictatorship of Haiti is replaced by a popular front government it would be not a bi-product of the rise of the masses, but a severe defeat.

   While he does not speak of the pre-revolutionary situation in Brazil, comrade Lynch tells us that in Peru since April there has been a counter-revolutionary situation. The reactionary offensive situation in Peru is very different from post-Allende Chile or post-Hitler Germany. Despite such a defeatist characterisation comrade Lynch raises as a demand for Peru the struggle for 'all power to the soviets' (when they do not exist).

6. In the 32 pages of the Thesis on LA and the programme of action there is not raised there key and indispensable demands in our preaching. While POP and POB are raising as central demands the fight against all privatisation and for the reopening of public companies under workers control, repudiate the external debt and attack the rich, these documents completely ignore these demands. While in the programme of action we do not find the demand for the expropriation of all the bourgeoisie it is proposed that we expropriate without compensation the small transport owners.

   It does not call for the active and unconditional defence of Cuba. Worse, it formulates pessimistic perspectives to the effect that it is inevitable that in Cuba the bourgeoisie will come to power. For Latin American revolutionaries is indispensable to prevent imperialism from strangling Cuba. We oppose defending the democratic rights of the bourgeoisie or those that disseminate TV Marti. Still less we are for making a united front with them or raising a demand for a constituent assembly. We are for defending Cuba demanding the formation of workers councils and the passing of all power to them and giving an impulse to the world revolution.

After one year we can see that:

1.- In the IS nobody never call to participate in anti-communist demonstrations and in the Theses on United Front we are not in favour of united fronts with bourgeois parties in the DWS.

2.- In all 1993 the LRCI didn't demand to any imperialist power to recognize and support a bourgeois regime in the "ex-Socialist block".

3.- The new Theses on the United Front openly reject the formation of united fronts with bourgeois parties in the imperialist countries and in the degenerated workers states.

The original line on Algeria was changed after our criticisms.

4.- In January 1993 the IEC rejected the demand for a Constituent Assembly in all Germany 1989 and in China (like the IS originally suggested). That demand will mean that we allow the right for the capitalists to organize to undermine the Workers State. The LA IEC members accepted to modify its original position. Now the LRCI only raise the CA demand in DWS in which there are openly bourgeois regimes and with the addition that we try to introduce sovietic characteristics.

In 1993 WP(B) made two mistakes when it raised the Constituent Assembly demand in South Africa and Russia. WP (May 1993) said that in South Africa we are for a *"sovereign CA to implement full democracy and socialism"*. The CA is a democratic bourgeois institution and can't implement full democracy and socialism, a task that only the proletariat with its councils and militias could only fulfil. In the last Yelstin-coup in Russia WP (October 1993), in an article that correctly explain the character of the conflict,didn't raise the demands for a general strike and a political revolution, and said that we must demand *"a CA with full powers to adopt a new democratic constitution and to pass a programme of emergency measures to deal with the food shortages, economic chaos and inflation."*. POB wrote an article based in this mistake. We don't fight for democratic constitutions because we are not for the democratisation of the bureaucratic system and the bourgeois regime. Our aim is a political revolution and a workers council government. Now in Russia a sovereign CA (an a democratic constitution or emergency plan that it could adopt) will not be controlled by the revolutionary proletariat and will not be based on the destruction of the reactionary state apparatus.WP and the IS accepted Johnson criticisms.

5.- Comrade Lynch never insist any more in his characterisation that Peru is under a "counter-revolutionary situation" and the IS accepted POP's line on that. The position that the 1980's was a decade of defeats in LA and the position on Haiti were changed. In Brazil the IS accepted several points that c. Johnson made and the IS accepted the line that he wrote for Guía 1. The position that Bolivia suffered an "strategic defeat" was not share by the WP's comrade that was half a year living in Bolivia but until now the IS didn't change. We should deal with that at congress.

6.- In the new Latin America Action Programme it was integrated all our criticisms. The original document didn't raise *central* demands against privatisation, for the defense of Cuba, for the cancellation of the external debt, etc. Now, the LA action programme raise this demands as one of the most important ones. It also changed the position for expropriation of the small owners.

Four years ago the IS had the position that very soon Castro will be overthrown by a bourgeois regime like in Eastern Europe. Now, this position was changed. With Johnson in the IS it produced a long Theses on Cuba in which the LRCI clearly said that we are against the freedoms for capitalist parties in Cuba, we are not for a CA in which this parties could participate, that we will make united fronts with Castro against the bourgeois parties and that, despite that we fight for an anti-Castroite political revolution, at this moment, as a tactic, we don;t raise the immediate demand for the overthrow of Fidel.

Appendix- Conclusion.

This document was produced for the last IEC but it was not possible to print and distribute it in the middle of the IEC. The last IEC just finished. It adopted the new Theses on United Front. One of the new IS members criticised this document as based in many concessions to c. Johnson. Every body accepted that this document incorporate new changes in the LRCI and that it accept several of the positions that the Latin American comrades argued for years. On the national question the IEC accepted to maintain the position for unconditional self-determination in the DWS but it accepted our position of rejection of the self-determination to ethnic groups. The IS also changed its position that the fragmentation of multi-national semi-colonies is generally the starting point of the permanent revolution.

In the debate comrade Bodine (WP) said that in the IS c. Johnson could constantly lost one against six but in the IS, the IEC could vote several times for his positions. Comrade Boris (Ast) said that, despite he don't agree with the Latin American comrades, their criticisms has always a positive effect in producing healthy rectifications in the LRCI's line. He also said that the IS majority has a "holy cow" spirit and they don't like to recognise its mistakes.

Instead of accept the positive effects of c. Johnson criticisms the majority of the IS, against the vote of all the non-European sections and the majority of the non-British IEC members, didn't re-elect c. Johnson into the IS. The IS majority should change and try to be more self-critical.

Johnson 27-12-93/ 3-1-94

THE DIFFERENCES ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION.
Johnson.

Capitalist world.-

In their "BALANCE SHEET OF THE LEFT OPPOSITION" (See previous IEC MAILING), comrades Lynch and Frankel said that Johnson was against the LRCI line on Lithuania and that *"he has a tendency to see the national question as overwhelmingly a weapon used by imperialism to subvert the workers' state and possibly of 'antimperialist' semi-colonies too. We think c. Johnson has a tendency to see the national question, and the right to secession in particular, as rather a dangerous demand, at best neutral unless it is linked to something unambiguously progressive like the defense of a DWS or a struggle against imperialism."*

As I will prove later POP and my self supported the line on Lithuania. I don't see the national question *"as overwhelmingly a weapon used by imperialism"*. By the opposite I think that it is extremely important to raise the right of unconditionally national self-determination in the capitalist countries. In any programme that we should write about Latin America, Africa, Iran, Turkey, Middle East, India, South East Asia, Australia/Pacific continent, etc. it should be indispensable to raise that demand.

I don't think at all that the right of secession in particular *"is rather a dangerous demand"*. and I don't demand that it should be *"linked to something unambiguously progressive"*. As leninists we agree with the right to secede (like we agree with the right to divorce) but we generally don't recommend it. If a nation want to secede we will be against any measure that try to stop its democratic decision. In the "Third World" the right to secede against imperialism played and play an important roll. If Scotland, Euskadi, Catalunya or Quebeq try to secede we will say we don't recommend that alternative but, if the great majority of the workers and people of that nations are convinced that they should create an independent state, we will support their right of secession.

My disagreement with c. Frankel's theses was that he wrote that in the case *"of multi-national semi-colonial states it was nearly universally the case that national secession was a positive goal, the bourgeois democratic starting point of the permanent revolution."* (Theses 6.1) In my reply (see page 3 of my Criticism of the National Question in IIB 63) I proved that this is wrong. In Asia and Africa the great majority of the states had between two and 700 nationalities inside them. The disintegration of all of them into pure national states could not have necessarily a progressive content.

The division of Central America, the Caribbean islands states and Great Colombia only debilitated them. The disintegration of Nigeria, South Africa, Liberia, Ethiopia etc. into new micro-bourgeois national states could be the starting point of the counter-revolution.

C. Frankel and c. Johnson agree that we should be the champions of the unconditional right to national self-determination, including the right to secede, in the capitalist countries. We only reject self-determination when it will defend national privileges against other peoples (Israeli Jews, Boers in South Africa). We accept that right even in the imperialist countries.

Now comrade Frankel accepted to me that his original formulation was incorrect. In the "International Political and Economic Perspectives" he wrote the chapter on the National question which I agree completely. The formulation that he wrote in Theses 13.3 shows that c. Frankel and the IS move in a better understanding of the national question:

"In the case of national struggles which actually coincide with struggles against imperialism and its agents and/or struggles against elements of capitalism/pre-capitalist forms of exploitation the national struggle can form the starting point for the strategy of permanent revolution. Other national struggles which amount to claims for political or economic privilege, which attempt to seize or monopolise territories rich in natural resources, perhaps in collusion with the MNCs or an imperialist power are reactionary and have to be opposed."

This formulation is an advance. It deny the fact that *"it was nearly universally the case that national secession was a positive goal, the bourgeois democratic starting point of the permanent revolution."* It recognize that national struggles could be the democratic starting point of the permanent revolution if it is linked with SOCIAL tasks (agrarian, antimperialist, etc.). It also opposed the national movements that try to split semi-colonies and DWS in collusion with an imperialist power.

Nevertheless I think that now the IS went a little beat into the other extreme. We could be obligated to recognize the right to secede to a nation that control important economic resources and whose leaders are agents of MNCs. Everything depends in the international conditions and what is the position of the native working class.

Conclusion.- In this point there is not any programmatic or methodologic disagreement. The differences are overcome.

Now we have to deal to other two disagreements over the national question. One is about the debate on the historical and non-historical nations. The disagreement still exist. Several European and NZ members inside the IEC don't agree with Frankel-Lynch position on that point. Comrades Frankel and Lynch until now they vindicate their position (although they start to have a more critical view of Rosdolsky) but they are not trying any more to impose that position in the LRCI's documents. Until now cde. Frankel didn't answer my criticism about that point. I think it is an important methodological discussion and we could deal OPENLY, as Bodine suggest, in the pages of TI.

The last significative difference on the national question is in relation to the DWS. But, in this point there was not major or programmatic differences inside the IEC until AFTER THE SECOND CONGRESS.

Degenerated Workers States.-

Lithuania.

In the Document it is said that Johnson *"went on to object to the position the IS took on the hardline putch in Lithuania."* This is not true. Johnson never wrote any criticism to that document. Even more, he translated that resolution and wrote an introduction to that (see Bases 1). If you see the minutes of the IEC May 1990 (IIB 30) the resolution on Lithuania was adopted with the vote of the POP's delegate. The Lithuanian resolution was adopted without any vote against and only with two abstentions (Ripley and Gunter). In the debate c. Winter (RTT/ now RTL) wrote an amendment that was amended by Ripley and that was adopted unanimously. It said:

"Our unconditional support means that the nature of the government in power should not be a condition for supporting Lithuania's independence (eg. we support the right of Lithuania to secede from the USSR even if right now the government in power intends to restore capitalism). On the other hand we cannot support the creation of a bourgeois Lithuanian state -a state that comes into being on the ruins of nationalised economy and the destruction of the working class gains that emerged from a workers' state. It is for that reasons that we say that only a workers state in Lithuania will genuinely resolve national oppression. What should trotzkyists say about 11 March declaration? They must tell Lithuanian workers that we support the right to an independent state but are opposed to the independent state that Sajudis want to build, namely a capitalist state. However, we would till defend the right of self-determination whilst fighting against the restoration of capitalism. We would only suspend our defence of self-determination in conditions of war (external or civil) where the legitimate defence of the workers' state of the USSR is threatened by the forces of imperialism and counter-revolution."

In her intervention cde. Ripley said *"If we lose the fight to stop independence leading to capitalism we would still fight with them (the Lithuanian working class) versus the USSR who are stopping them doing it. If we could not win the working class them we would have to fight with them against the USSR".*

Minutes later the POP delegate (Gabriel) said: *"I agree with Ripley's comments; we do not support a war to restore capitalism. We are unconditionally in defence of USSR against capitalist aggression and an attempt to dismember the state."*

Azerbaijan and the death agony of stalinism.

The first two national points after the beginning of the 1989 anti- stalinist mas upheavals was Germany and Azerbaijan.On Germany the IS passed a resolution on 21/11/90 that said:

"Although the division of Germany was a reactionary denial of the right of self-determination ... Communists, therefore, oppose in principle the reunification of the GDR and FRG where that entails the destruction of the post-capitalist property relations of the GDR and the expansion of FRG imperialism." (TI 4. Pg. 28)

We were completely against the lambertists and morenoites when they demanded an unconditional unification of Germany as part of the unconditional right for self-determination. The IS reprinted in 1990 a pamphlet that POP produced with that polemic. The GAM build its east section using that method.

In Azerbaijan the IS adopted a resolution on 28 of January 1990 in which it said:

*"**Revolutionary communists could not have favoured the seizure of power by nationalist chauvinist organizations, whether in Azerbaijan, Armenia or for that matter Georgia. Under theses conditions the intervention of troops and the prevention of such an outcome would have to be supported,** although we would not express any political confidence in the Kremlin or the tactics of the troops."*

*"We are therefore in favour of the presence of the Soviet Army Forces in order to carry out the following tasks: ..**preventing the armed seizure of power by nationalists**; defending the borders of the USSR.."*

"Under the influence of neighbouring Iran, an independent Azerbaijan would be pushed towards creating an Islamic state, a thoroughly reactionary development which all workers, peasants and in particular women must resolutely oppose. Rather than seceding, the nationalities should seek to unite in a struggle against the Stalinist burocracy to turn the USSR into a free federation of republics." (TI 4 Pgs. 34-35)

In March 1990 we had an important IEC in which we adopted unanimously our central Theses "The death agony of stalinism".

In that IEC we had a debate about Azerbaijan in which the great majority of the IEC decided to side with the SAF against the reactionary independentist Azeri nationalist movement. Comrade Benedict, backed by Boris, presented an amendment that said that the LRCI should be against the Soviet Army Forces (SAF) intervention into Azerbaijan. This position reflected stalino-phobic pressures. In the debate comrade Frankel said that in relation to the right of the Azeris to self-determination *"we would have to make such a call conditional on dropping their demands for privileges."* (IIB 29) For the majority position voted 12 IEC members and the minority position only had 2 votes.

As we can see at that time for the IS the right for self-determination was **CONDITIONAL.** If one national movement, even if it is based in a oppressed nation, wants privileges or is reactionary it could be possible that we will side with the Stalinist army against it. One of the reasons that the LRCI gave to support the SAF intervention in Azerbaijan was to *"prevent the armed seizure of power by nationalists"*.

The IEC vote in favour (11 against 3) of the great majority of my long amendment on the national question in the DWS.

In the IEC I proposed another amendment that was supported by other 4 European comrades. It said:

"We refuse to make a united front with the bourgeois national forces that want to break up the Soviet Union and create smaller capitalist states. The USSR is not an imperialist state. We cannot unconditionally support all the nationalist movements. Our first priority is to defend the planned economy thorough imposing anti-burocratic workers control. We defend national self-determination and we recommend to the national movements that they fight for a common free soviet confederation. Where the independent movements are very strong we fight for independent soviet republics. Our aim is for a socialist federation of all the workers states in the world."

Comrade Frankel introduced an amendment that King Salomon would have been proud of in which he tried to avoid extremes and conciliate positions. That amendment was passed nearly unanimously. It said:

"We have to fight against all forms of bourgeois nationalism or religious fundamentalism, whilst of course supporting the secession of nationalities which have clearly and democratically expressed their wish to do so. However we do not support in the slightest the installation of a bourgeois nationalist regime in these states but fight for an independent soviet state." (IIB 29).

Yugoslavia and Kurdistan.

In the July/1991 IEC we adopted unanimously a resolution on Yugoslavia. In that discussion cde. Fabio had the position that we should support the Serbian army against Slovenia and Croatia. I was one of the cdes. that more rejected that idea. I said: *"I do not agree with Fabio position that we should be against self-determination and only favour it for oppressed nations. We should support it in the case of Scotland if they desired it and they are not an oppressed nation. In the Caucasus we could be on one side and on the next side the next day depending on the conflict.." (IIB 39)*

We had a discussion about the independence of Slovenia. The IS and the majority of the IEC had the position that in the Slovenian referendum we should *"argued against a vote for independence"*. Johnson, Boris and other comrades had the position that, because the Slovenian masses had big illusions in the independence, we should try to adress them with the demand for an "Independent Worker Republic of Slovenia". I proposed an amendment that said: *"In the referendum of 1990 Trotzkyist would have been in favour of independence and they would have called for a socialist sovietic republic. The answer 'yes' or 'no' in the referendum will depend on the concrete details of the referendum."*

The position of Frankel and the IS (against voting for independence) was carried with 8 votes in favour, 3 votes against and 2 in abstention.

As you can see, we don't have any serious programmatic disagreements about the national question before the 2' congress. Even more the IS was more cautious to support pro-independence movements in the DWS than Johnson!.

In 1991 we also had another discussion on the national question when we had to confront with the Kurdistan case. Before the Gulf war started Johnson called the attention in the Kurdish question. At that time the left couldn't imagine how important could by the Kurdish problem. When the Kurdish rebellion started inside the IS there was some lack of information. But POP produced a resolution on Kurdistan. In the Andes there is not any Kurd and there is extremely few information about the Kurds. But, we where able to understand the importance of the Kurdish problem before it exploded. The POP theses on Kurdistan was the basis for a future IS resolution.

In that debate POP had the position that we should raise the slogan for a socialist and united Kurdistan as part of a Socialist federation of the middle east. The IS and the Ast, after an initial sympathy with our slogan, started to made observation to that demand. The IS said that we should fight for the right of self-determination without calling for independence. Like in Slovenia the IS tried to be more cautious demanding independence.

In fact, our position was not pro-independence. We said against bourgeois autonomy or independence that are the banners of the Talabanis, Apos and Burzani we should fight for the unification of all the workers of the region, for the self-determination of any oppressed nationality and for the right to any nation to unite in a single republic. Only a united Kurdistan could be achieved in a socialist federation of the region.

What was our traditional line?.

When we deal with the national self-determination in the DWS we always put some conditions in the past. Some times WP and the LRCI said national secession must be conditional on their acceptance of other national minorities to secede or that they should not be the forefront of a capitalist restoration or imperialist intervention.

In the Theses of Gorbachev (adopted in July 1987 and reprinted in TI 1, Summer 1988) we put a condition in the right for self-determination in the DWS:

"For the right of all Soviet nationalities to self-determination up to and including secession, subject to the defence of planned economy relations and of the USSR."

In WP December 1988 WP publish an article on the national question in the USSR in which it said: that we *"demand the real right to national independence for the republics if they want it. We condition this right only with stipulation that the post-capitalist property relations-the economic gains of October 1917 revolution- be maintained."*

In the same WP there is another article "Nationalism in Yugoslavia" that said:

"It would also have been crucial to stress the support of revolutionary socialists for Kosovo's right to secede if its people so wished, and provided that they did not intend to restore capitalist property relations."

In WP 119 (June 1989) Dave Hughes wrote a brilliant article on the USSR national question in the central pages in which he said:

"The right to self-determinatioin was subordinated to the defense needs of the fledgling workers' state."

The same conception we had in the TM.

Johnson wrote "Contribution to a tactic about the national question inside the stalinists countries" (see IIB 38. June 1991) and "The Caucasus question" (IEC Mailing.1. July 1991) In that documents he develop that positions and never I received the slightest criticism from what I wrote there.

Retrospective I think that this LRCI's old positions had schematic elements. In some circumstances we can support the right to self-determination even if the national movement is lead by restorationists

In Lithuania 1991 all the comrades in the LRCI support the position that we should in that circumstances recognize unconditionally the right to self-determination. The (ex) comrade with more sectarian and stalino-phile tendencies (Winter-RTL) wrote a piece in which it said *"Our unconditional support means that the nature of the government in power should not be a condition for supporting Lithuania's independence (eg. we support the right of Lithuania to secede from the USSR even if right now the government in power intends to restore capitalism)."*

In that case we saw a confrontation between two restorationists/stalinists parties. The Lithuanian CP and the Gorbachevite tried to restore capitalism. Gorbachev tried to transform Lithuania in a Russian Hong Kong. The Lithuanian CP made a block with nationalists to separate that country with the aim to have better relations with the West but also because of strong national feelings in a population that never accepted the Stalin's forced annexation.

The imperialists were not backed militarily Lithuania. They were trying to support Gorbachev and to try to fine a conciliatory solution. At the same time that the imperialists launched an intervention in Iraq with the pretext that we should defend poor Iraq against an invasion, they didn't made any scandal when the Russian troops entered in Lithuania. In the Gulf war period POP tried to show how much hypocrisy had the imperialists and we launched a campaign for the defence of the Lithuanian workers and people.

In the 2' world war we sided with Stalin against Lithuania. If the Lithuanian national movement could be the forefront of an imperialist plan to intervene in the USSR and destroy the workers state and Moscow will be leading a resistance to capitalist restoration and military attack, we should have to change our position.

The change in our line.-

Few days after the 2' congress the IS adopted the new "Theses in defense of Trotzkyism". In that document the IS introduce new modifications to our programme. After listening my criticisms cdc. Frankel accepted that the best thing should be that the programmatic modifications should be dealt in the Congress and that was a mistake to introduce this changes in the IS without discussing this new positions at the congress or the IEC.

After the congress finished I was invited into the IS as an observer to discuss about the new "Theses in defense of Trotzkysism". I made several amendments and I agree with all the text. I put an objection. It was Theses 24.

In that point the LRCI openly modified its position on the national question in the DWS. It said:

"The proletariat should therefore recognise unconditionally the right to self-determination of an oppressed nation or ethnic group, even if this nation should then proceed to restore capitalism."

The same idea is reproduced in the Frankel's Theses on the national question. This is a confuse position.

I will propose this amendment:

"We are against any kind of social or cultural oppression against any oppressed ethnic group. We advocate the right to self-determination, including secession, to all the nations inside a DWS. We recommend to all of them that the best way to resolve their national and social problems is by means of an international socialist federation of workers councils republics. When the great majority of the working class of a particular nation has strong illusion in autonomy or separation we should support their right and we could advocate the necessity for creation of an autonomous or independent council republic. We should not support a national movement that wants to create new privileges and oppressed another nation.

When a secessionist movement is lead by reactionaries we should adopt an specific tactic depending on the specific circumstances. We could be against the intervention of the national stalinist army and to respect their right to secede when this movement has the great majority support of the working class, it didn't have the active military support of an imperialist power and it didn't try to repress other nationalities. Nevertheless, we 'should always be enemies of the restorationist/nationalists and we should always fight for workers councils republics and for a democratically voluntary sovietic federation."

An ethnic group could be a religious, tribal or racial group. **We defend any ethnic group against any form of social oppression. But we can't advocate them automatically the right for self-determination including secession.**

Lets take the example of the Sikhs. They are a clear ethnic group with a clear way of living, proper identity and consciousness. They also are the majority in India's Punjab. They constantly suffer horrible pogroms. But, we are AGAINST their right to self-determination and against the creation of Khalistan. A Sikh state should be a theocratic, reactionary and anti-Indi state.

In Somalia we are against the right to self-determination to the different 6 tribes and tens of clans that made war between each other. We are against the constitution of small ethnic tribal states. In the case of Somaliland, a multi-tribal region with a different history than for the rest of Somalia, it is possible to advocate their right to secede.

In Lebanon we don't advocate the rights for the Shias, Sunnis, Druses, etc. to self-determination including secession. They are oppressed by the ruling Christian elite, but they are not nations. We are against splitting even more the Lebanon with the aim to create confessional micro-states or feuds.

In the Caribbean we only support the right of the native peoples to self-determination because they are a different nationality. We are against any kind of cultural or social discrimination against any oppressed ethnic group. But, we don't advocate the right to self-determination (including secession) to the different oppressed ethnic groups (East Indians, Blacks, Chineses, Laosians, Muslims, Rastafaris, etc.).

If in a capitalist state we can't fight for the right to self-determination to an ethnic group with less reasons we can fight for that right in a DWS.

We can't say that we are for an "unconditionally right to self-determination even if this nation should then proceed to restore capitalism."

When the USSR invaded Afghanistan we were not in favour of that unconditional right. We didn't block with the Afghan nationalists against the Russian army. We didn't defend unconditionally the right to self-determination of Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, Finland, Poland, etc. against the USSR in the 2' world war. Despite that we reject the counter-revolutionary methods of stalinism we have to side with them against the bourgeois republics.

In 1917-18 the Sovietic revolution come to the majority of the nations of the former Russian empire with the Bolshevik Russian troops. The bolsheviks violated the principle of self-determination to Ukraine (one nation as big as France). Like Dave Hughes explained in his article in WP June 1989:

"With the Ukraine becoming a bastion for international counter-revolution and with the persistence of elements of dual power in the cities the Red Army had no alternative but to defend the Russian workers' state and the Ukraine's workers by entering the Ukraine in force."

In January 1918 the Bolsheviks smashed the Crimean Tartar national assembly and the "size of Sebastopol was remembering for a long time with the atrocities that come with it." (Carr, La Revolución Bolchevique. Pg. 340)

In Bujara, Tannu Tuva, Mongolia and in the great majority of Asia and the Caucasus the soviet revolution come from a military intervention that many times was backed with some sector of the native population.

It is true that the Bolsheviks have to accept the creation of new bourgeois republics in the Caucasus, Ukraine, the Baltics, Poland and Finland. But they do that because immediately after the October revolution they didn't have the force to impose a workers' council republic in that countries. In Russia the masses exhausted their experiences in the Czar and in the democrats. But in this ex-Czarist possessions the masses had to experience in their own skin what are the nationalists and democrats. In that conditions, when the local Bolsheviks are weak and the masses had illusion in the nationalists, the communists didn't have to made an abortion and precipitate an adventurerist invasion or putch. That is the context in which Bujarin in the ABC of Communism introduce the famous quotation that the Bolsheviks will recognize the right of separation from Russia even if they could maintain a capitalist state. But, when the Bolsheviks had the forces and some significative local support to guarantee a success they could intervene.

The Document said *"Comrade J. has failed to prove that Trotzky and Lenin ever used such a self-contradictory slogan as a the conditional right to self-determination."*

First. I had proved that the LRCI and WP raised BEFORE and CONSTANTLY that position. I am only defending our traditional line. Before I will prove that Trotzky had that position I will demand to the comrades from the majority if they can prove that Trotzky raised the demand of *"unconditional right to self-determination of an oppressed nation or ethnic group, even if this nation then proceed to restore capitalism."* They will never could prove that.

As Carr said: *"It should be impossible to establish Bolsheviks regimes in Ukraine, White Russia or the Baltics without the direct intervention of Moscow ... The choose was not between independence or dependence, it was between dependence to Moscow or dependence to the bourgeois regimes in the capitalist world"*. (Carr, Id. p. 285-86)

In late 1920's there was a debate between Trotzky and the ultra-leftists over the Chinese railway. The ultra-leftist said that we should defend the right to self-determination to the oppressed Chinese nation and, for that reason, the USSR should return the Pacific railway to China. The Bolsheviks took this railway from the Czar and they didn't want to give to the Chinese reactionaries. Trotzky answer to the ultra-leftists that the right to self-determination was subordinated to the principles of the proletarian dictatorship.

In that polemic Trotzky wrote:

"the theoretical wisdom of ultralefts in Berlin and Paris boils down to a few democratic abstractions ... The Chinese Eastern Railroad runs through Manchuria, which belongs to China. China has the right to self-determination...It should turned over. To whom? To Chiang Kai Shek?...During the Brest Litovsk negotiations, von Kuehlman introduced the demand for an independent Latvia and Estonia, referring to the fact that the parliaments established there with the aid of Germany had instructed him to demand separation. We refused to sanction this, and we were denounced by the entire official German press as imperialists.

Let us assume that in the Caucasus there is an outbreak of counter-revolution which, with the help of, say, England, achieves victory. Let us also assume that the workers of Baku, with the help of the Soviet Union, succeed in keeping the whole area of Baku in

their hands. It goes without saying that the Transcaucasian counter-revolution would lay claim to this district of Baku. ***It is perfectly clear that the Soviet republic would not consent this.*** *" (LT Writings, 1929, Pg. 216).*

Louzon rejected Trotzky's position. He have the position that we should fight for unconditional self-determination as a principle. For that reasons, the USSR should leave Manchuria and return the railway to China. Against that position Trotzky wrote:

"The national problem separate and apart form class correlations is afiction, a lie, a strangler's noose for the proletariat"

""the struggle for national self-determination, like the struggle for democracy in general, plays an enormous role in the lives of the peoples, particularily in the life of the proletariat ...But from the proletarian standpoint, neither democracy as a whole nor national self-determination as an integral part of it stands above the classes."

"The red army halted at the frontier of China because it was not strong enough to assume such an offensive, it would have been duty-bound to launch it. ***A renunciation by the Red Army of a revolutionary offensive against the forces of imperialism and in the interest of Chinese workers and peasants and of the world proletarian revolution would not have meant the fulfilment of Lenin's policy but a base betrayal of the ABC of Marxism."***

"At one time the Red Army invaded menshevik Georgia and helped the Georgian workers overthrow the rule of the bourgeoisie. To this day the 2' International has not forgiven us for it. Georgia is inhabited by Georgians. The Red Army was composed mainly by Russians. With whom does Luzon side in this conflict?

And what about the march on Warsaw in the summer of 1920? Louzon is perhaps aware that I opposed this campaign. But my objections were of a purely practical character. I feared that the toiling masses of Poland would not succeed in rising in time (war proceeds as a rule at a faster tempo than the revolution); and I was of the opinion that it would be dangerous for us to leave our base too far behind. This forecast was confirmed by events: the march on Warsaw was a mistake. But it was a practical error and not at all an error in principle. ***Had the conditions been more favourable, it would have been our direct duty to lend armed assistance to the revolution in Poland, as well every body else."*** *(id. Pgs. 269-270)*

With this position Trotzky clearly say that the self-determination is a democratic principle but that is subordinated to a more important principle: the proletarian revolution.

More clearly he explain his position when he support the Soviet intervention against the self-determination of the Georgians:

"We not only recognize, but we ***also support with all our forces the principles of the right of self-determination for all the peoples against the feudal, capitalist or imperialist states. But when the fiction of a national autonomy is transformed in the hands of the bourgeoisie in a weapon against the proletarian revolution, we don't see any reason to behave respect of that principle in other way like the other principles of*** *democracy, converted in the opposite by the capital."* (LT, sobre Georgia. Pg. 135)

Conclusions.

On the national question there are some progressive modifications in the line in relation to the capitalist world. So, now, in that area we don't have disagreements inside the IS.

There still remain disagreements on the question of "non-historic" and "historic" nations and in the interpretation of the politics of the Bolsheviks in the Soviet Revolution.

The main disagreement is about the self-determination of the nations in the DWS. The majority and the minority agree that we should demand the right to self-determination (including secession) inside the DWS, that we always will advocate the socialist federation as a principle and that, only when the great majority of the masses are wined to the separatist ideas, we should raise demands like workers councils republics.

The differences remain in two points:

A) If we can extend the right to self-determination (including secession) to the ethnic groups.

B) In when we will be against the self-determination of the nations in the DWS. The majority accept that when a secession movement try to oppress another national minority or when it is military backed by imperialism we should be against that right. Despite that they put a CONDITION, they don't want to recognize it. I don't agree completely with our previous formulation (before the 1992 Theses in defense of Trotzkyism) but I think they are better than the one that I criticize.

In fact, when we have to deal with specific national movements inside the DWS we didn't arrive to serious disagreements. We agree on Yugoslavia and the national question in Eastern Europe and the USSR. We agree that we should recognize the right to secession to Slovenia and Croatia. The national question in the Caucasus is a very complicated point in which we didn't had disagreements. The resolution that I wrote on that point was adopted in less than 10 minutes. Despite that is was a very complicated item this was the fastest resolution that we had adopted!

Some problems we have with Bosnia. before the last December IEC the IS adopted a resolution on Bosnia in which it is a change of line. I expressed my disagreements with 3 formulations and the IS accepted to change. The original resolution said that "We call for the defeat of Croat and Serbs forces at the hands of the Muslim *Bosnians and their allies.*" This could be interpreted as that we were in favour of supporting the Islamic regimes that support Bosnia.

"Now we fight for the establishment of military control of all and any areas within Bosnia-Herzegovina by Muslim forces." The IS accepted that we can't support all the actions of the Bosnian Muslims in the ethnical Serb and Croat areas in Bosnia-Herzegovina and that we will only support the Bosnian Muslims to recover the territories in which they were originally the majority.

The IS also accept that we don't ask the imperialists to arm the Muslims.

Later, in summer we had a discussion about Bosnia. Cde. Frankel wrote that in case that the USA/OTAN will launch bombardments in Serbia we should have a defeatist position in both sides. I disagree. If an imperialist army attack any DWS we should side with the latest. Of course that a USA bombing will not lead automatically to renounce to our position in Sarajevo. We could continue to be against the Great Serbian ethnic cleansing and intention to capture Sarajevo and we could try to build in Sarajevo a multi-ethnic workers militia to defend that city, but could not adopt a defeatist position when a DWS should be attacking by imperialist forces.

We adopted a resolution on the Caucasus in which we proved that we can have a general agreement in particular issues on the national question.

OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE IS' INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES.

Johnson.

The actual IS' international perspective is a better document than the one that the second congress couldn't adopt. A good point is that it try to summarise conclusions and develop what should be our principal tasks and demands. The adopted document is to long and it have important vacuums.

The document need to be expand in significative points like the Canadian crisis (economic decline plus development of new parties and separatist/ethnic movements; the capitalist restoration process in Vietnam, the majority of the ex-USSR republics and the Balkans; the rise of the far right; the crisis of the party system (in the majority of the world the traditional parties are loosing active members) and the development of new "anti-party" right wing populism (Perot, Reform party in Canada, Fujimori, etc.). The original authors of the document promised that they should write new parts concerning "the conditions of democracy in the western democracies (Italy, etc.); on the conditions of youth and blacks in Europe and the USA".

In its analysis of the "3' world" there is very few about LA. The document didn't try to explain why far east Asia is the region of the world that have a big rate of development when other parts of the 3' world are collapsing. It is very important to try to show the limitation of the "Asian, tiger" model that is try to adopt as an example in all the semi-colonies.

In the chapter about *"Political movements in the semi-colonies"* there is an over-enphasis on religious fundamentalism. There is few or any analysis of the transformation of the old nationalist parties into neo-liberalism, the development of militarised neo-liberal democracies, the actions and evolution of the working movement and the collapse of the majority of guerrilla movements. As a common phenomenon in all the semi-colonies the document stand: *"The vacuum left by this discrediting of Stalinism and third-worldism has partly been filled by anti-western Islamic fundamentalism and various sorts of nationalism or ethnic movements. Those movements which are still anti-US are often anti-democratic, anti-women whilst the mass democratic movements are seldom anti-imperialist."* (T. 11.1). This is wrong. In LA nearly all the anti-imperialists movements also fight for better conditions for the women and for more democratic freedoms to the workers movement. Similar characteristics you can see in all the self-claimed socialist left in Asia and Africa. Islamic fundamentalism is only a phenomenom that happen in a relatively small proportion of countries. Palestinean Hamas, Argelian FIS and Islamic Brotherhood in Egypt and the middle east combine anti-western attitudes with theocratic anti-women and anti-democratic conceptions; but this movement don't monopolise the anti-imperialist movement in the semi-colonies. The Indian and Sikh fundamentalist are mainly a reactionary filo-ethnic cleansing and fascistoid not anti-imperialist movements. In the semi-colonies several relatively progressive movements that raise social demands could rise Christian or Islamic banners (like Liberation Theology, Popular Church or Arab left) and we don't have to equalise this movements with the fascistoid anti-communists fundamentalists.

We will disarm our self in the semi-colonial world if we say: the pro-women and democratic movements are often pro-imperialists and the anti-imperialists movements are often anti-democratics. In the IS anybody raise the following idea but if we are consistent with this politics we should minimized the anti-imperialist united front and try to develop democratic united fronts with pro-imperialists bourgeois parties.

It is also wrong to say that the vacuum of the left is filled by *"anti-western Islamic fundamentalism and various sorts of nationalism or ethnic movements"*. This is not all the case in Latin America. In Brazil, Uruguay, Chile and Venezuela the reformist workers parties are maintaining themselves or are growing. In Brazil there are possibilities that next presidential elections will put the Workers Party (PT) in the first or second place. In Venezuela Causa R and the MAS are advancing and the first won

the Caracas city council. In Guyana and Jamaica the former castroite left is in power. The only Latin American country in which the left had a serious defeat is Peru. But the vacuum generated by the left collapse is not filled by any kind of nationalism. It was filled by a right wing populism (Fujimori). In the only LA's countries in which there are growing Indian ethnic movements is in Bolivia, Ecuador and Guatemala, but this movements are often leftists. Nationalism is loosing forces.

Inter-ethnic clashes are developing in several multi-ethnic estates (former stalinists states, Black Africa and South Asia).

In T. 11.1 it is also say *"More dramatically the defeat of Saddam Hussein in the Gulf War in 1991 discredited anti-imperialist military pretensions."* This is not completely correct. Hussein military pretensions (annexation of Kuwait) were not anti-imperialist. Hussein and his follower claim that they defeat imperialism because they remain in power in Iraq. Hussein never was transformed in a anti-imperialist hero in all the "3' world". It is true that nearly all the anti-imperialist movement are now more right-wing and even completely pro-imperialists. But this is linked with more important phenomenons than the Hussein's defeat like the collapse of the Degenerated Workers State and the victory of imperialism and neo-liberalism in the cold war.

In T. 13.3 there is a good position when the document say:

"In the case of national struggles against elements of capitalist/pre-capitalist forms of exploitation the national struggle can form the democratic starting point for the estrategy of permanent revolution. Other national struggles which amount to claims for political or economic privilege, which attempt to seize or monopolise territories rich in natural resources, perhaps in collusion with the MNC's or an imperialist power are reactionary and have to be opposed."

But we need to expand our position in the case of nationalist movement that want to oppress other nationalities (like in Georgia), that want to break workers states with the aim to become imperialists clients (like it could be the case of Guandong) and of regional movements with separatist tendencies (Northern Italy).

In the meeting that we had to adopt the "international Perspectives" cde. Frankel presented the 3 pages Conclusion chapter. As I repeat it is a good idea to produce that chapter but we couldn't have time to examine and amend it.

I have 3 significative differences with the IS' majority over 2 thesis that, in my opinion, are fatalistists (all T. 1.5 and 8 and the first sentence of 14.5).

"1.5 In the semi-colonial world also a great unevenness will became manifest. THE MAJORITY OF COUNTRIES IN AFRICA, ASIA AND LATIN AMERICA HAVE BEEN DE-INDUSTRIALISED by a long withdrawal of imperialist investment in raw material extraction. There is a real perspective of not only continued economic decline but of THE DESTRUCTION OF THE WORKING CLASS AS THE INSTRUMENT OF SOCIALIST REVOLUTION. On the other hand, the sizeable,and militant proletariats of the Asian NICs and of a number of regionally powerful (if not hegemonic) states -Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, South Africa, Nigeria, Turkey, India -will be faced with serious struggles."

All this thesis is incorrect. It is not true that the majority of the the countries in Africa, Asia and LA (it means at least 3/4 of the world's population) have been de-indutrialised and that "is a real perspective" of "the destruction of the working class...". It is true that thousands of factories closed and sack workers, but this a WORLD tendency. It happen in all the states from UK to New Zealand. The worst "de-industrialisation" process is now happening in Eastern Europe in which an extraordinary bigger proportion of the factories are closing and of the working class is becoming unemployed But nobody could say that in this countries the working class are being destroyed. capitalism always destroy productive forces and next it rebuild new productive areas.

In LA the number of urban population is growing (now it is nearly 3/4 of all the continental population). Millions were sacked but there are new wage workers in the informal sector, services, new 'small and medium companies and in the countryside (a lot of small owners are becoming rural proletariat). The unemployed and subemployed are part of the labour's reserve army.

Several imperialists journals are also talking that LA should have an economic recovery and new industries. After all the attacks on the working class and the terrible eighties, Northamerican, European, Asiatic and Japanese capitals are coming to invest in LA.

But if in Asia. Africa and LA "*there is real perspective ... of the further destruction of the working class as the instrument of the socialist revolution*", who will replace the working class? Could this societies retreat from capitalism to previous mode of productions? Another classes will replace the working class as instrument of socialist revolution? From were will come the socialist revolution to this countries, they should import it from the imperialist countries or regional hegemonic states?

Bolivia and Peru are one of the poorest countries in the semi-colonies. If the working class could be destroyed as an instrument of socialist revolution this countries should be the first to move in that sad direction. If we are consistent whit that prognosis we should not have to put many efforts in building Bolivian or Peruvian sections.

In Bolivia we have a long fight with several ex-comrades (OTI, Kautsky, etc.) that said that it exist an "historical defeat" and that the proletariat could not be an "instrument of socialist revolution". Kautski become indian nationalist and start to talk about the socialist transformation will be lead by peasant comunities. The Katarists say that the peasant unions or the peasant guerrillas should replace the hegemony of the working class. The reformist say that a new alliance of middle classes, peasant and national capitalists should be the instrument of socialist revolution.

The actual facts are proving that this analysis is incorrect. Poorest countries with decimated working classes organized in the recent years important regionals, sectorial or national general strikes.

The last sentence is not exact. It is true that in the Asian NICs there are sizeable proletariats but they are not now particularly militants. With the exception of South Korea the working movements in Taiwan, Singapur, Malaysia, etc. are not very well organize and didn't have the militant tradition of the Bolivian, Peruvian, Nicaraguan or Haitian proletariats. South Africa is not a semi-colony. Is correct to say that the proletariats of Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, South Africa, Nigeria, Turkey and India "will be faced with serious struggles". But it is also correct to say that ALL the working movements in the semi-colonies should be in that situation.

Chapter 8 has a pessimistic title: '*CAPITALIST RESTORATION COMPLETED IN CENTRAL EUROPE IN 1994*'. As a revolutionary marxist we can't renounce to revolutionary optimism. Few days before Hitler took power in Germany Trotzky didn't say I will predict that the Nazis will smash the working class. He always say we can stop this very much possible outcome if we will fight and make a workers united front. We can't be pessimistic spectators that say to the working class "capitalist will be inevitable completely restore in this year." To our contacts in Poland and Serbia we should say this is the most probably outcome but we could change the situation if we build an anti-restorationist workers united front that could organize general strikes, demonstrations and factory occupations against any anti-working class measure.

Three years ago the previous "international perspective" predicted that Hussein, Khomeini and Castro will be overthrow. Until now it didn't happen. Politics is not an exact science like Mathematics or Physics. In Politics 1 + 1 is not always 2. As a revolutionaries we should always stress the idea that the intervention of the working class and the fights of the toilers in different parts of the world could change a very possible outcome.

"14.5 Thus the political balance sheet of the world's working class movement over the past five years is preponderantly negative; organizational decline and collapse; ideological degeneration and programmatic capitulation."

If that is the situation of the working class and if we predict that in 1994 will be completed one of the worst historic defeats of the international working class (capitalist restoration completed in central Europe) How could be characterise the world's period as revolutionary?

I think that the balance sheet of the world's working class movement is contradictory. After 1989 the world enter in a new period in which the previous postwar Yalta order

was destroyed an a new period of destabilization begun. The world didn't experience a "counter-revolutionary situation" (that mean the destruction of the working movement like in Germany 1933), but it experienced a situation of "democratic" counter-revolutionary offensive.

In 1989 several workers movement that were under strong dictatorships start to made strikes, massive demonstrations and general strikes, conquered democratic freedoms and developed new organizations. After decades of passivity the Romanian proletariat overthrow Ceacescu and later stop a reactionary coup. The working class in Poland, Ukrania and Vorkuta made several strikes. In China the working class was starting to awake when the stalinists launched the Tien Nam Men's massacre. In Eastern Europe the working class start to develop new organizations but, because of the ;ack of revolutionary leadership and the illusions in Western democracy and market, we have now a reactionary and possible epidoci outcome.

Since 1989 in Black Africa it was realised a wave of mass demonstrations and massive general strikes that finish tens of old dictatorships. In Guyana, Montevideo, Caracas, several cities of Brazil "marxist" leaders come to the government reflecting in a deformed way working class protests or angry. In the last five years we saw the Intifada and the beginning of mass strikes in Germany (the most radicalise movements in the most important European imperialism in the last decades). In Italy, Greece, Turkey and Spain we also see general strikes. In South Korea we saw radicalise student and workers demonstrations that resisted heavily repression.

But, at the same time we have to recognize that neo-liberalism and imperialism manage to impose several victories. In the great majority of the countries the level of unionisation decrease and the workers loose several social conquests. The workers parties, union and leaders are more right wing and conciliate with neo-liberal ideas.

If we only say that the balance sheet of the world's working class is reduced to *"organizational decline and collapse; ideological degeneration and programmatic capitulation.* we are presenting a one-sided pessimistic picture. Its ignore the other side that we described. Before 1988 and the collapse of stalinism nearly all the working class movements were lead by leadership that were and are ideological degenerated and programmatical capitulators. We don't think that the failure of stalinism lead to ideological degeneration and programmatic collapse. We have to be dialectician and understand that the failure of stalinism could open a vacuum that could open audiences for revolutionary trotzkyists ideas.

In Chile, Paraguay, the majority of the semi-colonies of Africa. Turkey, Burma, South Korea and ex-COMECON the number of members of non-state unions growth in the last five years. When the document put figures of all the workers that were killed or victimised in 1992 with the aim to prove that analysis it is not a good method. We need to compare the figures of 1992 with previous years. Probably we will fine more than 260 union activists killed yearly in all the world in the 1980's or before. Only in 1973 in Chile, in 1976-77 in the Latin American Southern Cone, in Indonesia with the anti-communist coup, etc. we could see that only in that countries there were killed hundreds more union activists that this figure. In 1918-19, when the proletariat was in his more great revolutionary upheaval, more than 260 union activists were killed in civil wars. That figures didn't prove nothing.

Other proves that put the document to defend their analysis is the situation of the state of the unions in the Gulf petro-monarchies and in other Arab countries. But the situations of the unions in that countries were the same or probably worst before 1988. The only important prove that made the document is that in many LA countries the neo-liberal shocks and the informalisation of the economy "have hit the union hard". That is true, but from this fact we can't conclude with that pessimistic characterisation of the world's working class movement.

JOHNSON 14.11.93

Observations on the last IEC.

The last IEC was probably he most productive since the second congress. We had an open plitical debate and the political differences appeared more clearely and without subjetive barriers.

Advances in the IEC.

The positive thing are:

1. The LRCI adopted unanimously the new theses on UF. The LCRI made positive new changes in the direction of defending Lenin-Trotzki's positions on the relations between the revolutionary party and the other organizations. It adopted the criterion to diferentiate a common action with different forces for limited mass actions a UF. Now we only fiht for workers or anti-imperialist united fronts. We openly exclude the possibility of making "democratic" united fronts or united fronts with bourgeois forces in the imperialist or post-capitalist countries. There will be no more calls for united fronts with capitalist parties in the DWS or with the reactionary or pro-imperialist bourgeois oppositions, e.g. Algeria.

Everybody in the IEC recognise the positive effects of the long time arguments raised by LA comrades. Nevertheless, not all the progressive amendments were passed and many were defeated with few or non votes of difference.

2. On the national question the positions that we should fight for the self-determination of the ethnic groups (including right to secession) was defeated. This was a wrong position that could mean that we should fight for the right of different religious, racial or tribal groups to create their owns states.

The IEC in the international "perspectives" document also modified the previous position that in the multi-national semi-colonies the creation of the new national states is nearly always the starting point of the permanent revolution. In the case "of multi-nationals semi-colonial states it is nearly universal the case that national secession was a positive goal, the bourgeois democratic starting point of the permanent revolution" (Theses .1. of the IEC's Theses on the National Question). This conception is similar to the USEC or Lora. The majority of the semi-colonies contained between two and 700 nationalities. The fragmentation of this countries and the creation of hundreds of new semi-colonial bourgeois micro-states could generate the division of the workers and toilers, ethnic cleaning, more obstacle to the development of productive forces, etc. The Balkanization or Bosniafication of Liberia, Bolivia, Peru, Southern Africa, Zaire, etc. could be the starting point of fratricidal counter-revolution. Now the LRCI has adopted the position that the fight for the national separation could be the starting point of the permanent revolution *only if* this fight is linked with anti-pre capitalist and anti-imperialist tasks.

Nevertheless the IEC re-adopted the positions that we can fight for the unconditional self-determination of every nation in a DWS even if they want to restore capitalism. This is not the positions of Trotsky and the MRCI/LRCI until 1991.
Trotsky said:
"We do not only recognise, but we also give full support to the principle of self-determination, wherever it is directed against feudal, capitalist and imperialist states. But wherever the fiction of self-determination, in the hands of the bourgeoisie, becomes a weapon directed against the proletarian revolution, we have no occasion to treat this fiction differently from the other "principles" of democracy perverted by capitalism".
(LT. Social democracy and the wares of intervention. Russia 1918-21, p.94.)

The MRCI/LRCI said:
"For the right of the soviets nationalities to self-determination up to an including secession, subject to the defence of planned economy relations and of the URSS".
(Theses on Gorbachev. TI N.1. Summer 1988.)

"Demand the real right to national independence for the republics if they want it. We conditions this right only with stipulations that the post capitalist property relations --the economics gains of the October 1917 revolution-- be maintained".
(WP. December 1988).

In the debate on the IEC the IS majority said hat the minority on the national question "went on the objective to the positions the IS took on the hardline putsch in Lithuania". As was proved an other

document, everybody in the LRCI (including at the that time the RTT) supported the LRCI position. Also in the debate the majority kept silent about the previous LRCI's positions on Azerbaijan.

At the same time that the LRCI opposed the Soviet intervention into Lithuania, we critically supported the soviet intervention into Azerbaijan.
In Winter 1990 the IS said:
"Revolutionary communist could not have favoured the seizure of power by nationalist chauvinist organisations, whether in Azeribajan, Armenia or for that matter Georgia. Under these conditions the intervention of the troops and the prevention of such an outcome would have to be supported".

"We are therefore in favour of the presence of the SAF in order to carry to following tasks:.. preventing the armed seizure of power by nationalists".
In march 1990 the IEC by an overwhelming majority defeated positions with stalino-phobic inclinations that objected that statement. In that debate comrade Frankel said something that we could like him says today: In relations to the right of the oppressed Azeris "We would have to make such a call conditional on dropping their demands for the privileges" (IIB n.29)

3. In the "International Perspectives" the IEC deleted the original and dangerous 1.5 positions that said:
"The majority of the countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America have been de-industrialised by a long term withdrawal of imperialist investment in row material extraction. There is a real perspective of not only continued economic decline but of the further destruction of the Working Class as the instrument of the socialist revolution".

Capitalism can't exist without industries and the Working Class. If the majority of semi-colonial have ceased to have these productive forces it would mean that they will cease to be capitalist countries. Such a regressive step backwards is impossible in the imperialist epoch.

If the mayority of semi-colonies become de-industrialised and destroy the Working Class, it means that we should reject the principles of the permanent revolutions strategy that in all the backward capitalist semi-colonies the only leading instruments of socialist revolutions is the Working Class. It would mean that the socialist revolutions in the mayority of Africa, Asia and LA should be lead by other non-proletarian native classes or should be imported from the more developed countries.

This positions would mean that there is not future for the proletariats like the Bolivian or Peruvian and that we should abandon the proyect of building sections in those countries.

That positions is not only methodologically incorrect but it is also in contradicction with the reality. The world's region that developed more in the last decade is the east Asian semi-colonies. The imperialist media say that in 1990 there will heavely increase the MNC's investments in LA and the other semi-colonies that had imposed greated level of explotation of its own Working Class and adopted open doors politics that will bring them better conditions for profits rather than the imperialist powers in reccesion and with expensive welfare state and the unestable east Europe.

The IEC unanimously deleted the point. Dale attack this position as "revisionist". In the WP's NC there were several criticisms against that formulation. But, *before* in the IS, after a long sharp discussion on that question, the mayority voted six against Johnson to maintain that point (1.5). Johnson inmediately wrote a document critizing that position. But, instead of receaving fraternal criticism, the IS started to said that J criticism shows that he is incapable of being part of the IS.

4. In the tasks of the LRCI it was recognized that we should priorise our work in the mass organizations and not in the small centrist sects. It also agreed to recognize that the LA sections were correct when they wanted to create an LRCI revolutionary youth organization.

Advances in the IS

- This IEC also ended a new "experimented" of IS. For the first time in the history of the M/LRCI we had an IS that included a resident member who was an historic cadre from a section with different origins than WP (B).
In the last decade the IS was composed only of comrades that come from WP (B). The only exception was when the historic leading founder of the AST (Gunter) was elected for a short time to be an honorary member of the IS. But he didn't come to the great majority of the IS meetings because he was abroad. In 1992 a young comrade from the ASt's new generation comrade Sverdlov, came the IS. He,

despite all his talents, was not a historic LRCI cadre and he was more a new cadre that had to be trained and had to ass st the IS.
For the last year the organiser of two sections in LA comrade J come to try to create an integrated trans-continental leadership. But this process was very difficult. The British based IS was very reluctant and some times hostile to him.
In the last years the IS was in most of the cases like a homogeneous bloc inside the league. Several times the IS was defeated by the majority of the congress and the IEC. The congress defeated the IS in several points in the Statutes, the Balance sheet and the LRCI's tasks. One of its members was suspended by his section (WP-B) for undisciplined. The IEC defeated the IS in several points of party building, etc.
This was the first time that a comrade from other side than the tradicional IS was incorporated into the IS.
In several votes the IS was split six against one; comrade J, But on a number of points the IS revised or changed its position, As comrade Gunter said, this difference was a possitive fact.
As c. Victor said we can have better IEC's because the differences were debated already in the IS. Comrade Bodine said that c. J. could be defeated several times in the IS, but then the IEC support several of his positions. Even some IS members that voted against his amendmends on the IS, in the IEC they voted in favour of the same amendmends.
In South Africa the IS produced a first resolution in which (six against one) it rejected an amendment from c. J. that raised the workers party tactic in that country. But a few months later the IS adopted unanimously a new resolution in which the workers party tactic was at the center of our politics in South Africa.
In the Theses on Cuba the IS adopted, against Johnson opposition, the position that the LRCI is in favour of a moratorium (postponing the payments) of Cuban's external debt (instead of calling for its cancellation) and for a united front of all the debtor countries against the IMF. But later the majority of the AdCom changed that position.
Despite and because of that contradictions the IS advanced in 1993 into a correct series of political positions.
* In Cuba the IS rejected its previous position formulated in Summer 1990 that Castro will fall soon, following the path of Eastern Europe (a capitalist overthrow). The IS didn't mention the defense of Cuba in the 32 pages of the "Latin American Action Programme" draft. The IS now dedicates much attention to the defense of the Cuban revolution and produced a long resolution in March. The IS now openly rejects any kind of united fronts with capitalists forces in Cuba and says it will make a united front with Castro against them. The IS is in favour of a political revolution but for tactical reasons doesn't call for the inmediate overthrow of Castro because it could only now produce a vacuum that the social counter-revolution could fill. The IS doesn't call for a Constituent Assembly or a democratic parliament in Cuba. Based on the method of the "The Degenerated Revolution" the IS raised sovietic demands into the exising bureaucratic "people's power" institutions.
* The IS also criticized the formulations in WP(B) paper that a CA could open the road to socialism (South Africa) or that it could adopt a democratic constitution (Russia). Even the most democratic CA or constitution could not replace the working class' soviets and militias and the proletarian revolution as the ONLY way towards socialism.
* The IS and the IEC adopted the latest version of the Latin American Action Programme in which they put at the center the fight against privatisation, for workers control, for the cancellation of the external debt and for other social demands that were absent
* The IS adopted good positions in the two Russian coups d'etat. The LRCI called for a general strike and strike committee to defend workers freedoms against Yeltsin but without making united fronts with ultra-nationalists or fascitoids.
* The IS elaborated some modifications to their previous line on Bosnia (adopted in December 1992). Now, the IS said very clearly that we are not in favour of Muslim reconquer of ALL Bosnia, that we don't ask the imperialist troops to support the Muslims and that we don't want any kind of support to the Bosnian Muslim foreign allieds (for example, Islamic countries)
* The IS adopted a good document on the PLO-Israel settlement in which we raised the demand for breaking the PLO and build a workers party in Palestine.
* The IS adopted two documents (United Front and LRCI Tasks) that had the extraordinary merit to be adopted by the IEC without any vote against.
* The IS could have a good intervention in POP, POB and WPNZ. The recommendations of the IS letter to WPNZ were taking into account. The IS drafted two good resolutions on Peru. The relations between the IS and the LA sections were at its best moment. Cde. Johnson wrote nearly every month letters to POB criticing their monthly papers and POB took into account that criticisms. When c. Johnson discover anti-semtic arguments in POB paper and he made a letter and a resolution, POB inmediately accepted its mistake and after POB openly corrected in its paper.
* The IS had a better interventions into the sections. Inside the IS were comrades that have different points of views and experiences of how to approach to the problems.

* In Britain the IS press the section to have a more agressive intervention, to launch a system of organize supporters, the plan for creating a youth, etc. The IS also took initiatives to increase paper sales.
The IS changed positively as a result of the pogressive effects of confrontation of political differences inside the IS.
The IS also strongly improved their relations with the Southern Hemisphere sections. For the first time the IS minutes were produced in a non-English language (Spanish) and appeared a LRCI's spanish publication (Guía). The IS produced more publications than ever before in 1993. The IS adopted a less onesided interventions in the sections. The authority of the IS improved as a result.

Problems.-
1.- We see problems with the characterisation of the period. The official position that say "counter-revolutionary phase in a revolutionary period" is confuse an can be interpreted in different ways.
At this moment we don't have an alternative characterisation but we think it is important to open a debate with the aim to adopt a better understanding of the period at congress.
2.- We didn't have a debate on the state question. POB didn't participate in a debate on that question at the July 1993 IEC.
The IEC rejected (all against one) the proposition not to re-print "The Degenerated Revolution" until it could be revised after congress. The IEC decided to re-print this book in January-February.
We are worried about the position that tries to revise our conception of the state and insist that the Bourgeois state was not smashed and it was only purged or transformed in the degenerated social revolutions. Accoding to the minority the bourgeois state took away the Bourgeoisie like a person can took away their clothes or cut put on again. If the state remains Bourgeois and with a totalitarian Bourgeois regime then the conclusion is that the fight for bourgeois democracy could be progressive. That was the conclution arrived at by the original authors of that theory (Tim Wolforth and Quintin R.).
3.- We accept by the rule of democratic-centralism that POB should have said openly in Bolivia that we had in 1985-86 an "estrategic defeat". Nevertheless POB doesn't agree with that position. This is in contradiction with the "Theses on Bolivia" that was adopted by the MRCI after long discussions with POB and c. J.
POB was created under a long batle against OTI's right wing centrist position on "historic defeat" and against the Bolivian reformist, Indianist and guerrillerist left that used that characterisation to said that we need to change our estrategy (proletarian revolution and dictatorship) by another (people's war, electoral accumulation, etc.)..
Initially the position of the IS was to characterise the 1986 serious defeat as an "historic defeat". After the pressiure of the LA sections they modified to "estrategic defeat". But this characterisation ("estrategic defeat") don't have precedent in marxist terminology. It is also a confuse term. It could be interpreted as a defeat that means that we need to change our estrategy. It could also leave open door to conclusions like the defeated Theses 1.5. in the original "International Perspectives" that said that in the majority of the semi-colonies there is a process of de-industrialisation that would destroy the proletariat as the vanguard of the social revolution.
We prefer the original more scientific and more elaborated MRCI position:
In 1986 the revolutionary period was closed after several important defeats and it was open a new period of democratic counter-revolutionaries victories. The majority of the old mines and factories were closed or reduced and the masses become more poor. Nevertheless, the working class organizations until now exist, fight, make every year constant strikes and demonstrations, etc. After seven years of Neo-liberalism the different pro-IMF government, despite their significative advances, couldn't impose their programmes of privatisation of education, health, etc.

The composition of the IS.-
At the end of the IEC a new IS was elected. The elected slate was backed by the actual IS and the majority of British comrades. The defeated slate was backed by Bodine (WPB), all the comrades from the Southern Hemisphere and the majority of the non-British IEC members.
In the previous IEC the former IS majority was defeated when at the last minute when they tried to sack c. Johnson from the IS. Then, the rest of the non-IS IEC members (14 against 7) supported the re-election of c. Johnson.
In December the IS majority explained the political reasons for their proposal. They admited that Johnson is not an stalino-phile, that he is a hard worker (according to c. Lynch we have several times to sack from the office because he want to continue working until more late) and that he has made positive contributions to the IS. The central argument was that they needed a homogeneous IS and Johnson represented another "sectarian" and "dogmatic" method.
Behind this question remains an important political problem. The actual IS has the conception that the IS should have many powers (including that to change of programme; suspend sections and IEC members, etc.) and at the same time it should be a relatively homogeneous block.

But, the IS is not a pure executive or administrative body. It is the leading body of the LRCI for half a year and has the power to change our programmatic positions (like they did with the national question two weeks after the Congress and without any discussion at congress in the "Theses on defense of Trotzkyism") or break relations with fraternal sections (like they did two weeks before the congress with the RTL).
We need an IS with the best leaders and most productive cadres of the LRCI. Specially we need a democratic, collective and representative IS at congress time. Pre-congress periods should be the most democratic ones and, for that reason, it is incorrect to exclude a significant minority of the IEC; a minority that some times win and on other times it is reduced to a quarter of the IEC.
WP and the Ast made some advances in the last year because they integrated in their PC's the best cadres from their organization and the leaders of the different sides inside their groups.
A national PC can be changed every month by an NC which is elected at a yearly conference. But, in the LRCI the LRCI can change every 3 years and the IS can change every six months. Around 2/3 of the IEC members don't live in the IS' city and, only for that reason, they have problem or incapacity to be part of the IS. So, every six month the IEC don't have much choice than to elect a WP(B)'s dominated IS.
For years differents comrades and sections battled for building a representative IS. But, the IS mainly remain as an expresion of one wing of the most important section. From the LRCI there are four sections (WP, IWG, POF, GAM) whose historical leaders come from WP or were created under their guidance, and there are other four sections (AST, POP, POB, WP-NZ) which their historic leadership comes from different traditions and experiences and have a more independent point of view. It is not for pure chance that the historic leaders of these later four sections remains very critical of the IS and its homogeneous conception of leadership. Cde. Boris was correct when he said that the IS has a "holy caw spirit".
He explained that in several circumstances the IS didn't listen to the different sides inside the sections, that the IS doesn't like to criticise is own members and that it doesn't like to criticise its own mistake or give credit to others when it changes is positions. For example, he said, in the case of the theory of economic crisis we advanced into a common agreement because the IS moved in the direction of WP-NZ's positions but they don't like to recognise it.
Now we have elected as IS in which there is not any c. that come from semi-colonial sections (half of the league) or an IEC full member that comes from another tradition than WP. It is not a IS that incorporate the best and most experienced, disciplined and theoretical cadres from the IEC (or even from the IEC that are residents in UK).
We didn't have a good second congress. The IEC's only meet 5 days every 6 month and they don't have much opportunity to oversee the day to day work of the sections and the adoption of the political line.
For these reasons it is necessary to strengthen the IS with the incorporation of the IEC members that represent different strengths, traditions, experiences and point of views in the IS.
The second congress adopted as a priority task to make LA one of the two priorities and to put c. J. on the IS. "The IS should if at all possible have 2 British and one non-British fulltimer. This would be in the first phase an Austrian, in the second comrade Johnson from P." (Resolution on Tasks from the 2'nd congress. Theses 6.12.).
Now with the non-reelection of c. J. the IS is weaker and the left wing positions that he represented, despite that in the IEC they got some support victories, are eliminated or reduced from the IS. The IS majority instead of trying to create a common framework with the left wing inside the LRCI and the LA cc. heavily attack c. J. In it's report and the balance sheet of the LCRI they didn't criticise a single mistake of any of its members. Instead they dedicate many sentences to produce a one-sided balance sheet of c. J role and characteristics.
Now for the first time in the LRCI we have an IS with two non IEC member. Despite he fact that we have a huge IEC of 21 full member (nearly 20% of the LRCI's full member) we have only 5 IEC member in the IS (less than a quarter of the IEC). The two non member represent about 29% of the IS . But in reality because one of the IS members (Van) only come to every 4thor 5th IS meeting it means that in the IS day today meetings one third of its member were not elected at congress and don't have vote in the minimum leading body between congress (the IEC).
We don't think that the non-IEC member have spetial talentsin founding sections or making important theoretical contributions.
A good point was the election of c. Sparkes to the IS. In previous IEC's he voted togheter with overseas IEC members on several points (against consecions to PB in the party theses, or UF, etc.) and he is against the pro-Wolforth minority positions on the state. Nevertheless we don't feel that he express our positions of view on the IS. He has a similar conception of a homogeneous WP's centered and centralist IS to the IS mayority. Without the support that the gave to the IS mayority slate they difinitively would not have won.
The minority on the question on the state had strong methodological disagreemment with the LRCI on these importat issue. That is why they said that the majority that defend the DR is "revisionist in the method, history and programme"If their positions should win the IS will adopted an stalino-phobic

method that will change its whole line. Fortunately this positions is loosing suport. It won virtually no support in WP-NZ, POB, POB or GAM. Comrades of the IEC that initially sympatized with that positions are changing. In the London and Birmingham branch's meetings nobody suport the minority. In WP's summer school the minority could't find amoung speakears in favour and the overwengly mayority of member rejected it. All he founder of the IWG and WP reject it. In the IIB's nobody wrote to support c. Lynch's postions and there are more more comrades that write against his his postions. Cdre. Lynch didn't answer after so many montls c. Johnson questioner's on the state debate and he press very much to eliminate this discussion from the IEC agenda.
However, despite the minority on the state question getting smaller, now the Adcom is composed of 3 supporters of that positions. We don't say in advance that they will try to abuse its powers to influence the debate. We only say that it is not the best for the LRCI that all its fultimers are against such an important official positions and without significative support..

Conclusions.

We accept the results in the last IEC. We losed in the election of the IS despite some vitories in the debates on the NQ and UF. We will work loyally with the new leeadership. But in the period up to congress and at congress. We will continue maintaining this position.

1. The LRCI should replace the slogan for freedom for all non-fascist burgeois parties in the DWS by demand for freedom only to all the parties that the Working Class feel as their own representantives.

2. THe LRCI should change the formulation "the proletariat should therefore recognize unconditionally the right to self-determination of the oppresed nation even if this nation should then procceed to restore capitalism". The LRCI should re-adopt its previous positions on the National Question in the DWS. Before he dies c. Hughes made an excellent two pages central article in WP about the NQ in the DWS. We want to replace the previous sentence with one edited sentence that appears in that article and sintetice the traditional WP/LRCI's line:
"The right to self-determination is subordinetd to the defense needs of the workers state".

3. The LRCI should defend their traditional line on the state question in the DWS.

4. The change of the characterization of "strategic defeat" in Bolivia because it is confused and is against our tradition profile and its replecement with the characterization that were unanimosly adopted in the MRCI in the "theses on Bolivia".

5. For a collective, representative, really internationalist and democratic IS. We are against the conception of an IS homegeneous and anglo and euro-centric. We should also have to discuss the possivilty to create an intermediate level of international leadership in between the day to day IS and the six months IEC that could meat every 1 or 2 months and that could integrate the best LRCI's european based leaders. We don't have a complete elaborated position. It could be, for example, that every month we could have a weekend meeting of an IS plenum with 9 members that come from different parts of Europe and every week we can have a Political Bureau of between 3 to 5 members.

Leo (WPNZ)
Pedro (POB)
Remigio (POP)
Johnson (ex-IS)

First week of january.