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THE ONLY ROAD TO WORKERS' POWER AND SOCIALISM

(El Unico Camino Hasta el Poder
Obrero y el Socialismo)

by Carlos Ramirez, Sergio Domecg and Juan Candela.

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SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY

**THE ONLY ROAD TO WORKERS'
POWER AND SOCIALISM**

**(EL UNICO CAMINO HASTA EL
PODER OBRERO Y EL SOCIALISMO)**

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Juan Candela**

This document is published in the International Information Bulletin in accord with the United Secretariat motion adopted at its meeting of April 15-16, 1972: "To respond to the request of the Political Bureau of the Argentine section as conveyed by Sabado and put priority on immediately translating into English and French and publishing in the International Discussion Bulletin two documents representing their views: 'El Unico Camino' and the resolution of the fifth congress of the PRT (Combatiente)."

(The fifth congress resolution will be published as soon as it becomes available.)

CHAPTER ONE

MARXISM AND THE QUESTION OF POWER

A) Some General Considerations Relating to the Question of Power and Armed Struggle

Let us start at the beginning: What general basic approach should revolutionary Marxists insist upon when the question of a strategy for power and armed struggle are being considered?

1) In the first place, we should make an analysis of the economic situation of world capitalism and of the international revolutionary struggle, keeping in mind that the socialist revolution is international in content and national in form. This should be followed by an analysis of the economic situation and of the revolutionary struggle in that area of the world and in the country itself. The analysis should take into account the present stage of development of the productive forces. This will permit us to make a preliminary decision regarding the possibilities for a "real" revolution: that is, whether or not capitalism can still expand the means of production. The analysis should also consider whether revolutionary classes exist or not; the relation between the political superstructure and the social structure; the uneven development of the economy and the revolutionary forces, country by country, region by region, etc., and the possible *concrete* combinations of all factors, economic as well as political, etc.

This analysis would permit us to establish the following:

a) the possibility of the development of the revolution, and its uneven pace in different parts of the world and in one's country; b) which is the revolutionary class and who are its possible allies; c) what is the specific combination of revolutionary tasks and the slogans that should be used during the revolution's different stages (democratic, socialist, national tasks, etc.) for each region and country.

2) In the second place, we should analyze the class relationship of forces. We should look at the degree of organization and cohesion of the counterrevolutionary social forces; their government's complexity and level of development; the development of military technology, and their army; their internal contradictions on a national as well as international scale. We should also examine the level of organization and strength of the revolutionary classes, their experience and revolutionary consciousness; whether they have been able to build a cohesive revolutionary party; whether they have been able to develop a military force, and the nature of that force (weak or strong, etc.). This second aspect—which, in general, we have previously regarded superficially—in combination with the first, will permit us to establish:

a) The future dynamic of the revolutionary struggle (whether it will be short or prolonged; whether it will be a national or civil war or a combination of both; the characteristics the struggle will acquire in each period according to the specific forms of struggle of each class and the existing relationship of forces). This analysis is very important since the tasks and the policies

that we will carry out in each stage depend upon it. This analysis will permit us to define the character of each stage and the overall strategy for it (defensive or offensive, limited or generalized armed struggle, etc.). We must keep in mind not only the needs of the existing stage, but also the preparation of our forces for the next one.

b) We will be able to determine the concrete conditions for the victory of the revolution, which will vary from country to country and will vary from one historical epoch to another.

In summary: to lay the basis of a strategy for power we must consider the general economic, political and military conditions in the world, the continents, the region and the country. From a study of the overall situation we can form a clear idea of the stages and phases of the revolutionary war; the principal and secondary tasks of each stage; each stage's approximate duration and political and military characteristics, and the manner and conditions under which the seizure of power by the revolution will occur. All this is what we call the strategy for political and military power.

Without a proper — strategic — understanding of the overall situation and the various phases or stages of which it is composed, the party will proceed blindly and will not be able to lead the masses to victory. The party will remain limited to an empiric understanding of the immediate situation, believing that the winning revolutionary strategy is the mere arithmetic sum of partial tactical goals if it does not take into account the deciding factor for the revolutionary war's success: the attention that should be paid to the overall situation, including the different stages. An understanding of the overall situation helps us to understand the parts which make up the whole. This is the only way to prevent losing oneself in a mere tactical concept of stages and falling into adventurism or opportunism.

Let us go on to the second part of the question. Once our strategy, our overall view of the situation and of the different stages and partial phases is established the problem will be posed: What specific forms of struggle and military tactics are best suited to each stage and also linked to our strategy? Let us consider some general Marxist propositions in order to help solve these problems:

a) Revolutionary Marxism, in contrast to all other political tendencies, accepts all forms of struggle by the revolutionary classes, rejecting none. (Syndicalists accept only the economic strike, even though they apply "forceful methods"; reformists accept only legal and parliamentary struggles; anarchists—at least in the epoch in which they existed—utilize terrorism, etc.) Marxism doesn't "invent" the methods, it takes them from the general course of the revolutionary struggle, "generalizing, organizing the developing consciousness" (Lenin: "Guerrilla Warfare").

b) Marxism demands that we select the forms of struggle best suited to the concrete historical conditions of the stage of the developing revolution and in consonance

with those conditions to determine which are fundamental and which are secondary. (For example, in a general sense: during a period of boom and stability for bourgeois regimes, parliamentary and trade-union struggles should be considered the fundamental forms of struggle. When the bourgeois regime is in crisis, armed struggle and insurrection are fundamental, etc.) It is the duty of the revolutionary party to orient and guide the masses toward the most useful forms of struggle in accordance with the general strategy for power and suited to the distinctive features of the particular stage.

c) Marxism doesn't limit itself to the possible and existing forms of a given moment since it recognizes the inevitable necessity for new forms of struggle when historical changes take place. Taking into account the uneven and combined development of the revolution, it recognizes that on many occasions the necessary forms of struggle for a new period are taken up with a certain delay by the masses due to inertia flowing from the previous stage. The mission of revolutionaries, then, is to try to educate the masses and organize them in the methods of struggle most suitable to each stage of the revolution.

Without forgetting for an instant all of the previously mentioned aspects, we must point out another which is basic to a strategy for power and to all relevant forms of struggle for each period. Lenin as well as Engels "repeated [this one] again and again, trying to make the Marxists comprehend it": "Military tactics depend on the level of military technique." Lenin explains to us in a practical way the application of this principle when he points out: "Military technique today is not what it was in the middle of the nineteenth century. It would be folly to contend against artillery in crowds and defend barricades with revolvers." ("Lessons of the Moscow Uprising.") Therefore, the party must also play a leadership role in the perfection of modern military tactics derived from the level of military technology.

B) Historic Evolution of the Strategy for Power and Armed Struggle in Revolutionary Marxism

We have outlined the general basic considerations needed for the study of a strategy for power and armed struggle. We now intend to present a historic summary that will permit us to see how these problems were solved by the great leaders and theoreticians of revolutionary Marxism in the concrete conditions of their time and countries.

Marx and Engels

Marx and Engels devised a strategy for the working class to take power based on the level of development of the productive forces and military technology of Europe in the past century. We should note two separate periods: the ideas of Marx and Engels up to 1895, and the ideas of Engels after 1895. Before 1895 Marx and Engels considered that the proletariat, in a rapid and violent uprising, and carrying along with it the middle social layers of the large cities, would take control of the streets by fighting at barricades. The aim of this struggle was not to obtain a "victory as between two armies," which would, according to Engels, be "one of the rarest exceptions." (Introduction: "The Class Struggle in France 1848-1850.") It was rather to "[make] the troops yield to

moral influences which, in a fight between the armies of two warring countries, do not come into play at all or do so to a much smaller extent. If they succeed in this, the troops fail to respond, or the commanding officers lose their heads, and the insurrection wins. If they do not succeed in this, then, even where the military are in the minority, the superiority of better equipment and training, of single leadership, of the planned employment of the military forces and of discipline makes itself felt." (Ibid.)

They arrived at this strategy with the following things in mind: 1) The almost totally working-class and urban character of the revolution. 2) The middle social layers were all attracted to the working class and the youth and the powerful idea of socialism which was identified with the most romantic ideals of liberalism. 3) The weakness of the bourgeoisie's military forces and weaponry (imperialism had not yet come into existence at this time).

In 1895, when Engels drew up a balance sheet of the great working-class revolutions which had taken place during that century, he modified this strategy due to the following changes that had occurred:

1) By 1849 "Everywhere the bourgeoisie had thrown in its lot with the governments." Furthermore, "An insurrection with which all sections of the people sympathize will hardly recur; in the class struggle, all the middle strata will probably never group themselves round the proletariat so exclusively that in comparison the party of reaction gathered around the bourgeoisie, will well-nigh disappear. The 'people,' therefore, will always appear divided, and thus a most powerful lever, so extraordinarily effective in 1848, is gone." (Ibid.) Lastly, "The spell of the barricade was broken; the soldier no longer saw behind it 'the people,' but rebels, agitators, plunderers, levellers, the scum of society..." (Ibid.)

2) The growth of the armies and their special counter-revolutionary training.

3) The growth of the railway system which permitted a large military mobilization in a short period of time.

4) The invention of the repeating rifle which was very superior to the old hunting guns and even "the fancy guns of the munitions shops," and the new street plans which made for "long, straight, broad streets, as though made to give full effect to the new cannon and rifles."

The conclusion Engels draws from his analysis is the following: "The time of surprise attacks, of revolutions carried through by small conscious minorities at the head of unconscious masses, is past. Where it is a question of a complete transformation of the social organization, the masses themselves must also be in it, must themselves already have grasped what is at stake what they are going in for with body and soul." (Ibid.)

"In future, street fighting can, therefore, be victorious only if this disadvantageous situation [we refer to the above-mentioned points] is compensated by other factors. Accordingly, it will occur *more seldom in the beginning* of a great revolution than in its further progress, and will have to be undertaken with greater forces. These, however may then prefer... the open attack to the passive barricade tactics." (Our emphasis. Ibid.)

As a result of this analysis, Engels was cognizant of the importance for the European social democracy to take advantage of the possibilities for growth in a situation of legality, "using universal suffrage," since "... the Socialists are realizing more and more that no lasting victory

is possible for them, unless *they first win* the great mass of the people, that is, in this case, the peasants. Slow propaganda work and parliamentary activity are recognized here, too, [in France] as the immediate tasks of the party." (Ibid.)

The opportunist leadership of the German social democracy took advantage of this work by Engels and published it in a fragmented and distorted version "taking all that it could use to defend a tactic of peace at all costs and against violence." (Letter from Engels to Lafargue, April 3, 1895.) We are not saying that Engels' article might have provoked the reformist degeneration of the European social democracy; this degeneration was the product of social pressures. However, basing itself on that article among other things, German social democracy developed all its parliamentary and reformist ideas.

Lenin

In opposition to social democratic reformism Lenin formulated a new strategy for taking power based on the concrete conditions in Russia. Though this included elements of the classic formulation, it was fundamentally different in certain aspects. Lenin kept to the classic concept of the road to power, taking into consideration the concrete Russian conditions. In Russia the conquest of power would take place through a general insurrection of a working-class and urban character in which the working class would lead the peasantry which was already carrying on its own agrarian revolution. And—in a manner similar to the great European revolutions of the previous century—would win over broad sections of the Tzarist army. With the weapons and soldiers thus gained the revolutionary power could be installed.

However, Lenin contributed some new elements to the idea of insurrection:

1) The victory of the revolution would not come about as a consequence of one short-lived insurrection, rather victory would be won through a *prolonged civil war*. According to Kautsky, "...the impending revolution... will be less like a spontaneous uprising against the government and more like a protracted *civil war*." Lenin answered, "That is how it was, and undoubtedly that is also how it will be in the coming European revolution!" (Lenin: "Lecture on the 1905 Revolution.")

What would be the distinctive features of this prolonged civil war in Lenin's view? In his 1906 article, "Guerrilla Warfare," he explains it this way: "The forms of struggle in the Russian revolution are distinguished by their colossal variety compared with the bourgeois revolutions in Europe. Kautsky partly foretold this in 1902 when he said that the future revolution (with the exception *perhaps* of Russia, he added) might be not so much a struggle of the people against the government as a struggle between two sections of the people. In Russia we undoubtedly see a wider development of this *latter* struggle than in the bourgeois revolutions in the West. The enemies of our revolution among the people are few in number, but as the struggle grows more acute they become more and more organized and receive the support of the reactionary strata of the bourgeoisie. It is therefore absolutely natural and inevitable that in *such* a period, a period of nationwide political strikes, an uprising cannot assume the old form of individual acts restricted to a very short time and a very small area. It is absolutely

natural and inevitable that the uprising should assume the higher and more complex form of a prolonged civil war embracing the whole country, i.e., an armed struggle between two sections of the people. Such a war cannot be conceived otherwise than as a series of a few big engagements at comparatively long intervals and a large number of small encounters during these intervals. That being so—and it is undoubtedly so—the Social Democrats must absolutely make it their duty to create organizations best adapted to lead the masses in these big engagements and, as far as possible, in these small encounters as well."

Lenin believed that the insurrection would triumph after a prolonged civil war because he maintained that the proletariat was starting from a weak situation in comparison with a powerfully organized state. In the course of a prolonged civil war the proletariat would accumulate experience and strength; would form a strong party forged in action, clandestine and centralized at the same time. A revolutionary army would be built, consolidated not only by participation in the "big engagements" during periods of revolutionary upsurge, but also in the "large number of small encounters" (guerrilla warfare) carried out during the long periods of revolutionary retreat.

When the proletariat has acquired sufficient experience, created its strong and tempered party and its revolutionary army; when the bourgeoisie has been weakened sufficiently, particularly its army, and has alienated the middle social layers; then the insurrection will triumph.

For Lenin, we see, the revolution was an ascending spiral, with revolutionary upsurges and downturns brought on by setbacks. During the downturns, however, the revolutionary classes were able to maintain the superior level of experience and organization gained during the previous upsurge which put them in a better position for the next upsurge. This spiral could only be broken if the bourgeoisie was able to resolve the contradictions which prevented further development of the productive forces.

2) Lenin, along with Trotsky, pointed out the general conditions in Russia which made for the triumph of the revolution (conditions which extended in general throughout the Europe of their day). They were the following: *First*: "that the existing social structure has become incapable of solving the urgent problems of development of the nation." (Trotsky: "History of the Russian Revolution.") *Second*: the existence of "a new class capable of taking the lead in solving the problems presented by history." (Ibid.) This class, the proletariat, would become "capable" of taking the lead in the nation when it had acquired a "new political consciousness" (revolutionary), when it had built a party and a revolutionary army and instruments of dual power. *Third*: "the discontent among [the] intermediate layers" and "their readiness to support a bold revolutionary initiative on the part of the proletariat..." (Ibid.) *Fourth*: "the revolutionary party, as a tightly welded and tempered vanguard of the class." (Ibid.) *Fifth*: "[the] combination of party with soviets—or with other mass organizations more or less equivalent to soviets." (Ibid.) *Sixth*: the existence of a revolutionary army since "...a genuine victory of the revolution is impossible without such an army." (Lenin: "The Latest in Iskra Tactics.")

3) We can therefore say that the fundamentally important tactical elements added by Lenin to the classical

concept (tactical because they are subordinate to the strategy of prolonged civil war) were the following: a) The already known proposition that a strong, centralized, clandestine party, led by professionals, was needed. b) Armed struggle takes place in all stages, in the form of "a large number of small encounters" (which Lenin called guerrilla warfare) during periods of lull as well as in the "big engagements." c) In order for the revolution to be victorious a revolutionary army is necessary, organized by the party itself as part of its military preparation, and the creation of armed workers' detachments (for which the party should carry on tireless propaganda, agitation and organization). The armed workers' detachments would gain military experience in many "guerrilla actions" during the "difficult, complex and long process of the prolonged civil war" and would be able to arm the proletariat and win to its side sections of the reactionary army during the insurrection. These detachments would be under the party's direction and their actions would be directed not only to the expansion of their military capabilities, but also to guaranteeing the existence of all party activity by physically eliminating its enemies and expropriating financial resources. d) The call for a general insurrection should only be made when the "general conditions for a revolution have matured," when "the spirit and attitude of the masses have been made manifest," when the "outside (objective) situation is clearly the result of a deep crisis" and when "a strong and ready revolutionary army" exists.

4) From a strictly military point of view, Lenin made an extraordinary tactical contribution. We noted that Engels had shown the impossibility of defending military positions, at least in the first stages of the revolution when the bourgeois army was not in the throes of a total crisis. However, Engels never came up with a military solution of this problem.

Lenin takes Engels' basic conclusion: "Military tactics depend on the level of military technique," and expands it: "Military technique today is not what it was in the middle of the nineteenth century. It would be a folly to contend against artillery in crowds and defend barricades with revolvers. Kautsky was right when he wrote that it is high time now, after Moscow, to review Engels' conclusions, and that Moscow had inaugurated '*new barricade tactics*.' These tactics are the tactics of guerrilla warfare. The organization required for such tactics is that of mobile and exceedingly small detachments, units of ten, three or even of two persons." (Lessons of the Moscow Uprising.) As we can see, Lenin is the discoverer and promoter of the idea of urban guerrilla warfare, substituting it for the concept of fixed-position warfare which the proletariat had tried to use up until that time against armies with superior weapons and organization.

When the situations and conditions foreseen by Lenin all came together the revolution triumphed. Following the triumph of the revolution the Red Army was organized, its backbone being the old revolutionary army (Red Guard) built by the Bolsheviks in the course of the revolution. Anti-imperialist and civil war came after taking power in response to the combined aggression of the Russian bourgeoisie and imperialism.

The Leninist conception of strategy and tactics led the Russian working class and peasants to victory. It was shown to be correct in practice (the final test of truth for

Marxism) because he started from a correct analysis of the dynamics of the revolution and the level of military technology in his epoch.

Lenin determined with precision that in Russian society the industrial proletariat was the vanguard class, with the proletariat of Petrograd, Riga and Varsovia its leading sector and the peasantry its main ally. He showed how to destroy the bourgeois army: political work among the rank and file worker and peasant soldiers combined with direct "guerrilla war" confrontations by armed workers' detachments. During the course of the "guerrilla war" the revolutionary army, the "material force" which guaranteed victory to the revolution, was constructed.

This conception was perfectly suited to the Russian situation. Russia was an agricultural country developing along capitalist lines with large sections of the middle classes forced into the proletariat by an autocratic government. Its army, composed of workers and farmers hungry for "bread, peace, and land," was worn out by years of inter-imperialist war. The historical period was one of interimperialist contradictions which held back the formation of a world-wide counterrevolutionary police force, leaving the revolution to contend mainly with its national enemies and their army whose weapons and techniques were based only on the national level of economic development.

Trotskyism

Our movement arose in the struggle to keep alive the revolutionary ideas of Marxism-Leninism during the era of the degeneration of Marxism under the aegis of Stalinism and the crushing of the European revolution.

The Trotskyist program for the above-mentioned period and for the struggle against fascism was essentially correct. But the physical liquidation of the best cadres under the fascist and Stalinist repression severely reduced the chances of forming a link between the correct program and the masses: the revolutionary organization.

Our Transitional Program is very cautious in its treatment of the strategic problems of taking power and sums up this question by pointing out, "It is impossible in advance to foresee what will be the concrete stages of the revolutionary mobilization of the masses." But the Transitional Program then goes on to elaborate in the best way done up to now by Marxism the transitional tasks of the proletariat, among these being the creation of armed detachments and workers' militias as embryos of the future proletarian army.

Where it becomes evident that our movement lacks a clear strategy for power is in the underdeveloped countries where the revolution has an agrarian and anti-imperialist character. Our Transitional Program ends up on this question by raising the essentially correct slogans: agrarian revolution, national independence, a national assembly; but it errs in its understanding of which forms of struggle are appropriate and what the future stages of the revolution will be. That is to say, it underestimates the role of the peasantry, it ignores the role of guerrilla warfare as a method of building the revolutionary army in the countryside, and it doesn't point out the character the civil and national revolutionary war will assume in the agrarian, colonial or semicolonial countries: its prolonged character.

The main point is that our movement has always stood for armed struggle, for the need to arm the proletariat and to create new armed working-class organizations. This is true in spite of some present day epigones who consider all attempts to organize and prepare new armed bodies within the working class as ultraleftism. This attitude puts them *several steps* behind the old social democratic ideas. Let us see, therefore, how the arming of the proletariat and the creation of armed formations is dealt with in the Transitional Program: "The petty-bourgeois democrats—including Social Democrats, Stalinists and Anarchists—yell louder about the struggle against fascism the more cravenly they capitulate to it in actuality. Only armed workers' detachments, who feel the support of tens of millions of toilers behind them, can successfully prevail against the fascist bands. The struggle against fascism does not start in the liberal editorial office but in the factory—and ends in the street. Scabs and private gunmen in factory plants are the basic nuclei of the fascist army. *Strike pickets* are the basic nuclei of the proletarian army. *This is our point of departure*. . . . It is necessary to write this slogan into the program of the revolutionary wing of the trade unions. It is imperative wherever possible, beginning with the youth groups, to organize groups for self defense, to drill and acquaint them with the use of arms.

"A new upsurge of the mass movement should serve not only to increase the number of these units but also to unite them according to neighborhoods, cities, regions. It is necessary to give organized expression to the valid hatred of the workers toward scabs and bands of gangsters and fascists. It is necessary to *advance the slogan* of a *workers' militia* as one of the serious guarantees for the inviolability of workers' organizations, meetings and press.

"Only with the help of such *systematic, persistent, indefatigable, courageous agitational and organizational* work, always on the basis of the experience of the masses themselves, is it possible to root out from their consciousness the traditions of submissiveness and passivity; to train detachments of heroic fighters capable of *setting an example* to all toilers; to inflict a series of tactical defeats upon the armed thugs of counterrevolution; to raise the self-confidence of the exploited and oppressed; to compromise fascism in the eyes of the petty bourgeoisie and pave the road for the conquest of power by the proletariat."

As we can see, although our movement did not have a clear and precise strategy for taking power, it is an irrefutable fact that the Transitional Program points to the pressing need to create the armed detachments of the proletariat for reasons of self defense and as embryos of the future army of the proletariat.

Maoism

Mao elaborated his strategy for power on the basis of the specific nature of the Chinese revolution and its vanguard. He pointed out the following special aspects of this revolution: 1) China is a "vast semi-colonial country unevenly developed both politically and economically and has carried out a great revolution." 2) "The agrarian revolution."

From these two characteristics Mao draws the follow-

ing conclusion: After the defeat of the urban working class revolution which resulted in the establishment of the Red Army—the product of a division in the national revolutionary army (army of the Kuomintang, party of the antifeudal Chinese bourgeoisie)—the party and the Red Army should take advantage of the uneven development of China and the vastness of its territory. They should dedicate themselves to the establishment of revolutionary "bases," without means of communication, in areas most remote from and most inaccessible to the reactionary army. From these "bases" they should organize revolutionary power based on the agrarian revolution and develop the Red Army until it was strong enough to "surround the cities with the forces of the countryside." According to Mao, this was possible because "China had gone through a great revolution (1925-27) which had laid the basis for the Red Army, for the Chinese Communist Party which leads the Red Army, and for the masses who have participated in the revolution."

3) The third characteristic is "the great power of the enemy." 4) The fourth is the Red Army which is small and weak. From these last two characteristics Mao came to the same conclusion as Lenin: that the revolution would take the form of a prolonged war. The concrete form would be of "counter campaigns to the enemy's campaigns of encirclement and liquidation." The counter campaigns would also be directed toward "encircling and destroying the enemy forces." (Mao: "Strategic Problems in Guerrilla Warfare.")

Thus Mao took the fundamental elements of Leninist strategy to win power: permanent armed struggle directed by the party, prolonged civil war and guerrilla warfare. He based himself on geographic-social conditions (the existence in China of regions inaccessible to the reactionary army and the agrarian character of the revolution), technical-military considerations (the impossibility of confronting a strong and powerfully equipped army in cities in conventional warfare), and applied the essence of Lenin's strategy for the working class and urban revolution to the agrarian and peasant revolution.

Mao's conception of "prolonged war"—which for Lenin was an ascending spiral with advances by the urban proletariat and defeats which still left it better prepared for the next upsurge—could be represented by a broken zig-zag line which also went upward. The Red Army would grow in size during "thousands of tactical battles" against the enemy, it would advance in a zig-zag way to reach its objective, its growth would be relatively independent of the ups and downs of the proletariat and the peasants (although these would have some effect on its strength). During the first stage of the revolutionary civil war which lasted from 1928 to 1936, when the Japanese imperialists intervened, Mao considered the struggles of the urban proletariat very important although always, of course, subordinate to the strategy of building the Red Army during prolonged civil war by guerrillas and peasants. After the Japanese imperialist intervention, Mao gave less importance to the possibilities of an armed uprising by the urban proletariat—which had been suppressed and decimated by the Japanese occupation of the big cities—and he held off on this until the peasant army gained sufficient strength to surround the cities.

For Mao, the general strategy for the victory of the revolution in China would be fundamentally different from

that developed by Lenin and Trotsky for Russia.

To begin with, the Chinese revolution developed under different circumstances: 1) It had to fight against an occupying imperialist army (Japanese) before the revolution had taken power. 2) The revolutionary army was different from the Russian Red Guards, both in its technical-organizational aspects as well as in the way it fought (a mobile and peasant guerrilla war), though it was also based on workers' and peasants' soviets. 3) The class character of the revolution was different.

Owing to these differences Mao figured that different circumstances were necessary to drive out the Japanese and carry the revolution to victory. First the creation of a united anti-Japanese front in China. Second, the formation of an international united anti-Japanese front. Third, the rise of a Japanese people's revolutionary movement and a people's revolutionary movement in the Japanese colonies. Fourth, an increase in the revolutionary and Red Army ranks to the point where it was possible to defeat both the Japanese army and the army of the Chinese big bourgeoisie. Finally, surround the cities with the peasant army and take them, calling for an insurrection. (Mao: "On Protracted War.")

Mao as well as the Vietnamese make a careful distinction—as Lenin did—between armed struggle and general insurrection. For example, during the six years that the anti-Japanese guerrilla war lasted (1939-1945) the Vietnamese Communist Party and the Viet Minh opposed tendencies that urged a call to general insurrection by the people because they considered it an adventurist position. Later, in August, 1945, when a powerful revolutionary army had been built after six years of war; when the Japanese had withdrawn; when Chiang's armies threatened to cross the frontiers allied with the weak expeditionary forces of French imperialism, Ho Chi Minh called for a general insurrection and the uprising was successful.

Evaluation of Trotskyism and Maoism

Although we don't have sufficient time for the organized and well-documented exposition which is needed and which we promise to provide soon, we find it indispensable to put forward our evaluation of Trotskyism and Maoism. Our evaluation is notoriously different from that held by Trotsky and all Trotskyists, as is our evaluation of Mao—we do this so that the many references in this article will be made understandable.

We believe that after the death of Lenin and the consolidation of Stalinism there was not just one, but two currents that kept Marxist-Leninist concepts and traditions alive. It was not only Trotsky and Trotskyism which preserved and elaborated revolutionary Marxism in the face of Stalinist degeneration, as has been traditionally affirmed in our party and in our international. A similar role was played by Mao Tse-tung and Maoism. However, neither current rose to a full understanding, application and extension of Leninism; rather each did this partially, incompletely, with respect to just one aspect of Leninism.

Trotsky and the Trotskyist movement developed the theory of permanent revolution and reached a more profound understanding of the complexity and dynamism of social processes, always understanding them as com-

bined processes and analyzing them from a general point of view.

It is not by accident that the Trotskyist movement, from the viewpoint of the overall perspective for the world and continental class struggle, has arrived at important judgments and conclusions, broadening in this way the vision of revolutionaries.

Trotsky and the Trotskyist movement have also contributed—creatively—to Marxism an analysis of the Soviet bureaucracy and developed from this a very clear theory of the nature and role of bureaucratic formations.

Mao and Maoism applied Leninism to the theory and practice of the seizure of power, which is nothing other than applying revolutionary Marxism to the circumstances of a particular country with the perspective of attaining workers power. That is the "concrete analysis of concrete situations" which Lenin defined as "the very essence of Marxism," the creative application of revolutionary theory to the concrete reality of a revolution which has been thoroughly studied, understood and fought for. As Mao himself said, "the fusion of the general truth of Marxism with the concrete practice of the Chinese Revolution."

Mao and Maoism creatively applied and developed Marxism-Leninism in the revolutionary people's war theory. That is, the need for a revolutionary army which can defeat the counterrevolutionary army; the need to build this army in the rural areas through a prolonged process during which the revolutionary forces grow from small to large, from weak to strong, while the reactionary forces go from large to small, from strong to weak. This produces a qualitative step forward to a general insurrection when the revolutionary forces have gained the greater strength.

Both Trotskyism and Maoism have mutually ignored each other's contributions. What is more, some Trotskyists still believe Maoism to be a part of Stalinism and consequently a counterrevolutionary current. Maoism, for its part, continues to believe that Trotskyism is a movement of capitalist and imperialist *agents provocateurs*. Today the principal theoretical task of revolutionary Marxists is to fuse the main contributions of Trotskyism and Maoism into a higher unity which would prove to be a real return to Leninism. The development of the world revolution leads inevitably to this goal as is indicated by the unilateral advances of Maoism toward the assimilation of Trotskyism (the break with the Soviet bureaucracy, the cultural revolution); the moves of Trotskyism toward incorporating Maoist contributions (the theory of revolutionary war) and, above all, the efforts of the Cuban leadership to achieve this superior unity.

Castroism

In recent times it has been the style in our party to affirm our "strategic agreement with Castroism" (which strongly smacks of demagogy and opportunism). However, we still have not clearly defined this "Castroist strategy." Much confusion has been created by considering tactical aspects as if they were the fundamentals (our "criticisms" of the *foco* theory) and attempting to show—pedantically, without any serious analysis, as is typical of petty-bourgeois intellectuals—that "Castroism" is an "empirical movement" which is "coming closer" to our ideas.

In reality, Castroism, without the theoretical clarity and purity of "method" of the great revolutionary Marxists of the past—but with a lot more than our theoreticians have—has for years been developing a clear worldwide and continental strategy for revolutionary struggle that has not yet been seriously discussed and assimilated by our party. In a short presentation we will try to summarize its fundamental strategical and tactical aspects.

1) For Castroism (we don't distinguish between Castroism and Guevarism, because this is a false distinction), the revolution has entered its "final stages of the struggle against imperialism," Castroism begins from an overall world analysis and responds with a world-wide revolutionary strategy: "We must bear in mind that imperialism is a world system—the last stage of capitalism—and that it must be defeated in a great world confrontation. The strategic end of this struggle must be the destruction of imperialism." (Che Guevara: "Message to the Tricontinental Congress.")

Thus, Castroism bases itself on truly new circumstances that arose in the postwar period: the inter-imperialist contradictions had become secondary. Today, revolutionaries cannot count on inter-imperialist wars (which greatly aided the Chinese, Russian and Eastern European revolutions) as an important factor for the victory of the revolution. For this reason it has become very difficult for the revolution to triumph in any separate country. Today, imperialism "must be defeated in a great world confrontation."

2) The tactic which corresponds to this world strategy is to create "two, three, many Vietnams." This slogan is crystal clear; nevertheless, it has not been even half understood.

Why did Che say two, three, many Vietnams, and not two, three, many Cubas? Because he understood that the exceptional conditions under which the Cuban revolution took place would not be repeated. Because from an overall strategic analysis of the world revolution he foresaw the inevitable intervention of imperialism *before* the seizure of power by the revolution; and its transformation into a prolonged anti-imperialist war by one or several nations against the Yankee army's occupation. Che said; "if the *focos* of war grow with sufficient political and military wisdom, they will become practically invincible, obliging the Yankees to send in reinforcements. . . . Little by little the obsolete weapons which are sufficient for the repression of small armed bands will be exchanged for modern armaments and the United States military 'advisers' will be substituted by United States soldiers until at a given moment they will be forced to draft increasingly greater numbers of regular troops to ensure the relative stability of a government whose national puppet army is disintegrating before the attacks of the guerrillas. It is the road of Vietnam; it is the road that will be followed in our America, with the special characteristic that the armed groups may create something like coordinating councils to frustrate the repressive efforts of Yankee imperialism and contribute to the revolutionary cause.

"America . . . has before it a task of much greater relevance: to create a second or a third Vietnam, or the second and third Vietnam in the world." (Che: Ibid.)

"Our aspirations to victory may be summed up: total destruction of imperialism by eliminating its firmest bulwark—imperialist domination by the United States of America; carrying out, as a tactical method, the gradual

liberation of the peoples, one by one or in groups; forcing the enemy into a difficult fight far from its own territory; liquidation of all of its sustaining bases, that is, its dependent territories.

"This means a long war. And, we repeat once more, a cruel war. Let no one fool himself and let no one hesitate to begin in fear of the consequences it may bring to his people. It is almost our sole hope for victory." (Ibid.)

According to this world strategy for revolutionary struggle, the fundamental thing is the socialist and anti-imperialist revolution in "the dependent territories." Any role that could be played by the masses in the imperialist centers takes second place. The masses in the imperialist countries enjoy relative social stability and have not yet produced any significant revolutionary movements.

However, Castroism in no way ignores the role the people in the imperialist centers could begin to play in the next few years, especially in Europe. "The struggle for liberation has not yet been undertaken by some countries of ancient Europe, sufficiently developed to realize the contradictions of capitalism but weak to such a degree that they are unable either to follow imperialism or to start on their own road. Their contradictions will reach an explosive stage during the forthcoming years—but their solutions are different from those of our dependent and economically underdeveloped countries." (Che: Ibid.)

Castroism has also begun to pay attention to the Black movement in the United States; without overestimating its possibilities because overestimation would introduce an element of confusion regarding the nature of the present stage of the world revolution. In this stage the struggle is still fundamentally the socialist and anti-imperialist struggle in dependent countries. This will continue to be so for a long period unless a catastrophe occurs in the capitalist economy, for which there are as of now no indications; or until there is an abrupt acceleration of the colonial revolution. The Castroist position is even more cautious regarding the peace movement in the United States. Although always encouraging the movement, it doesn't overestimate the revolutionary possibilities because this would introduce, for like all overestimates it would introduce another element of confusion into the strategical concept.

3) According to this world strategy, Castroism points to three particular continents where revolutionary struggle is a tactical part of the overall strategy for world revolution. Those continents are Asia, Africa and Latin America.

For each continent Castroism lays out a continental strategy for revolutionary struggle, but special attention is paid to Latin America.

"The fundamental field of imperialist exploitation comprises the three underdeveloped continents: America, Asia and Africa. Every country has also its own characteristics, but each continent as a whole also represents a certain unity. Our America is integrated by a group of more or less homogenous countries and in most parts of its territory U. S. monopoly capital maintains an absolute supremacy." (Che: Ibid.)

In the first place, Castroism defines the character of the Latin American revolution: socialist and anti-imperialist.

In the second place, it defines its class character: peasant, worker and popular. ". . . the national bourgeoisies have lost all their capacity to oppose imperialism—they ever had it—and they have become the last card

in the pack." (Che: *Ibid.*)

In the third place, Castroism concludes that the struggle is on a continental scale, clearly pointing out, however, that this continental strategy should begin with the opening up of national and regional revolutions which, while they are tactics in relation to the strategy, are the proper way to *begin* the struggle. Thus, each country and each region of the continent, while it is a tactical part of a continental strategy, also needs a specific regional or national strategy elaborated by the revolutionaries of each country and region. All this, of course, taking place within the context of OLAS, a revolutionary continental organization.

To have a continental strategy doesn't mean, according to Castroism, that the struggle itself has reached continental dimensions; this will be achieved when the revolutionary struggles in the various countries and regions have developed sufficiently: "We have maintained for quite some time now that, owing to the similarity of national characteristics, the struggle of our America *will* achieve continental proportions. *It will be* the scene of many great battles fought for the liberation of humanity.

"Within the over-all struggle on a continental scale, the battles which are now taking place are only episodes." (Che: *Ibid.*) This is how Che answered, in advance, the feverish interpretations of those who now, a little late and in a very confused manner, discover that in Latin America a "continental," "apocalyptic," etc.; "civil war" is taking place. In reality what now exist are national revolutionary movements that are part of a continental revolutionary strategy due only to the existence of a continental revolutionary leadership.

4) Castroism applies the same tactics as part of a continental strategy that it applies on a world scale: "the creation of the second or third Vietnam, or the second and third Vietnam of the world."

This, we repeat, is the essential task of revolutionaries in each country and region. "For the majority of the countries of the continent the problems of organizing, initiating, developing and completing the armed struggle now constitute the immediate and fundamental task of the revolutionary movement." (Point 7 of the OLAS Program.) "The historic responsibility of furthering revolution in each country belongs to the people and to their revolutionary vanguards." (Point 9.) And finally, "The most effective type of solidarity that the revolutionary movements can offer each other lies precisely in the development and culmination of their own struggle within their own countries." (Point 12.)

The concrete political and military form this continental revolutionary tactic will take is a prolonged war carried on mainly by guerrilla armies formed in accordance with the particular conditions of each country and region. ("The development and organization of the struggle depend on choosing the right site on which to carry it out and the most adequate methods of organization."—OLAS Declaration.)

This idea is expressly opposed by the spontaneist tendencies, who wait for a "spontaneous revival" of the revolutionary classes and the triumph of the insurrection in a brief period of time. Che said precisely this: "And the battles will not be mere street fights with stones against tear-gas bombs, nor pacific general strikes; neither will they be those of a furious people destroying in two or

three days the repressive superstructure of the ruling oligarchies. The struggle will be long, harsh, and its battlefronts will be the guerrilla's refuge, the cities, the homes of the fighters." The Castroist leadership has indicated its agreement with the criticism of the spontaneist concept of quick insurrection contained in the following excerpt from a letter sent to the Guatemalan CP's central committee and to Yon Sosa's M-13 by the "Edgard Ibarra" armed detachment: "The meaning of this position, arrived at through skillful maneuvering, is to strip away the revolutionary implication of the guerrilla groups. It implies that they can not grow to become the people's army. It denies the role of the peasantry in the revolutionary war of our countries. It denies the need to defeat imperialism and its lackeys militarily in order to wrest power from them. It denies the prolonged-war aspect of the armed struggle. It puts forth the illusory perspective of short-lived insurrection."

Castroism therefore maintains that the method, the fundamental tactic for the struggle, is construction of the revolutionary army, beginning with guerrilla groups. "The guerrilla group, as the embryo of the armies of liberation is the most efficient way to start and develop the revolutionary struggle in most countries." Although aware of other forms of armed struggle, even though they are not specified in the Castroist program—perhaps because reality has not yet indicated them—these are recognized implicitly by the recognition of peasant guerrilla groups as just *one* of the forms of armed struggle, although they are *the most important* form.

In recent declarations and statements Castroism mentions the guerrilla group in a more general way than previously (*foco* theory).

Therefore, it leaves the door open for the appearance of other guerrilla war forms without sticking exclusively to the *foco* theory. The discussion around the *foco* theory becomes secondary as each day goes by, leaving revolutionaries in each country and each region free to use the most convenient way to start armed struggle and guerrilla warfare; as long as they are ready to initiate it, of course.

5) One concept of Castroism which should be pointed to as an integral part of its revolutionary ideas is the proposition that the revolutionary leadership must be united both politically and militarily.

This, while it cannot be considered an integral part of Castroist tactics and strategy, is an important principled question and has been much misrepresented by some "theoreticians."

This is not related to the question of the relation between the party and the army raised long ago by Leninism-Trotskyism and later by Maoism. In the context of the present situation in Latin America that discussion would be as useless as the old discussion of the chicken and the egg. Castroism as a revolutionary leadership found itself faced with the objective reality forced upon it: there are no strong revolutionary parties in Latin America. In the epoch of a worldwide imperialist police force the task of building such parties demands both a political and military strategy for all revolutionary activity at the very beginning.

For true revolutionaries building the party and building a military force are tasks inseparably bound together. Where revolutionary parties don't exist they will have to

be built as military forces from the outset. Where they do exist and are weak, they will have to be strengthened and also transformed immediately into military forces so they can meet the requirements of a political-military strategy for power in this epoch.

In response to this need, Castroism puts forward the idea of the revolutionary leadership's political-military unity. In our time politics and the rifle cannot be separated. A separate problem is to decide who fights for the revolutionary organization with arms in hand and who carries out other tasks. Even in the most orthodox *foquista* organizations half may fight while the rest do other work. This problem should be solved in consonance with the strategy and tactics of struggle the revolutionaries have adopted for the conditions of their country.

However, political-military unity of the leadership is a general principle applicable to all situations and it doesn't demand anything more than that the leadership of the army and of the party (supposing that they both exist separately) should be one and the same thing. Those who oppose this concept do so because they hold reformist ideas about the building of the revolutionary party. Such, for example, was the proposition of the Venezuelan CP leadership which so enthusiastically endorses Moreno's "thesis" published in *"Estrategia, No. 1."* The heights to which he raised these reformist concepts are there for everyone to see and they are available to the entire Latin-American revolutionary vanguard.

6) One final matter deserves attention. Castroism believes that the geographic area and fundamental method for building the revolutionary army is guerrilla warfare in the countryside and that it is impossible to achieve the victory of the revolution without such an army. But it also gives greater importance to urban struggles than does Maoism. In Cuba and in all countries where it has influence on the leadership of revolutionary war (Guatemala and Venezuela, for example) Castroism developed strong armed urban groups in the cities to do as much fighting as the guerrilla groups in the country. Furthermore, in

Cuba, Castroism on two occasions called on the proletariat to carry out insurrectional strikes, one in April, 1958, which was opposed by Fidel who considered it premature (the strike was a failure), and another in December, 1958, when the Batista army was falling apart and the rebel army marching on Havana (not even at that moment did the strike aid the overthrow of the regime).

This is, roughly sketched out, the world, continental and regional strategy and tactics of Castroism. Of all its elements the least important (of a more tactical character) is the *foco* theory for the construction of an army. This theory was developed by Castroism from its empirical experience as the most rapid and practical way to build the revolutionary army. Our party has lost years of time polemicizing against the weaknesses and deficiencies of this theory, so secondary to the general Castroist concept of strategy and tactics.

Embroiled in this petty polemic, we, the super-geniuses of revolutionary Marxism, have strutted around with our theoretical conquests before the "sectarian" and "mechanistic" "petty-bourgeois revolutionary" theories of Guevara (adjectives used by Mr. Moreno in his articles criticizing Guevarism). But up to now we have no indication of another practical method to replace Guevara's theory which remains the best way to start armed struggle and begin to build the revolutionary army. This is something the true practical theoreticians of revolutionary Marxism (Lenin, Trotsky, Fidel, Mao and Che) knew how to create and lead in combat to final victory.

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CHAPTER TWO

DID OUR PARTY HAVE A STRATEGY FOR POWER?

In one of his most widely circulated articles, General Giap, the military leader of the Vietnamese revolution, begins by saying: "Our party first emerged when the Vietnamese revolutionary movement was at a high peak of activity. From the first, it led the peasants, urging them on to take up arms and install soviet power. Because of this, it was conscious from the first period of its life of the problems posed by revolutionary power and armed struggle."

Our own party, on the other hand, first emerged when the revolutionary movement was, from a Marxist point of view, practically non-existent. Because of this, it has not faced the problems posed by revolutionary power and armed struggle in the last 25 years.

Today, the ideological revolution taking place in the consciousness of the working class and in some sectors of the petty-bourgeoisie is reflected in our party. It manifests itself in the important role that "the problems posed by revolutionary power and armed struggle" is beginning to play in discussions within the party.

Our organization developed in the context of two great historical processes: 1) Peronism: the bourgeois and reformist political expression of our working class, with its natural results; defeats suffered at the hands of the most reactionary sectors of the bourgeoisie and imperialism and its subsequent retrogression. 2) Castroism: the undisputed leadership of the socialist revolution in our continent, at least from 1961 until today. To these two great social movements that constitute the historical context of the evolution of our party must be added a third super-structural element: Trotskyism.

The first historical source of our party, its emergence during the Peronist period and during the retrogression that followed, is responsible for its most serious limitation; the inability to elaborate a strategy for power and armed struggle. Most of the pressures on our cadres and leaders during recent years have been reformist, economist and opportunist. These pressures have created incorrect political ideas in our party, political ideas that are ossified today, but remain because of the weight of tradition; ideas that we must correct if we want to prepare ourselves to act like a real revolutionary leadership in this new historical period.

The second historical source of our party, Castroism, of whose continental revolutionary movement we consider ourselves a part, constitutes a danger of an opposite kind. Incorrect assimilation of the Cuban experience has already led us to one disaster (1961-62). The Cuban leadership resolved the problems confronting it in the struggle for power and in the armed struggle in an amazingly suitable way—finally arriving at the formulation of a correct world and continental revolutionary strategy. But the Cuban leadership did not take into account the extremely rich historical experience of revolutionary Marxism and its analytic method. It tried to extend its revolution to an entire continent without a concrete analysis of the forms of revolutionary action necessary in each national situation. This was combined with the inability of the Marxist parties to provide the necessary analysis.

This led to many disasters, for which neither our party nor *any* of our leaders is free from blame.

From its inception as a Trotskyist group our party has always held that in our country power would be won by leading a revolutionary upsurge of the working masses in great urban centers. This conception is common to all Trotskyists. However, our party had degraded that conception by omitting two basic Leninist conditions. They are:

a) The revolution is a prolonged civil war.

b) Prior to the seizure of power, the proletariat and its party must be armed and trained. That is, a revolutionary army has to be constructed.

This conception did not negatively influence our party as a revolutionary organization in its formative period because it helped rather than hindered the party's penetration into the mass movement that was obviously developing and growing. This was the number one task of that period. Although we obviously lacked a correct strategy for power, our party was able to carry out the basic tasks that proved us to be a revolutionary organization. These accomplishments which we still retain and should keep are: a) Strong ties to the mass movement and its vanguard. b) A one-sided defense of and application of Trotskyism (with its successes, errors and limitations). c) Developing—although in a deformed fashion—Bolshevik methods of work and party organization.

A) Openings Toward a Strategy for Power

Under the impact of the Cuban revolution; the successes of Hugo Blanco in the Peruvian countryside; the mass mobilizations of the Tucuman sugar workers; the Uturnco guerrillas, and under the personal influence of Abraham Guillen, that guerrilla group's theoretician, "Palabra Obrera" made an important turn in 1961-62. This turn was based theoretically on Moreno's document, "The Latin-American Revolution," which in practice meant a putchist deviation for the entire party and led to the split of Ben-gochea's group and a precipitate return to the spontaneist conception of the seizure of power.

Moreno's pamphlet takes up, in a general way, some of the theoretical questions posed by Maoism and Castroism. However, it does not give a definite, precise answer to these theoretical problems nor, more importantly, does it attempt an analysis of the concrete reality, even for our own country.

But at least the propositions raised in the pamphlet have a positive effect, inasmuch as they open the door to a new perspective. But it is insufficient and gives rise to all kinds of deviations because the theoretical problems it attempts to counter are not answered unambiguously, mainly due to the fact that they are not taken up in relation to any country's concrete situation.

This analytic method, by the way, is typical of intellectuals inclined toward grandiloquent theoretical plans but incapable of tying theory to practice. Impressed by the abstract and general evaluation of guerrilla warfare and the Chinese and Cuban strategy contained in "The

Latin-American Revolution," our best militants tried to put it into practice.

Che Pereyra, Martorell, Creus and others actively participated in the Peruvian revolution where they became real revolutionary leaders of the masses along with Hugo Blanco. But they ran into a sharp factional fight with Moreno who abandoned his theories as soon as there was an attempt to put them into practice. Bereft of the party's support, isolated and left stranded by their Argentine comrades, and without a clear understanding of the questions posed by armed struggle they were quickly beaten down by the repressive forces.*

Angel Bengochea, Santilli, and other party comrades also soon found themselves forced to break with the theoretician of "The Latin-American Revolution." This group was expelled from the party as if it were an alien body, and in isolation they met with a tragic end in Posadas Street on July 20, 1964.

The period of party history we comment on can be called the time of a theoretical opening to the great contributions made by the Asians in general, and by Mao Tse-tung in particular, to revolutionary Marxism. But this opening lasted only a few months because its initiator quickly disowned his thesis, and, as often happens in the revolutionary movement, it was other people who risked their necks in service to those ideas.

In general, we consider this period to have been a positive one. It could have resulted in a qualitative leap forward by the party in the formulation of a strategy for power, but this leap was momentarily frustrated. The Fourth Congress of our party must make that leap.

B) Return to the Earlier Spontaneism after the Failure of "Putschism"

Moreno found a way to wipe out all traces of the propositions set forth in "The Latin-American Revolution" and make a complete about face. He developed a new theory. The new theory held that the classes or sectors of classes and regions that were in the vanguard of the struggle were in a state of constant change. So that at one time the vanguard could be the sugar workers and at another time it could be the longshoremen. He sought to prove this theory with the example that in 1958, the vanguard of the working class was for a time the bank workers. We remember this theory because it was the subject of much discussion and was finally, though reluctantly, put into practice. Today, as a benefit of the ideological revolution now occurring, we can easily see that the changing class and changing region theory was a theoretical short cut. Moreno used it to break with the perspective opened up by "The Latin-American Revolution" and get back on the old path, the spontaneist strategy for the seizure of power.

Illia's victory in the 1963 elections, his later assumption of office and the beginnings of a slow process of democratization made possible a new wave of economic

struggles (strikes and occupation of factories) and pushed the armed perspective more into the background. Combined with the defeat of the peasant movement in Peru and the setback suffered by the "foquistas" this set the socio-political stage for the resumption of spontaneist theories. The return to spontaneism was marked by the document, "Argentina, Nation in Crisis."

This book contains the spontaneist strategy for seizing power which our party has held to for the last three years and which the Fourth Congress of our party must definitively overcome and put to rest.

What is the perspective for power outlined in "Argentina, Nation in Crisis"? A few paragraphs which deal with this key question and with armed struggle will help us decide. Moreno writes:

"We lack one element to make the perspective fully complete: the ability to predict the future course of the working class and popular movement. The economic crisis and the ruling class offensive cannot be held off (which means there will be increasing exploitation and a continuous rise in the cost of living). The defensive struggles of the working class will increase until some important victories are achieved that will change the present defensive actions into an offensive surpassing anything seen before. Related to these struggles there may arise united actions in the city districts, inter-industry solidarity strikes and new '*plenarios de las 62*.' The working class will decide. Who foresaw that the '*plenarios de las 62*' would take place? No one, although we predicted them. It is very likely that inter-factory unity will develop, that the '*plenarios de las 62*' will re-emerge. This process will begin with the first important victories. If the bosses are able to overcome their conjunctural crisis, then it will be necessary to look to the future. It could be possible then that the bosses would make some concessions because they had work to be done. That would make it possible for the movement to grow, acquiring organizational forms superior to any heretofore. The workers' movement will then, based on the experience gained and its new forms of organization, raise the question of power. (pp. 52-52.)

"I am not going to talk here about the great possibilities for rural guerrilla war as a local expression and part of the mass struggle in certain areas of the country. That is a local question that must be studied in each given locality. I will take up the kind of rural guerrilla war that utilizes the metaphysical three-stage theory and is presented as the backbone of the organization that will carry on all of the mass movement's struggles. We do not believe in this or any kind of metaphysics. On the contrary, we assert that the revolutionary struggle in our country, as in every other country, will have its own specific characteristics, totally different from those acquired by the revolutionary struggle in countries where the working masses have already taken power.

"These characteristics will be determined by the following factors: the socio-economic structure of the country; the traditions of the workers' mass movement and its vanguard; the experience and consolidation of the exploiters, including the middle class, and the impact inside the country made by the expansion of the world revolution. In no two countries will this combination of factors give identical results. Our revolution, for example, cannot take place the same way as China's with its 80 per cent peasant population and its long border with Russia. We now have an 80 per cent urban population and are thou-

* Our party will publish a balance sheet of the Peruvian experience in the near future. We consider it a basic landmark for the Latin-American revolution. We will also make available all the documents and statements which up until now have been kept secret by the Moreno clique, the devoted practitioners of Stalinist methods.

sands of miles from Russia. The same goes for Cuba. In Cuba, the revolution took place with the stamp of approval of all neighboring countries, including the U. S. (as Che has recounted), without opposition from the Free Masons or even the Jesuits, and with support from the middle class and landowners.

"Our call for reflection and study in the search for the specific forms of the road to power in Argentina is made to warn against the metaphysical concept of one single road (that of three inexorable stages). We insist that the language, methods and traditions of our working people be respected. Not even the most heroic, most magnificent revolutionaries in the world can lead them to the revolution by telling them, in an unintelligible dialect, *"Oye Chico, no sea comierda."* [Cuban colloquialism loosely meaning, "Hey man, put up or shut up." — Tr.]

"All this is not, should not, and can not be construed as an attempt to detract from the great achievements of the Cuban Revolution or its brilliant leadership. Nor is this an attempt to detract from the armed struggle as a fundamental and permanent ingredient of the mass struggles throughout Latin-America, including Argentina. No! This call, this insistent warning, is made so that better application of armed struggle can be made, specifically one of its many variants, rural guerrilla warfare.

"We do not believe that the rural population, except in the Northwest which accounts for approximately 2% of the country's population, will provide the ultimate expression of the revolutionary process as against the urban population and the working class who will take first place. The latter have demonstrated numberless times their capacity for struggle and rapid recuperation. The task in this new period is to accompany, lead, push and guarantee success to the struggles of the workers' movement and the urban middle class through use of armed struggle. Why should we turn our backs on this part of our best national traditions? Could it be, by chance, that those magnificent revolutionaries who have forgotten the idiom of our masses and get emotional thrills about terrorism in Venezuela have forgotten that the urban Peronist terrorism of 1956 was far more effective and efficient? Do they also forget the great Anarchist, Communist and Peronist strikes that took place in conjunction with the armed struggle? Why not repeat them, correct them and expand them? Isn't it shameful to abandon this magnificent tradition for a metaphysical schema, the exact copy of some other country's revolution?

"We believe that in the period of great working-class struggles presently beginning in this country, armed accompaniment to those struggles in fundamental and decisive, because this is the only way to guarantee our fundamental tasks in this period.

"We should not allow another battle to be lost. We must develop more effective means for the struggle and for the seizure of power." (pp. 70-71.)

Scorning the entire tradition of revolutionary Marxism, Leninism and Maoism, and forgetful of his own positions in "The Latin-American Revolution," Moreno returns with the greatest of ease to the old spontaneist concept that the working class movement will, as a result of its experience and in new organizational forms, raise the question of power.

Of course he adds the ingredient of "armed accompaniment" to his reformist aperitif, an ingredient which, as everyone knows, did not go beyond the paper it was

written on.

During his search for the specific road to the Argentine revolution Moreno discards, in passing, all applicability to our country of the two greatest examples of taking power through armed struggle: China and Cuba. In "The Latin-American Revolution" he pointed to these as additions to contemporary Marxism. The arguments he employs are, quite frankly, ridiculous. He refers only to specific characteristics of the Chinese and Cuban Revolutions and ignores the fundamental theoretical and programmatic contributions to Marxism that need to be understood in our country. They are:

a) There is no other road to the seizure of power than armed struggle.

b) Armed struggle is not initiated simply as the corollary to a triumphant popular insurrection. It can start as a defensive reaction of the masses and their vanguard under circumstances of a pronounced downturn in the class struggle.

c) The construction of a revolutionary army, without which it is impossible to take power in this period, is to be achieved in those rural areas where the geographic and social circumstances are favorable. This army growing small to large, from weak to strong. To quote again from Moreno's "The Latin-American Revolution," ". . . it attempts to incorporate into the program and theory of the permanent revolution the theoretical and practical contributions of guerrilla warfare, which are the specific forms for the advance of the masses in underdeveloped countries."

But now, he has become the champion defender of our "best national traditions" and thus introduces the subterfuge of counterposing a political-military strategy for power to activity in the mass movement. It is as if he were trying to demonstrate that anyone who starts from a concrete analysis of the situation in the nation and comes up with a strategy for power that is not subordinated to the ups and downs of the urban proletariat has by that fact abandoned work among urban workers.

On the other hand, he does not point out that the Russian model for a victorious urban insurrection has a specific characteristic of fundamental importance that makes it exceptional: the Tzarist army was in a state of complete decomposition because it had been fighting on the front lines in an unjust war.

It is necessary to insist on this matter to make it completely clear in the party. The two main examples of victorious urban insurrections, the Paris Commune and the Russian Revolution of February and October, have one characteristic in common: the bourgeois army was extremely weak. In the case of the Paris Commune, this weakness was due to the Franco-Prussian War, which kept the army preoccupied. As soon as the Germans realized the historic threat posed by the Commune, they not only let the French army go to fight the communards, they also sent part of their own army against the workers' revolution which could not survive under these conditions and went down to bloody defeat.

In the case of the October Russian Revolution, the Russian troops had been fighting on the German front in an unjust war and had reached an extreme degree of decomposition. That made the victory of the insurrection possible. On the other hand, dozens of urban insurrections have been bloodily crushed (the most recent example being Santo Domingo) owing to the relative weakness

of the insurrectionary masses confronted with a strong bourgeois army or with imperialist intervention. From these facts we can draw a clear conclusion: If the bourgeois army is not in a state of crisis, or if Yankee imperialism intervenes, the victory of an urban insurrection is impossible.

C) The Current Justification for the Return to Spontaneism

In a recent work Moreno asserts the "immediate necessity of completely changing our program for power."

But it is very interesting to see how he sums up the party's existing program for power, for it has in fact never been changed.

Moreno says: "Previously, our party's program for power took as its starting point the fact that the working class was experiencing an extraordinary trade union experience of nationwide scope and reformist, economist character which had to be taken into account. From that flowed our program for power, based on the premise that it was necessary to raise the level of consciousness of the nation's working class, calling for a government of the leaders and organizations in which they had complete confidence. As a result, our tactics for power always related to the same central axis, the CGT and the trade union movement within the framework of the national experience. The method we proclaimed was to fight for and win power through an insurrectionary general strike. Depending on the immediate situation, we emphasized one or another tactical application of this strategic line. The trade union leadership never posed the question of power nor even that of political independence from the bourgeoisie and Peronism."

Before analyzing this magnificent summary of our party's strategy for winning power it should be pointed out that Moreno forgets the Castroist virus that "infected him" and the party in 1961. Let us examine, paragraph by paragraph, the end result of Moreno's turn and his attempted justification for it:

"Previously, our party's program for power started from the fact that the working class was going through a reformist, economist trade union experience of nation-wide scope which had to be taken into account."

Correct! *One* of the elements that have to be taken into account is the experience of the country's working class. But to elaborate from that starting-point a strategy for power goes against all of revolutionary Marxism and is typical of petty bourgeois intellectuals who tail-end the *spontaneous* working class movement.

A strategy for power is established *starting* from an analysis of economic, social and political conditions and also from an analysis of the relationship of forces between the revolution and the counterrevolution on a world, regional, and national scale. This analysis as a whole is already the beginning of a strategy for power and has nothing in it that is abstract since the elements that are analyzed are objective and concrete. This is the first step. To complete our analysis we must determine the different stages of the revolution, the concrete chances of success, the tactics appropriate to each stage, the fundamentally strategic classes, and the party's political line which can lead the revolutionary class through several stages to the conquest of power. Throughout these stages it will not only be necessary to keep in mind the revolutionary class's experience, but also to raise the class to a higher level

through the vanguard party's political line.

Moreno's permanent confusion throughout his analysis is due to his jumbling together the concrete and that which is right in front of his nose. He can never see the forest for the trees. This confusion between the concrete and the appearance of things is characteristic of empiro-criticism and does not take into account that dialectical materialism is above all else the science of the unity, the totality. Empirom-criticism tries to understand each separate aspect of the total relationship of forces that determines a situation and—even though you cannot put your finger on the totality—truly determines the concrete.

His reasoning starts from the immediate and the particular. From there he makes an effort towards the general, but always through the limiting narrowness of the particular.

We have already pointed out that opportunists like Moreno always utilize only the first part of the Hegelian law, "All that is real is rational, and all that is rational is real," which leaves them always lagging behind reality and unable to comprehend it. Our method takes into account both poles of the contradictions and acknowledges the reality of revolutionary thought which attempts to include the totality of social forces, separating the primary from the secondary. In this way we can see the succession of different stages so we can *lead* the vanguard class through these stages toward the conquest of power.

"From that flowed our program for power, based on the premise that it was necessary to raise the level of consciousness of the nation's working class, calling for a government of the leaders and organizations in which they had complete confidence."

A perfect syllogism of formal logic!

One hundred years of revolutionary Marxism thrown overboard.

As we saw in the summary of the previous chapter, revolutionary Marxism has established a series of concrete conditions necessary for the victory of the revolution. It indicated a series of stages which the revolution will go through during the course of the struggle between the revolutionary forces and the counterrevolutionary forces until the former, under certain national and international conditions, are able to overcome the latter. Revolutionary Marxism also pointed out that these stages and conditions differ from epoch to epoch and from country to country. Moreno prefers to evade this complex analysis of the "long, hard and difficult" process of making a revolution and jumps from the trade union consciousness of the working class to supporting the rule of the bureaucrats and the unions. Moreno also forgets the works by Trotsky on trade unions in the epoch of imperialism, with their central thesis that the trade unions cannot maintain even their class independence from bonapartist regimes unless they are led by a revolutionary party. Later on in his work, Moreno recognizes that this program had a purely propagandistic character, because, "In the last instance the working class and its vanguard did not pose and did not have to pose the question of power to solve their immediate problems."

What Moreno is trying to say here, translated into the language of revolutionary Marxism, is that there did not exist in our country pre-insurrectionary or insurrectionary conditions, and therefore, the projection of power had to be propagandistic.

What a great way to raise the consciousness of the working class! Instead of telling the working class what stages the revolution will go through until the workers can take power (creation of a revolutionary party and army, prolonged armed struggle against the bourgeoisie and imperialism, winning over the intermediate social layers to its politics, etc.), he creates illusions in the working class about the possibility that the bureaucrats and the trade unions—which Trotsky said couldn't even rise to independent politics—would take power. This is really confusing the permanent revolution with a revolution by "kangaroo jumps."

"As a result, our tactics for power always related to the same central axis: The CGT and the trade union movement, within the framework of the national experience."

We can make the same criticisms of this statement we made of the last, but here an important element is added, "the national experience."

At this point Moreno acknowledges his myopic nationalism. As late as 1968 he discovered that there is a continental civil war in Latin America initiated by Castroism, which—leaving his exaggerations aside—it is necessary to take into account in elaborating a strategy for power. But his expression, "within the national experience," is a confession that he was always incapable of rising to an analysis of the international and continental factors that affect a national strategy for power. And all this in a continent where there has already existed for several years a revolutionary leadership with the correct strategy for power!

"The method we proclaimed was to fight for and win power through an insurrectionary general strike."

His entire "strategy for power" is a step backward in relation to the strategy of Marx and Engels before 1895. It is a step backward because Marx and Engels at least lived in countries where the proletariat had a revolutionary, not a syndicalist-reformist-nationalist tradition. In these countries, the proletariat could expect support from broad layers of the bourgeoisie and was opposed by a weak state which did not have the help of an imperialist world police force.

But this "proclamation" of the insurrectional general strike is the best praise that has been sung to spontaneism in the history of Marxism.

Moreno has forgotten Lenin's constantly reiterated recommendations to those who badgered him about the insurrection. He has forgotten the whole set of concrete conditions held by revolutionary Marxists to be necessary for every country in every epoch before an insurrection could occur.

Here we have a reformist-syndicalist-nationalist working class without revolutionary consciousness, without a party or revolutionary army, without insurrectional objective conditions in the country—as Moreno himself never tires of repeating in order to justify his rejection of armed struggle—and he claims it is necessary to "proclaim" the insurrectionary strike. Lenin called people who proceeded in this way adventurers, charlatans and confusionists.

"Depending on the immediate situation, we emphasized one or another tactical application of this strategic line. The trade union leadership never posed the question of power nor even that of political independence from the bourgeoisie and Peronism."

Eureka! Moreno needed years of opportunist practice

to discover a truth he could have found through a little more diligent study of the great Marxists, especially Trotsky.

But Moreno, the champion of the concrete, the immediate undeniable fact, is incapable of generalizing as did Trotsky thirty years ago:

"In the epoch of imperialism and under bonapartist regimes the trade unions can not even maintain their class independence without a revolutionary party leading them."

Far from Trotsky, Moreno, like a vulgar opportunist, laments the fact that the trade union leadership never posed (by some sort of magic) the question of power.

But in another part in his analysis our great theoretician approaches senility: "Our political line was that the unions and the CGT should take power by means of an insurrectionary general strike, all general strikes are by their very nature insurrectional. The bureaucracy kept this from happening."

Our great theoretician must be very old and very tired to have thus forgotten the ABC's of revolutionary Marxism. Either that or he was very desperate to confuse the party. This paragraph indicates that Moreno has not only departed from Marxism, but also that he retains none of its practical wisdom. In his eagerness to write something down he forgets the dynamic of the revolution, which is a process of "prolonged civil war." He forgets the totality of the subjective conditions (party, dual power, etc.) which *he* himself insists on not only for the victory of the insurrection, but even to begin armed struggle. He forgets everything that he himself has written in order to blame the bureaucracy for his lack of a strategy for power. "All general strikes are by their very nature insurrectional." One can only feel sad to read such childish things in a "document" presented to the rank and file of our party.

A few comrades, perhaps from a lack of familiarity with "the classics," say that our party has had the "classical conception" of the seizure of power. In saying this, they give Moreno a gratuitous compliment, and do the party no service.

As we have seen, the conceptions we have had up to now on the question of power have nothing in common with "the classics."

The formulations we have been using on the question of power do not deserve to be called a strategy for power, even less a political-military strategy. The perspective for armed struggle is not clearly integrated into any of the stages of the process and appears as a general demand as only to differentiate us from Stalinists and reformists in holiday speeches.

This spontaneist outlook should be uprooted from the party's politics, not only because it is a wrong approach to the strategy for power and armed struggle, a dead weight blocking our advance toward a correct outlook, but also because it tends to produce tactical errors in day-to-day practice.

Those who have no proper vision of the whole, of the strategy and stages, automatically commit errors in the partial struggles because they either overestimate or underestimate the possibilities.

The incorrect handling of the question of power has resulted in nothing other than a syndicalist view "decorated" with insurrectionism and spontaneism. Therefore, it is not surprising that our cadres believe trade unionism is everything, that politics is petty bourgeois propaganda,

and that attempts to elaborate a strategy of power and armed struggle at this time when there are no trade union struggles is "putchism."

Nor is it strange if we believe "that the victory of one factory committee can provoke a revitalization of the entire class" which will go onward to an insurrectional general strike and bring down the government in four days. If we held to this syndicalist caricature of Marxism it would not be surprising if our cadres wanted to turn each factory, each conflict, into a small Vietnam coming before the workers like people from Mars but often being transformed into "marshals of defeat" for the working class movement. Consecrated to the heroic struggle against "putchism" we often fell into vulgar syndicalist putchism with the result that in places where our party has led a conflict in the last period the activists have simply gotten themselves fired.

We have reached the end of this chapter and have arrived at the following basic conclusions:

1) Up to today our party has not had a correct strategy for power. We have held onto the erroneous conception that power will be won through a spontaneous urban insurrection during which we will assume leadership of the mass movement, the proletariat will arm itself and in a relatively short period assume power. Our party should

criticize itself for this spontaneist concept and this should be done publicly as befits a truly Bolshevik organization.

2) This erroneous strategy for power did not prevent the establishment of our party as a revolutionary current characterized by:

- a) Ties with the mass movement and its vanguard.
- b) A one-sided defense and application of Trotskyism (with its successes, errors and limitations).
- c) The development—with some deformations—of Bolshevik methods of party organization and work.

3) Today, if our party does not overcome this fundamental limitation, it runs the risk of its definitive demise. The Latin-American and world situation, the crisis of the country, the existence of the military dictatorship and the national character of our party are factors which will help us make that qualitative forward step which our Fourth Congress must take: provide the PRT with a correct political-military strategy for power.

4) For the formulation of this strategy we must begin with a concrete analysis of our country's situation and an exhaustive knowledge of the theory and practice of the world revolution, that is to say, of revolutionary Marxism, so we may apply its general laws to the particularities of the Argentine revolution.

CHAPTER THREE

INTERRELATIONSHIP OF THE WORLD, CONTINENTAL, AND REGIONAL REVOLUTION

Since its birth, Marxism took into account the worldwide nature of the capitalist economy and the consequent worldwide character of the revolution.

Lenin and Trotsky took into account the international character of the revolution not only to determine world strategy for the Third and Fourth Internationals, but also their entire analysis of the Russian Revolution—the possibilities for victory without a revolutionary upsurge of the European proletariat, the influence of the Russian Revolution upon that upsurge, etc.

Marx and Engels lived in the epoch of free enterprise capitalism, that is to say, before the appearance of capitalist imperialism. Revolutions in this epoch, international in content and national in form, had to contest almost exclusively with only their national enemies.

Lenin and Trotsky lived in the epoch of imperialism when inter-imperialist contradictions were quite sharp and gave rise to the two world wars which aided the Russian, Chinese and East European revolutions.

The sharp character of the inter-imperialist contradictions made it possible for the Bolsheviks to take power without setting off an imperialist intervention. In the same way, Yankee imperialist intervention in China was, at most, indirect and in Eastern Europe practically non-existent.

In spite of the fact that on a world scale they did not struggle against a unified enemy, Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky believed that an international revolutionary organization providing a correct political line was absolutely necessary to hasten the world revolution.

In our time the situation has changed substantially. It appears that only the Castroist leadership has taken full cognizance of this change and drawn the logical conclusions. The development of nuclear technology and the growth of the workers states after World War II have moved inter-imperialist contradictions to second place, made the possibility of interimperialist war non-existent and led to the gradual conversion of Yankee imperialism into the police force of world counterrevolution.

Today, as against the pre-war period, the formerly secondary contradiction has become primary. This is the contradiction between Yankee imperialism, at the head of the other monopolist sectors and national oligarchies, and the world socialist revolution whose first vanguard detachment is the NLF in Vietnam.

Revolutionaries throughout the world are faced with the certain intervention of imperialism which will, step by step, send arms, "advisers" and finally thousands of combat troops. This has been demonstrated in all of today's revolutions, Santo Domingo being one of the most instructive examples.

Another important change is taking place in the post-war period: in all countries, including some imperialist centers, the bourgeois state tends to acquire bonapartist forms because of the bourgeoisie's need to control its economic and social crisis from the threat of revolution, its need to form a homogeneous front with imperialism.

In synthesis: Since the war there has been a polarization of counterrevolutionary forces around Yankee imperial-

ism. This has manifested itself clearly in two ways. (a) inter-imperialist contradictions have become secondary, the fundamental contradiction which tends to become more and more acute is between the world counterrevolution and the world revolution; (b) in most capitalist countries the tendency is toward suppression or restriction of bourgeois democracy and the institution of bonapartist forms which in many cases tend towards semi-fascism.

This polarization follows a law persistently elaborated by Lenin and Trotsky in their analyses of the national revolutions of Russia and Europe: If there is a revolution, there is a counterrevolution, and as the revolution advances, the counterrevolution advances.

This law was evident principally in national revolutions during the period of free capitalist competition and the epoch of inter-imperialist wars. Today, in the "last stage of imperialism," it is clearly evident in the arena of the world revolution.

Never before in the history of the socialist revolution has it been so necessary to have an international organization with real influence in the revolutionary process and a world revolutionary strategy in which continents and countries are tactical aspects.

The revolutionary internationalist leadership which already exists: the Fourth International, Castroism, and some sectors of the Tricontinental (Vietnam and others) should form the starting point of this new International and this world strategy.

Within the framework of the Fourth International we have important contributions to make, but to do so we must define our own strategy for this stage of the world revolution.

We believe that our party should clearly pronounce itself in favor of the world revolutionary strategy formulated by Castroism.

Some clarifications are necessary at this point:

Firstly, we are in favor of announcing our agreement with the Castroist strategy and tactics for the world and continental revolution for the following reasons: a) We consider them essentially correct; b) In his most recent works Moreno begins to kick around some aspects of this strategy, but he presents them as his own ideas and mixes in confused and alien elements. Furthermore, he adds to the elements of the Castroist strategy an infernal confusion of ill-defined categories ("continental civil war," for example). He fails to clearly define the different stages and the dynamics of the revolution. He does not distinguish between the fundamental and the subsidiary aspects of each stage, nor does he define the period of time required for the evolution of each stage. (For example, take his affirmation: "The revolutionary dynamic will more and more approximate the 'norm' understood by Marxism," etc.)

Secondly, Castroist strategy clearly defines the present stage of the revolution. The fundamental aspect of this stage is the development of the anti-imperialist socialist revolution in the "dependent territories." The masses in the imperialist countries can at this time play only a sec-

ondary role, although their importance will increase "in the coming years" due to sharpened contradictions in the imperialist centers *caused by the development of the colonial revolution* and the resulting economic and social contradictions in the imperialist countries.

Moreno, in his intrepid efforts to *theoretically* surpass the Castroist leadership, says the world revolution "nears the norm laid out by Lenin and Trotsky," "with the intervention of the working class and the urban population in the leadership of the peasant masses and with a conscious revolutionary party that poses the question of power."

This "norm," isolated in time and space, becomes a dangerous assertion that prevents us from understanding reality.

If this affirmation means that today in the imperialist centers of the U. S. and Europe the revolution is coming close to the "norm," it is not true. It overestimates the revolution's present level of development and possibilities in the imperialist countries. In addition, it blocks us from achieving a correct world revolutionary strategy to guide us in placing our human resources where the most important work has to be done.

If Moreno means to say we are approaching the "norm" *now in Latin America* it is as dangerous as in the previous case because it disarms us strategically and tactically on this continent where Castroist strategy and tactics are correct.

If he means to say *now and in some countries* like Bolivia and Argentina, for example, there might be some small justification. But he would not be taking the whole situation into account, such as the need to build a military force and the dialectical relationship in time and space between the city and the country. We will undertake that study in the following chapters.

In all the proposals that concern strategy and stages it is important to distinguish between the historical perspective and the basic living aspects of the present stage. Furthermore, it is important to make the most accurate evaluation possible of the stage for which we foresee the attainment of our historic perspective.

This is the only method that allows us to decide upon the primary and secondary areas for our work. It is the only way we can arm the party politically and morally, because the party must have a clear conception of the stage through which it is passing and the future perspectives for the revolution.

The world revolution is still passing through the stage that opened with the defeat of the European revolution. This defeat and the rise of the capitalist economies of Europe and the U. S. shifted the center of the world revolutionary struggle from the advanced capitalist countries to the colonies and semi-colonies. Trotskyism, as an international movement, lived in isolation from revolutionary life because it did not understand this phenomenon thoroughly. Theoretical speculations about the "return to the norm" will only continue this separation. The anti-imperialist and socialist colonial revolution will have to advance a great deal, there will have to be "two, three . . . many Vietnams," before the world revolution can return to the "norm."

Nor should the present capitalist economic crisis in the imperialist centers be exaggerated. Even though there are significant signs of economic crisis, there is not one serious economist who says this crisis can become serious

enough to halt the growth of the productive forces. Should we lay out a strategic perspective on such flimsy grounds it would begin to transform us into an international sect of pedants. At this point all we can say with certainty is that the advance of the colonial revolution will exacerbate the imperialist exploitation of the colonies and semi-colonies in a desperate attempt by imperialism to maintain internal stability, and this will cause ever-sharper contradictions in "the dependent territories."

Behind our conception of the present stage of the world revolution there is not the slightest underestimation of the role the working class must play in some semi-colonial countries; for example, Bolivia and Argentina. But world and national strategy, although closely interrelated, ought not to be confused with one another.

What lies behind the empty charlatanism of Moreno? He predicts a crisis for "the entire Yankee economy," and the mobilization of the working masses of the metropolitan countries for revolutionary aims (a return to the "norm"). He now says the revolutionary role of these working masses flows from their "place in the process of production"; not as he had previously affirmed in "The Latin-American Revolution"—alienation. Behind all this charlatanism is hidden the opportunism of petty bourgeois intellectuals who tremble before the "strength and stability" of the Argentine bourgeoisie but still dream of a revolutionary mobilization of the "working class and the masses of the advanced countries" provoked by the "critical situation" . . . of the Yankee bourgeoisie which, fortunately, is thousands of kilometers away.

In his analysis our professor falls back on political methods always characteristic to him. He plagiarizes Marxist analyses and tries to palm them off as his own "brilliant discoveries" in order to maintain the mythology with which he tries to blind the petty bourgeoisie. And . . . he comes to conclusions opposite to those of the Marxists he plagiarizes without acknowledgment.

With these conclusions Moreno disarms the party which should understand that for the next long period the revolutionary struggle will unfold in the colonies and semi-colonies. A crisis of imperialism as a short- or middle-range perspective is not to be expected. The revolutionary forces must steel themselves and morally arm themselves for a prolonged struggle without illusions that the "metropolitan masses" will come to pull the "chestnuts out of the fire."

The entire analysis "made by Moreno" of the Yankee economic situation is a dishonest imitation of the analysis made by the most serious Trotskyist economist of our time, Ernest Mandel, and published in "World Outlook," Vol. 6, No. 2, January 19, 1968.

Using this analysis is dishonest for two reasons: a) the source is not cited; b) he distorts all the conclusions and the analysis itself.

Mandel clearly shows that it is not the balance of trade but the balance of payments that is in deficit and he backs up his analysis with some statistics, identical as to amounts and dates with those Moreno uses to support "his analysis."

But let us drop this charlatan's analysis and see what Mandel says:

"A country's economic strength, in the last analysis, is always a function of its productive capacity and labor productivity, that is, of its potential for producing a given quantity of products with the smallest possible expendi-

ture of labor. In a capitalist regime this potential can be measured by the per capita value of production and by commodity prices relative to those of other countries (that is, by the competitive capacity of industry and agriculture).

"From this standpoint the United States remains by far the most powerful and prosperous capitalist country in the world."

Thus, Mandel, using the Marxist method, begins by analyzing the state of the productive forces, pointing out that this is the most important factor. Moreno, on the other hand, makes a purely monetary analysis which is the method of bourgeois economists.

Later on, Mandel "takes Moreno's finding" and points out that the "trade balance is largely in surplus: the U. S. continues to export many more commodities than are imported," and the deficit is found in the balance of payments. "The source of the deficit then lies exclusively in: a) governmental aid to foreign countries, that is, the cost of maintaining the imperialist alliances; b) the expenses of the American armed forces abroad, that is, the maintenance of military bases and the conduct of military operations abroad."

Later on he points out that "A devaluation of the dollar would not be an economic catastrophe for the U. S." and that "the American economy would be scarcely shaken by it." Also, if the dollar is not devalued, the U. S. would not be in danger of going bankrupt, because although the monetary relationships between European and U. S. capitalists favor Europe in the short run, they favor the Yankees in the long run. Mandel points out that: "The dollar's real weakness lies not in its balance-of-payments deficit. It might even be claimed paradoxically *that this deficit reflects the strength rather than the weakness of the American economy.* The real weakness of the dollar rests in the enormous governmental and private indebtedness in the U. S., without which the formidable American productive machine could no longer sell its flood of commodities."

Unlike our minorityite who takes all his material from Mandel's analysis and draws the opposite conclusions, Mandel points out that the U. S. remains by far the most prosperous and powerful capitalist country in the world. The monetary deficit far from being a weakness, reflects its strength. Mandel deduces that there is no prospect for an economic crisis in the U. S. in the short run, only in the long run *when the only factor that causes the balance-of-payments deficit has developed further: the colonial and semi-colonial revolution.*

All of Mandel's work on the economic level supports our revolutionary strategy, our position on the role of the proletariat and masses of the imperialist countries in *this* stage of many years duration, and our evaluation of the Yankee economic "crisis."

Let us therefore leave our minorityite who keeps speculating about "the return to the norm," distorting the analysis of serious Marxists, and prostituting Marxism. Our party has to have a clear understanding of the present world situation and the characteristics of this revolutionary era.

Strategy for Our Continent

We support all the conclusions of the world strategy developed by Castroism for struggle against imperialism. This gives our continent, along with Asia and Africa, spe-

cial importance.

Castroism also has a strategic conception for our continent which considers regions and countries as tactical aspects. Since we have already elaborated on Castroism's continental strategy we will now point out some aspects of this strategy that must be kept in mind.

Castroist continental strategy begins with the anti-imperialist call to war proclaimed by Fidel January 1, 1959, the same day he took power in Cuba: "We will make the Andes into the Sierra Maestra of the American continent."

The revolutionary seriousness, self-denial and determination of Castroism, its determination to put into practice its declaration of war, were understood late and after much effort by many Latin-American Marxists, including our party.

Castroism's attempts to put its strategy into practice went through several stages, some of which have already been superficially analyzed by our party (Alejandro Martell, *"Tesis Latinoamericanas," "Estrategia"* No. 1). We have not sufficiently noted how Castroism, in each attempt, in every success and every failure, modified, added to, and generalized its strategy and tactics for power on a continental scale.

That is how it arrived, in 1967, at the proposal to "create the second *or* third Vietnam of the world, or create the second *and* third Vietnam of the world" in Latin America, and everything else it added to its earlier conception: the anti-imperialist and socialist character of the revolution, the necessity of creating revolutionary armies that can fight a prolonged war against the bourgeoisie and imperialism, etc.

This strategy and tactics have begun to be put into effect in one region of the continent: Central America.

In recent years Castroism has given secondary emphasis to the southern part of the continent (Peru, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, and Paraguay). Before the Bolivian guerrilla group's formation support was limited to small guerrilla groups which were, for geographic reasons, given military aid in a small way.

Except for these attempts by Castroism and the small groups that functioned in the south there were no important efforts to carry out Castroist strategy and tactics. (Hugo Blanco's efforts were guided by another conception.)

With guerrillas established in various Central-American areas (Colombia, Guatemala, Venezuela), the Cubans made their first serious attempt to initiate armed struggle in the southern region—armed struggle which we, the revolutionaries of the southern region, were incapable of initiating. They sent their top group of fighters to Bolivia.

In 1963 our Bolivian brothers started to plan the establishment of a guerrilla group.

Our party opposed this, basing itself on an analysis opposite to that of the POR, an analysis developed in the spirit of pedantry which is a chronic condition of the minority theoretician.

Moreno, whose nature is to manipulate with political lies of all kinds, has consistently denied that such a position existed. Unfortunately for him he made the mistake of putting it down on paper and publishing it, although only partially, since the letter he sent to the POR has never been published and is much clearer on this matter. To wind up this polemic with the champions of political dishonesty, let us view the POR's position and our position of that time in extracts from documents published

in "Estrategia" No. 2.

PRT Position

"There are revolutionaries who compare the fall of Paz Estenssoro with that of Goulart. Nothing could be more wrong. The Bolivian revolution of '64 repeats the history of '52. . . . Today we find ourselves in a similar position. After countless numbers of defeats for the South American masses . . . the Bolivian workers take the field and reverse the process.

"In the preventive coup carried out by the army to avoid the working class revolution we see a colossal concession to the Bolivian mass movement."

POR Position

"It is a preventive coup led and supported by North American imperialism to contain and channel the proletariat's most important revolutionary and democratic movement. The military coup was not directed against Paz Estenssoro but against the working class and popular mobilization. Paz left everything in order, with his successors chosen and in charge of continuing the counter-revolutionary course of the government under new forms."

The Nature of the Military Junta

PRT Position

"[The army] saw itself forced against its will to initiate a period of the most sweeping democratic rights the mass movement in Bolivia has ever experienced.

"Even the most superficial aspects confirm this analysis: In Bolivia there emerged not a dictatorial regime as in Brazil, but a democratic regime which makes broad concessions to the mass movement."

POR Position

"The military junta is, therefore, a reactionary attempt to destroy perspectives opened up by the mass struggles. The declarations of the military ministers leave no room for doubt and even less do the measures put into practice, like the so-called 'Operation Disarmament.'

"We can thus deduce that the military junta is a continuation of the old regime, a continuation that reinforces the rightward course."

The Working Class's Position on the Junta and the Possibility of an Electoral Outcome

Position of the PRT

"In this way it is possible for the Bolivian army, with its Pentagon advisors, to try to channel the popular and working class movement toward a parliamentary electoral regime. . . . The opportunist and petty-bourgeois tendencies in the workers' movement. . . in demanding elections are taken in by the maneuver of the army and imperialism."

Position of the POR

"Even if in some sectors there arose some hope in the

new government, it would be very quick to disappear, giving way to distrust and criticism. . . . A little later, facing disarmament, the position was clear: open opposition. The mining proletariat was the first to raise the slogan 'down with the military boot.'

"These perspectives have already been tested (the bourgeois electoral opening) and have been proven useless. Because of this they are rejected by the masses."

Regarding the Possible Electoral Maneuver and Slogans for Power

Position of the PRT

"The real demand (to the government) has to center on the absolute necessity that a workers' and popular government, not the military government, issue a call for a Constituent Assembly that is free and sovereign."

Position of the POR

"Against the false alternative of rightist leaders, who tell us to choose between the dictatorship of Paz Estenssoro and bourgeois democracy, the POR affirms that the only road. . . is to fight for socialism.

"Against the Utopian ideas and illusions of the petty bourgeoisie, only the workers' and peasants' government is effective, real and concrete."

Future Perspectives for the Class Struggle

Position of the PRT

"Because each succeeding stage of the class struggle means a broadening and generalization of this struggle, it is not ruled out that the working class might be victorious. The army is using the present stage of democratic liberties to divide the popular sectors, particularly the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie, from the workers' movement."

Position of the POR

"The peasantry, initially confused, is proceeding to place itself in opposition to the junta.

"The urban petty bourgeoisie, which now enjoys the benefits of a wide range of civil liberties, is the group which to a certain degree maintains its illusions in the junta. But already we can see the beginnings of opposition in this group.

"Because of this, the working class and the peasantry, compelled by their problems, march toward the crystallization of their alliance.

"The inevitable polarization of forces that will result from the crisis and decomposition of the regime will allow no room for halfway measures.

"The situation in the working class movement, the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie, is rapidly evolving toward a confrontation with the military junta."

These different descriptions, almost diametrically opposed, inevitably imply different tasks for the Bolivian revolutionists.

The PRT proposed to take advantage of the legality to reorganize the unions, demand a constituent assembly called by a workers' and popular government (!) and, given that the period is one for broadening and generalizing the struggle, preparations for an insurrectionary general strike are in order. As we see, an imitation of the spontaneists' eternal chant.

The POR on the other hand, proposed the centralization of arms under the unions, making them a "proletarian army," the armed defense of land confiscated by the peasants, and preparation for guerrilla war.

Before making any analysis of the Bolivian guerrilla struggle and its implications, our party must make a serious self-criticism of its previous positions on the Bolivian situation. We must clear the field of the theoretical atrocities committed in this respect. We must accept the grave responsibility for the failure of Che's guerrillas largely due to our opposition to the Bolivian party's position of preparing for guerrilla war and our failure to provide human and material aid to that enterprise. Only if preceded by this self-criticism, can the statements of those who talk about "Che's great strategical wisdom" be taken seriously.

The truth is that the Cubans, with their correct strategy, have given a kick in the back to those who didn't see the slightest possibility of developing guerrilla warfare in the southern regions. They have even accomplished the miracle of making Moreno discover that, since the appearance of Castroism, there is a revolutionary war on the continent and that the immediate task of revolutionaries in the southern region is to initiate armed struggle. That is quite an accomplishment.

But even if the Cubans sent Raul Castro and 20 *comandantes* to Argentina it would take more to convince Moreno that the immediate task of Argentine revolutionaries is to begin armed struggle. Who knows? However, as Trotsky said, "Opportunists are radical to the degree they are distant from the situation."

Let us now look at the situation in the southern part of the continent relative to the continental revolutionary war and the continental strategy and tactics of Castroism.

Castroists initiated the armed struggle in Bolivia as part of the tactic of creating two or three Vietnams in Latin America. The attempt failed because no revolutionary parties were organizationally, politically and technically prepared to provide support to the armed struggle carried out by "Che."

The southern region was considered by Castroism, and ought to be considered by us, to be the second tactical zone of the continental anti-imperialist war (the first is Central America). That is its place in the strategy of prolonged, socialist and anti-imperialist revolutionary war. But we also need a strategy for the entire region, one that would take into account the totality of all factors that come into play and would point out the basic stages and regions as well as the tactical relation of the secondary regions.

(An analysis of the strategy for the southern region is omitted here for security reasons.)

The fact that the revolutionary struggle will begin and develop in zones separated by hundreds of kilometers will reinforce the national form of the revolutionary process in the early stages. The coordination of forces among the different countries will go through three stages: a) In the preparatory stage it will be possible to have much interchange of resources and cadres and to conduct a political discussion among different tendencies to decide on a common strategy. b) Once the war has been initiated, the control of areas by the repressive armies and the great geographic separation will force the guerrillas to wage the war independently of each other for a long period of time. This will reinforce the national, rather than the regional character of the war, even though there will be tactical actions for mutual aid and an exchange of men and resources between the revolutionary forces from the very beginning. Moreno's beautiful dream of revolutionary armies swooping down from Bolivia to liberate Argentina will thus have to be postponed for several years. c) During a third stage, after years of fighting, if we are not defeated and have been able to establish strong revolutionary bases in the armed struggle zones, it will be possible to coordinate joint military action by the revolutionary forces in different countries at a higher level. Armed groups will then be able to function in the intermediate zones with the backing of established bases.

This overall strategy for the continent's southern region demands — instead of eliminating the need for — a correct strategy for power in each country. And it requires parties willing to make the most stringent revolutionary sacrifices to "initiate, develop and complete" the armed struggle in their country.

CHAPTER FOUR

OUR NATIONAL STRATEGY AND TACTICS MUST BE DERIVED FROM THE CHARACTERISTICS OF OUR REVOLUTION

Although the Argentine socialist revolution is a tactical aspect of a continental and world strategy, it also has its own national strategy which is related to the regional, continental and world strategy as a part to the whole.

Those who dissolve the need for an Argentine strategy and tactic for the seizure of power into the need for a continental strategy either do not understand the relationship of a part to the whole or are opportunists who do not want to open up the armed struggle in their country.

Any strategy for power and armed struggle in Argentina must flow from an analysis of the world and continental revolution (an analysis we made in the preceding chapters) and an analysis of the general characteristics of the revolution in our country. Afterward, we must specify the appropriate tasks for each stage of the revolution, starting with the immediate tasks for the present situation and the present level of consciousness and experience of the revolutionary classes.

1) Argentina is a semi-colony of Yankee imperialism in the "last stage of the struggle against imperialism." It is located in a continent going through a process of anti-imperialist and socialist permanent revolution. It has an uneven capitalist development, its economy is in a state of chronic crisis with a new conjunctural crisis coming, and there is fairly uniform political development throughout the country.

Due to the country's semi-colonial character and the fact that this is the epoch of the final struggle against imperialism, it follows that our revolutionary struggle, even though starting as a civil war, will lead to a second stage. The second stage will be national anti-imperialist war in which we can foresee that sectors of the small bourgeoisie will ally themselves with the revolution. Anti-imperialist, democratic slogans and tasks have great importance in this period. Intervention by imperialism will shift the relationship of forces between the revolution and the counterrevolution in favor of reaction.

This is the first reason why the revolutionary war will have a prolonged character.

Argentina is part of a continent in which a permanent revolution against imperialism and for socialism is taking place during this "final stage of imperialism." This determines the continental character of the revolution and the necessity to coordinate our struggles and efforts with revolutionary movements in brother countries *in the course of the revolutionary war*. Imperialist intervention will take place in all countries of the continent where revolutionary civil war has forced puppet governments and armies into a crisis. This will make it very difficult, unless there is a total change in the world situation (a world war, for example), for the revolution to triumph in any one separate country. This is the second reason why the war will be a prolonged one and why a quick victory is not possible.

The uneven development of Argentine capitalism, its organic economic crisis and the immediate perspective

of a conjunctural economic crisis indicate that there are regions where the crisis will be sharper, where the possibility of launching armed struggle is more immediate and necessary. In some areas support of the poor peasantry for the guerrilla war can be considered a sure thing. In some places there is an immediate possibility for organizing armed groups among the people's and workers' vanguard to carry out armed actions. All of these perspectives are increased by the development of the conjunctural crisis. Meanwhile in regions where there is more economic stability and in areas where the support of a comfortable peasantry is impossible, there is the least possibility that armed struggle will win immediate support of the people, even though the development of the conjunctural crises provokes mass mobilizations.

From the nation's relatively uniform political development flows the possibility that a revolutionary movement will take on a national character soon after the struggle begins in the vanguard class and region. This is true in spite of the fact that support for armed struggle in the economically stable areas will for a long period consist only of general sympathy, with monetary, human and logistic contributions, and direct armed actions by only a small section of the worker and popular vanguard.

The relative political uniformity in the country also leads to unified opposition to the revolutionary movement by the reactionary classes and parties on a national scale. This very clearly makes the course of our revolution different from that of China. In China uneven political development prevented the various sectors of the counterrevolutionary bourgeoisie and the "feudal warlords" from uniting in common counterrevolutionary action. This is a third reason why our revolutionary war will have a prolonged character.

2) The most revolutionary class in Argentina is the industrial proletariat and its potential allies, the urban petty bourgeoisie and the poor peasants in the North. The working class is unionized on a national scale and has a tradition of economic-reformist struggle under Peronist leadership. There are real signs that the working class is coming to the end of its Peronist experience and is becoming more receptive to revolutionary socialism. Important sections of the workers' vanguard have gone through the experience of Peronist terrorism. The working class vanguard consists of the sugar workers and the rural proletariat in the North.

Since the most revolutionary part of the working class is the industrial proletariat it is necessary for the revolutionary party to develop *all the forms* of struggle pertaining to this class. Through propaganda, agitation and armed actions the revolutionary party will ensure that all the different forms of struggle will have revolutionary socialist political content without getting bogged down in purely economic demands.

There is a contradiction between the working class's unionization on a national scale and its reformist-economist tradition. On the one hand, its national unity creates

the possibility that any struggle launched by an important vanguard sector can expand to become a nationwide struggle. On the other hand, the bureaucratic control that arose from the economic-reformist tradition impedes the extension of the struggle to those layers of the proletariat under its control.

The crisis of Peronist ideas in the working class (a result of the "ideological revolution") and the experience vanguard sections have had with revolutionary-terrorist methods (particularly in the interior) from 1956-61, make the working class more receptive to our revolutionary socialist propaganda and also allows us to take advantage of the revolutionary traditions of vanguard sectors combating the current economist-reformist tradition.

It is an undeniable fact that the Tucuman sugar workers and their industrial and rural proletariat and poor peasant allies are the vanguard sector. This, combined with the fact that Tucuman has one of the most critical economic situations in the country, makes it necessary to promote the struggle of the Tucuman workers and their allies.

3) The reactionary forces are powerful. They are united around the bonapartist dictatorship, a powerful, modern army and have the support of the monopolies and imperialism. Unless a revolutionary crisis or an economic catastrophe develops—a perspective not in any way immediate—inner contradictions will be of a secondary nature. The main struggle will be between imperialism and the national bourgeoisie united on the one side, and the working class, impoverished sectors of the intermediate layers and poor peasants on the other.

4) The forces of the revolution are very weak. There is only a small revolutionary party with little mass influence. At this conjuncture the working class is in retreat. There is not even the embryo of a revolutionary army.

These last two points, the strength of our enemy and our own weakness, provide the fourth reason why the revolutionary war will be a long one, a rapid victory of the revolution being impossible. They also indicate that the armed struggle and the formation of our revolutionary army must go from small to large, from simple to complex actions. We must link the actions to the needs and sympathies of the masses. We will harden our forces gradually during thousands of little actions by our armed detachments.

From the characteristics of our country, from its economic and social conditions, from its political traditions, we have indicated some characteristics that will be general to the armed struggle and the struggle for power in Argentina.

We can summarize the relationship of the Argentine revolution's characteristics to the world and continental revolution as follows:

1) The Argentine revolution is anti-imperialist and socialist, that is, permanent.

2) The revolution in Argentina is tactical in relation to the continental revolutionary strategy but has its own particular strategy which is that the working class and the people will have to embark upon a prolonged revolutionary war in order to defeat the bourgeoisie and imperialism and to install a revolutionary workers and popular government.

3) The revolution is worker and popular in class content because its vanguard is the industrial proletariat, and because its allies are the urban petty bourgeoisie

of the entire country and the rural proletariat and the poor peasantry from the North.

4) Given the revolution's class nature and armed character it must be led by a revolutionary party and a revolutionary army.

5) In the first stage the armed struggle will in essence be a civil war which will slowly change into a national, anti-imperialist war.

6) For several reasons the revolutionary war will have a prolonged character and be strategically defensive since it will be carried on by the revolutionaries, the working class and the people with small forces against a very much stronger common enemy which will take the offensive. However, all tactical operations will be offensive and will be limited as much as possible to situations where the revolutionaries will have the advantage of greater strength.

7) As it develops, the revolutionary war will assume more and more a regional and continental character without respect to national boundaries.

8) In this stage of the world and continental revolution victory for the Argentine revolution will require a strong revolutionary party and revolutionary army; the massive entry of the working class and its allies into the revolutionary struggle; the extension of the revolution throughout the continent, and a worldwide total crisis of imperialism.

The Present Situation in Our Country, Class and Revolutionary Region

Taking into account the world and continental strategy for struggle against imperialism; given the strategy for the southern part of the continent; having studied the general characteristics of our military and political strategy and the stages through which the revolutionary struggle will pass the questions are: How, when and where to launch armed struggle? What are the fundamental tasks of revolutionaries in this stage?

Remaining true to Marxism, we can not and may not use generalized statements to evade an analysis of the present living objective and subjective conditions. These will provide the decisive answer to the question of how, when and where. These will determine our tactics.

Moreno's document is an example of the wrong way to approach these problems, one not worthy of a serious Marxist. In this document he tries to do away with these problems with generalities and ambiguities. For example, "None of the basic objective conditions exist, although there are symptoms that this situation may produce them." "Paraguay and our country are in the rear, they are at this time the two most stable countries (in Latin America)." ". . . the situation of our country is one of relative stabilization with a tremendous deterioration of the national economy (!?) and in the conditions of the industrial workers and small sectors of the petty bourgeoisie." ". . . there is a relatively stable situation among the bourgeoisie and large sectors of the middle classes and the working class movement is in retreat."—And so on.

We, on the other hand, will study the situation of the regime, the present level of the working class movement, and the effect of the former on the latter. We will try to answer the questions raised at the beginning of this chapter, keeping in mind this concrete study of the subjective and objective conditions.

What objective factors must be taken into account in order to answer the questions? A number of factors "right before our noses" give credence to defeatist arguments. The dictatorship has met with no open opposition since it was established. The bourgeois opposition to it has been superficial; up to now there have been only the "politicians" without the support of the important sections of the bourgeoisie. Since the defeat of the trade union bureaucracy's efforts it has been more or less passively submissive and the working class has been even more beaten down in the down turn." Everything seems to confirm what our "great diviner" predicts, "several years of stabilization for the southern cone [southern portion of South America — Tr.] (following the defeat of the Bolivian armed struggle).

But having reached this point, we ought to clarify a theoretical problem of utmost importance that has been continually confused in our party due to the efforts of our fine reformist: What conditions do revolutionary Marxists consider necessary to launch armed struggle? At what moment should a revolutionary group or party consider the conditions ripe for the development of the revolutionary struggle in a country or a region?

The theoretician of reformism within our party presents the problem in the following way: "When do we launch an armed struggle for the conquest of power?" Or, to put it another way: When will we be able to say that a pre-revolutionary situation exists which provides us with the possibility of armed struggle for state power? And immediately after posing the question he cites a paragraph of the Transitional Program that begins by saying: "The basic conditions necessary for the victory of the proletarian revolution have been established by historical experience." [*Las condiciones basicas para la victoria de la revolucion proletaria han sido establecidas por la experiencia historica.*]* And then he repeats the four conditions recognized by the whole party as "prerequisite for the proletarian revolution."

Lenin and Trotsky established these conditions for the victory of an insurrection for the epoch in which they lived and in the countries that they studied. These conditions, depending on how they are grouped, can be considered to be four or six, because to the four referred to by Moreno two more mentioned in various articles by Lenin and Trotsky can be added: a) A new political consciousness in the revolutionary class that manifests itself in "a bitter hostility to the existing order and a readiness to venture upon the most heroic efforts and sacrifices in order to bring the country out upon an upward road." (Trotsky: "History of the Russian Revolution.") b) The existence of a revolutionary army, without which "a genuine victory of the revolution is impossible." (Lenin: "Lecture on the 1905 Revolution.")

* This sentence does not appear in the English version of the Transitional Program. The nearest in meaning is: "The economic prerequisite for the proletarian revolution has already in general achieved the highest point of fruition that can be reached under capitalism." Or possibly: "All talk to the effect that historical conditions have not yet 'ripened' for socialism is the product of ignorance or conscious deception. The objective prerequisites for the proletarian revolution have not only 'ripened'; they have begun to get somewhat rotten." — Translator.

Our party was always guided by this schema, taken from the classics and presented one-sidedly by Moreno, in order to determine whether or not the time was ripe to launch armed struggle. This is another theoretical trap by our reformist theoretician.

We shall see: In the first place, Lenin and Trotsky never claimed that this set of requirements was applicable to all times and places. This outline was, at best, their estimate of what was necessary at the time in which they lived for the *triumph of the insurrection* in Russia or, at most, in Europe.

In the second place, these conditions were established to decide *when an insurrection could be victorious*, not to decide when to begin armed struggle. Nor were they to decide that a prerevolutionary situation exists, for since Lenin's time until today, all of the great revolutionaries clearly distinguished between insurrectional and armed struggle, between revolutionary conditions and insurrectional conditions.

In Lenin's strategic conception, the revolutionary classes *could seize state power* when those conditions existed.

But all the subjective factors *were built up during the period of revolutionary struggle*, during the prolonged civil war, which was both a political and an armed struggle.

We must today add two more necessary requirements to the Leninist conception. These are determined by our own times: the extension of the war throughout the continent and the crisis of imperialism. We can say that, according to the Leninist conception, the revolutionary classes in Argentina are not prepared to make the revolution, to seize state power. But the necessary strength to do so will be acquired during the revolutionary struggle, along the strategic lines we have outlined in the preceding chapters.

The revolutionary class will gain "the necessary new political consciousness" only through this revolutionary struggle, through this prolonged civil and anti-imperialist war. Only thus will it build its revolutionary party and army and develop the organisms or areas of dual power that are necessary to overthrow the regime. The responsibility of revolutionists is precisely to initiate the revolutionary struggle when *objective conditions* have matured, to put themselves at the head of the revolutionary class and guide that class on the "long and arduous" revolutionary road.

What factors must be taken into account to characterize a situation as pre-revolutionary?

Lenin tells us that "Marx solves this difficult problem without shielding himself from the 'state' of depression and tiredness of certain layers of the proletariat (as the social-democrats often do, thereby falling into tail-endism). On the contrary, while he did not possess statistics on the state of depression or willingness of the workers to struggle (in March 1850) he continued to exhort the workers to arm themselves and prepare for the insurrection, without disorienting or demoralizing the workers by his own skepticism."

For Lenin and Marx, the conditions for the development of the insurrection are established by a study of the *objective conditions*. These objective conditions are: 1) The state of the productive forces (if they are growing, if they are stagnating or declining); 2) The *objective* existence of revolutionary classes; 3) Whether or not the middle classes have hope for the future under the prevailing regime.

According to Lenin, Marx continued to exhort the German masses to arm themselves and prepare for the revolutionary struggle despite the crushing of the German revolution of 1849 and despite the evident "state of depression." Later, when Marx and Engels concluded that the industrial crisis of 1847 was over, they raised the question sharply and precisely. "In the fall of 1850 it could be categorically stated that at time of such a rapid development of the bourgeois productive forces, it was out of the question to speak of a real revolution." (Lenin, Spanish edition, vol. X, p. 133.)

This example from Marx was the procedure Lenin always followed in his analysis, including the year 1906, when these passages were written.

At that time, he polemicized against the Mensheviks and Trotsky, who concluded that it was necessary to adopt a reformist, parliamentary, legalistic, non-Bolshevik line due to the evident decline of the mass struggle following the 1905 defeat. The united pedants of the Moreno club have completely turned this polemic on its head, trying to say that Trotsky and the Mensheviks were right in 1906. Nothing could be further from the truth. It was Lenin's method and line that allowed the construction of the Bolshevik party against the spontaneism of the Mensheviks that was limited to the mood of the masses and the subjective factors. Starting from the objective situation Lenin determined the need to maintain the party's clandestine organization, revolutionary methods of work and the preparation of armed detachments in spite of the "downturn" in the mass struggle.

To summarize: We must make a distinction between insurrectionary conditions and revolutionary conditions. The former are all the objective and subjective factors that make possible the victory of a general insurrection. These conditions merge together only for a brief period of time after a long revolutionary process of prolonged civil war. "Between the moment when an attempt to summon an insurrection must inevitably prove premature and lead to a miscarriage, and the moment when a favorable situation must be considered hopelessly missed, there exists a certain period—it may be measures in weeks, and sometimes in a few months—in the course of which an insurrection may be carried out with more or less chance of success." (Trotsky: "History of the Russian Revolution.") It was to be able to determine that "moment," in the conditions of their time and countries, when the revolutionary leadership calls for the masses to fight for power, that the classic revolutionaries used the schema of insurrectional conditions.

The revolutionary situation must be determined by an analysis of objective conditions.

Having clarified this, let us proceed to the analysis of the conditions in our own country.

The process of imperialist colonization of our country has culminated in the establishment of a bonapartist dictatorship supported by the great monopolies and the big bourgeoisie. Our country is more dependent than ever on the world economy of capitalism and on imperialism. As we have already seen, a balance-of-payments deficit in favor of imperialism will have very serious repercussions in semi-colonial countries. To this we must add that the polarization at opposite extremes of the imperialist countries and their colonies grows greater year by year. For example, the export of raw materials, one of the indexes used to measure the development of productive forces in

dependent countries, has fallen to 96, with 1953 as a base of 100. During the Frondizi regime when little growth of the productive forces took place our country went through a period of industrial capitalization at the expense of basic sectors of the economy. During the Illia government this development stagnated. The bonapartist dictatorship announced that it foresaw a period of "stabilization" and "reordering of priorities," and that it would initiate a period of growth. Many people believed this, including our impressionistic compañero Moreno who predicted a year ago that within the year there would be an upswing in the national economy.

The fact is that the plans of the dictatorship have fallen through. The Economic Ministry has already openly announced their future plans. They plan to orient the national economy toward even more "interdependence" with imperialism. They do not plan to "substitute importation" by development of sectors of national industry that are "onerous" to the situation of the country as a whole, they plan to increase the production of raw materials, etc.

This antidevelopment plan of the dictatorship is based on the real situation of the capitalist economy in 1968: There is a shortage of foreign capital for the basic needs of the economy due to the world capitalist crisis; markets for Argentine exports are narrowing with the attending loss of foreign exchange; an industrial recession is beginning ("Per capita" GNP was down 2% in 1967, there are nearly 1 million unemployed, etc.).

To this ought to be added the perspective of a conjunctural crisis for the Argentine economy that will sharpen all social contradictions beginning with inter-bourgeois contradictions and followed by a sharpening conflict between the trade-union bureaucracy and the bourgeoisie and finally the antagonisms between the working class and the bureaucracy and the working class and the bourgeoisie will sharpen. This is the actual, concrete perspective without empty general phrases, without round-about reasoning or double-talk. The crisis is already in process although we are not prepared to predict exactly when it will mature.

There is nothing in sight today that argues for a recuperation or re-invigoration of the Argentine economy. Should this occur later it would, of course, cut across the development of "truly" revolutionary politics among broad layers of the masses. This would happen even if the upswing spurred a "reactivation of the workers' movement and its vanguard catalyzed by the demand for work." That is the way Moreno puts it in his famous economic thesis that once again confuses the reactivation of economic struggles with the *political-revolutionary* struggle of the working class, with the possibility of a "truly" revolutionary development *which can only exist in a period of economic stagnation, not during a period of expansion.*

The first condition laid down by the classical revolutionaries within the framework of the national situation to conclude that a revolutionary situation exists is the "inability of the existing [ruling classes] to get the country out of its blind alley." (Trotsky: "History of the Russian Revolution.") That is much more precise and less demanding than the formulation smuggled into our party by Moreno, that is, "That the bourgeoisie is unable to find a solution to a critical situation." Now that it is evident, for example, that today in Argentina the regime reveals itself "incapable of solving the fundamental prob-

lems of the country," no one can say that "the bourgeoisie can not find a solution to a critical situation." (Of course that depends on what Moreno considers a "critical situation.") This condition has existed in the country for several years, especially in the North with a chronic acuteness comparable to that of the most backward of countries.

Within this context, we see that the intermediate layers have no perspective for improving their conditions. From this flows their discontent and disillusionment with the politics of the ruling class and their opposition to the dictatorship. Even though the dictatorship still appears viable, symptoms have begun to show, such as the recent doctors' strike; the strike of the state employees in La Plata; the threats by the teachers, and the radicalization of the leadership of the student movement as shown in the recent FUA Congress. These constitute a radicalization which can not be attributed solely to the ideological influence of OLAS.

This discontent, however, will not be able to express itself in major actions against the dictatorship because the middle layers in industrially developed countries are incapable of carrying out sustained political action by themselves. They can only support either a sector of the bourgeoisie, as in 1955, or the revolutionary initiatives of the proletariat. But the middle classes will support the proletariat only as long as the proletariat projects a correct political line that can lead the masses of the nation. In times of national crisis, "the petty bourgeoisie follows that class which inspires confidence not only in words but deeds. Although capable of impulsive enthusiasm, even of revolutionary fury, the petty bourgeoisie lacks endurance, easily loses heart under reverses, and passes from elated hope to discouragement." (Trotsky: "History of the Russian Revolution.") That class which inspires confidence by its deeds, "capable of taking the lead in solving the problems presented by history," has not made its entrance as a revolutionary class with independent politics in the history of our country. It behooves us to answer the question: Is the present quiescence of the working class a prelude to its entry as an independent revolutionary class into the life of the nation? Or on the contrary, is this the beginning of its slow decline and integration into the regime, as has happened in the imperialist countries? Or finally, is it a period of retreat between periods of struggle led by bureaucratic and bourgeois sectors, with reformist objectives, neither revolutionary nor socialist?

What Is The Meaning of the "Downturn" of Our Working Class?

We have ascertained by concrete analysis of the present objective situation that objective conditions for a true revolution exist now. We have shown that the first two objective conditions for the development of the revolution as established by the classical leaders exist in our country; namely, the ruling class's inability to solve the problem of developing the productive forces and the lack of any perspective for the middle classes. They are at different stages of development in different regions and all concrete facts indicate that they will become sharper in the future.

Is there in our country a class "capable of taking the lead" of the nation, capable of taking advantage of the objective conditions favorable to a socialist revolution and

creating the necessary subjective conditions, and capable of providing leadership for the middle classes? Yes, it does exist. In our country capitalism has created a large working class with a tradition of economic struggles, it is organized into unions and has gone through the Peronist experience. This class constitutes the most important *potentially* revolutionary social force in Latin America. Thus the objective revolutionary conditions are prepared.

Does this class today have the strength and experience necessary to make the revolution? As Lenin and Trotsky point out, "The revolution can have matured but the revolutionists could lack sufficient forces to carry it out. As a result society would enter a period of social decomposition and decay sometimes lasting decades." Therefore, it is now a matter of investigating "whether the revolutionary class has sufficient strength to carry it out."

Let us now study the condition of the working class to determine at which point we should open up armed struggle. For it is in the course of this that the necessary subjective forces for the future and distant victory will develop.

In our party an analysis of the state of the working class has often been used to explain away all the illnesses of the country, all the setbacks that befall us and the nation and party activity. The "downturn" is the sickness that leaves us without perspective, that leaves us waiting for a new upsurge, "The only cure for a downswing is an upswing."

In this approach, as simple and superficial as it is opportunist, the party and the objective situation are nothing—the mood of the working class is everything.

Lenin—who, as it happens, nobody in our party accuses of being a "putschist"—always repudiated that method of analysis. Pointing out that the party line cannot be decided by the mood of the class but rather by the objective possibilities of a "real" revolution. We have quoted some examples.

We are going to analyze the present mood of the class in a Leninist manner, not to explain all the ills of the party or to determine the possibilities for the revolution. We, like Lenin, believe that the possibility for the development of the revolution is to be discovered through an analysis of the objective conditions. We have already made that analysis and it has permitted us to confirm the existence of revolutionary conditions in the whole country, particularly in the North.

We shall now try to understand the meaning of the present "downturn" of the working class. We must do so in order to have one more factor to bear in mind when considering the best form of *struggle* which will mobilize the working class against the dictatorship and imperialism.

Our industrial working class, from the emergence of Peronism until now, has supported the politics and ideals of the Peronist leadership and trade-union bureaucracy. During that period there were ups and downs, periods of struggle and periods of decline but the common denominator was the fact that the bourgeois leadership and trade-union bureaucracy had the support of the working class. Bourgeois and bureaucratic ideals and objectives, both during periods of ascendancy and of quiescence in the economic struggles, were taken by the working class for their own. Today the situation has changed and the working class is undergoing a profound ideological revolution. The petty-bourgeois conceptions that

the Peronists introduced and the trust in the union bureaucracy's leadership has been significantly corroded by the last twelve years of harsh defeats and by the example of Castroism, an existing continental revolutionary leadership.

The future and immediate orientation of the working class and the people will be more and more determined by: 1) The objective conditions of the decomposition of semicolonial capitalism and the subjective existence of a Latin American revolutionary process and continental revolutionary leadership (to which we should add the existence in Argentina for the first time in 25 years of a national revolutionary party, although small and with little mass influence). 2) The treasonous politics of the old leadership (Peronism and the trade-union bureaucracy).

Of these two factors, the first is decisive. On the one hand, the laws of history are stronger than the apparatus of the trade-union bureaucracy which can not hold back the natural revolutionary impulses of the working class and the people in a period of social crisis. On the other hand, the development of the Latin American revolution and of our party will provide the masses with the leadership they need to reverse the present downturn.

Our fundamental task in this whole period from the present downturn to the next upturn of the class struggle is to overcome the present contradiction between: 1) the maturity of the objective conditions for the Argentine revolution and the advanced stage of the class struggle on a continental scale on one side; and 2) the lack of revolutionary preparedness by the working class and the people (the confusion and exhaustion of the old proletariat, the revolutionary inexperience of the young, and general lack of socialist consciousness) and the decline of the revolutionary struggle in our country in relation to the rest of the continent on the other side.

The objective conditions do not permit the integration of the working class into the regime during this downturn as has occurred in the imperialist countries (labor-ism, the AFL-CIO). For the first time in 25 years, conditions *begin to develop* so that a new rise of the working class will open up a "truly" revolutionary upsurge. While preparing for and participating in this upsurge our party will become strong and gain influence over wide sectors of the masses. Our party will strengthen the revolutionary army, without which, as all revolutionists since the time of Lenin know, victory is impossible. We must begin to build this army immediately by the preparation and initiation of armed struggle.

Our party is the only means through which the social forces can harden our class in the course of its daily suffering and inevitably bring about a revitalization of its struggles and a revolutionary upsurge.

It is the only revolutionary force in the country. During the next years the fate of the revolution will depend upon this party's audacity and decisiveness. Its capacity to point out the political solution of the present situation to the broadest layers of the class through a vigorous propaganda and agitation campaign will be of critical importance. Its capacity to organize, initiate and carry forward the armed struggle—closely linked with the revolutionary classes—against the government and imperialism will be crucial.

The working class is preparing its forces for a new upsurge with a *different content* than all of those before, but it is disoriented and waits for a revolutionary pole

of attraction to indicate the path it should follow. Even under the most rotten reformist leadership the working class has known how to indicate great heroism and will know how to meet its obligations. We, the conscious revolutionists, must also carry out our obligation.

(For security reasons we have omitted the analysis of the relationship between the revolutionary vanguard and the revolutionary region, as well as the answer to the question of how, when and where to launch the armed struggle.)

The Military Relationship Between the Country and the City During the First Stage of the Revolutionary War

Within our strategy of prolonged civil war, the creation of a military force is our main tactical objective.

Within our strategy for power the opening of revolutionary struggle against the bonapartist dictatorship and imperialism by the industrial proletariat and its allies is another strategic objective that has to be tactically subordinated to our strategy of prolonged civil war.

The experience of all revolutions teaches us that the proletariat does not succeed in taking power at the first attempt. The more likely variation is that it will be defeated in the first attempt and must wait until it gains sufficient experience in struggle and organizes a revolutionary army capable of defeating the regime's army. The revolutionary party must therefore work ceaselessly to prepare this upsurge while understanding nevertheless that it is very unlikely that in its first "truly" revolutionary attempt the working class will take power. At the very beginning of the upsurge the party must prepare itself for a possible retreat. That is why we say that mass upsurges are tactical in relation to the strategy of prolonged civil war.

What is tactical in relation to our strategic objective of creating a revolutionary armed force? From that viewpoint, an uprising of the proletariat as a whole should be considered tactical during the first period. It is tactical in relation to the strategic objective of building up a revolutionary army, a goal that can only be achieved strategically in the countryside.

"In our country the struggle of the urban proletariat is fundamental." The comrades who say this are correct, but it is a half-truth. The urban proletarian struggle is fundamental because that class is the motive force of the revolution. But in the present stage of the struggle against imperialism there is no chance of winning if it is not backed up by a revolutionary army strategically constructed in the countryside. This is so for several reasons. Engels and Lenin had already shown the impossibility of successfully waging conventional warfare by large contingents of proletarians in the cities. Lenin resolved the problem by advising the proletariat to organize itself in highly mobile small groups of from three to five that could open up guerrilla war and need not defend any fixed position.

In our times the situation has changed a great deal. It is true that the historical perspective guarantees that a crisis for imperialism is inevitable. It is true that the oppressed masses in the imperialist countries will rise up and it is no less certain that these masses will overthrow imperialism with their own hands. However, it will be a long time before this happens. Before the imperialist

crisis can occur, the colonial and semi-colonial countries will have to go much further on the road to revolution.

Until this happens, imperialism will continue to be a very strong military force, with great coordination and social cohesion and great power for destruction. It will always intervene to crush the revolution when the puppet governments and armies begin to fail. Therefore it will be impossible to fight imperialism by methods of conventional warfare in the cities. The revolution in the Dominican Republic is an example of what we are talking about.

In all dependent countries the tendency is to do away with bourgeois democratic type governments and replace them with military dictatorships. These, right from the start, eliminate the possibility that the workers movement will take the form of mass mobilizations and make it even more impossible to defend occupied positions whether in factories or sections of a city.

The most that can be accomplished in the cities is the formation of small combat units that will carry out urban guerrilla actions. Some of these actions will be coordinated with mass mobilizations, some not.

Only in geographically favorable zones and *with the support of the population* is it possible to form large mobile units that can carry out mobile warfare. Without these large mobile units it is impossible to talk of a revolutionary army. If we call the dispersed detachments of combat that operate in the cities the revolutionary army we will only introduce confusion. These units can never by themselves, even with the aid of a massive proletarian mobilization, defeat the modern imperialist armies.

It is necessary to take all this into account to combat adventurist tendencies which issue premature calls for insurrection.

For all these reasons, and for a period of several years, our strategy will be the creation of an army in the countryside in order to build the revolutionary army plus the formation of hundreds of armed detachments of workers and common people that will fight in the cities. These city groups will 1) support the mass mobilizations and 2) carry out independent military actions. This is our basic tactic which will be subordinate to our strategy.

The Strategically Defensive and Tactically Offensive Character of Our Revolutionary War for a Long First Stage, Its Specific Forms in the Countryside and the Cities

The revolutionary armed struggle will have a strategically defensive character throughout the whole country and the entire southern continental region.

The offensive or defensive strategic character of the war has to be determined by a consideration of the totality of the military and political relationship of forces in the continent, the region, the country and the particular area of the country.

Having initiated revolutionary armed struggle with a very small force in the continent, the region, the country, and smaller zones, the army and party are forced to utilize a defensive strategy for the long first period.

This is necessary to avoid serious reverses for themselves and for the masses.

This means the party understands that the revolutionary forces are incomparably weaker than the forces of counterrevolution. The oligarchies and imperialism in the present stage still have overwhelming superior force com-

pared to that of the revolution. They will defend their privilege as exploiters in spite of the historical certainty that they will ultimately be defeated by the revolutionary classes on the military and political terrain. They will take the offensive on all fronts to repress the slightest growth of the armed struggle.

This totality of the relationship of forces must be taken into account at all times. If we allow ourselves to be misled by a short-term or geographically isolated favorable situation we might overestimate our own forces and underestimate the strength of our enemy and suffer serious defeats.

This implies that we must fight with full knowledge of our weakness, realizing that time will overcome it providing we fight well and maintain a correct political line.

The error of opportunists is that they let themselves be impressed by partial aspects and from there draw general conclusions. They leave out of consideration the whole situation and they confuse the present stage of the revolution with the long-range historical perspective. This method has been judged by Marxism as being metaphysical, meaning that it considers each separate aspect of a situation separately, not taking into account its relation to the whole and to the reality. This is the method that many times guides Moreno's approach and that can lead the party to fatal errors.

The defensive strategic nature of the first long stage of the revolution must be well understood to combat tendencies like Moreno's. Using a metaphysical method they are impressed by just one aspect of a situation—as has occurred with the Bolivian guerrillas where Moreno claims the stage has changed from defensive to offensive. They then adopt adventurist positions and would—if by some miracle they gained influence among the masses—cause catastrophic defeats, or at best seriously disorient the party with a false line.

However, it should be remembered that for political and military reasons tactical armed struggle operations must be planned and carried out as offensive actions maintaining the initiative and concentrating the largest force possible against the enemy.

We must keep in mind that such actions are both possible and necessary. We must combat the adventurists who want us to take on unnecessary battles under inferior conditions and we must combat the tail-enders who believe it impossible to successfully carry out armed actions because of the retreat of the working class.

The first important conclusion to draw from our defensive strategy for the first stage is the necessity of a strong illegal apparatus for the whole party before carrying out military actions. If we do not do this and allow ourselves to be misled by the irresponsible characterizations of Moreno who believes that armed struggle in the North and in Bolivia will not change the situation in the rest of the country; who does not take into account the need to place ourselves on the defensive in the country as a whole, we will be liquidated in four days.

Leadership guidance is more important for the development of the revolutionary army in the countryside than any fluctuations in social and economic conditions or the mood of the working class. However, if a qualitative change takes place in the bourgeois regime allowing it to solve the chronic crisis and begin a rapid economic expansion, the course of the revolutionary war would be very much affected. It is necessary to bear in mind that the

Argentine economy can not improve the miserable state of the peasantry nor resolve the sharp crisis in the economy of the North. Based on this fundamental situation, the further development of the revolutionary army will depend mainly on its leadership. If we have a decisive leadership, audacious and intelligent, prepared to make any sacrifice; if we have a national and continental party with a national and continental strategy, the growth of our military force will be constantly upwards, independent of the ups and downs, advances and retreats, that will necessarily take place.

And the military force will be closely tied to the struggle in the rest of the country as well as to that of the entire south of the continent.

The development of the armed revolutionary struggle in the great industrial centers, on the other hand, will have its own pattern and dynamic. During the strategically defensive first stage, there will be periods when the working class will mobilize, launching a tactical offensive against the regime. Great battles will take place but they will be won in the beginning by the enemy. From the start of these struggles it will be necessary to prepare for the retreat. This will be followed by a long period of

downturn during which the working class as a whole will not participate in guerrilla struggles in the countryside or in the cities. Our party and its armed detachments will have to begin a thousand tactical encounters. Some of these will be part of the strategy for building the revolutionary army, some tied to the immediate needs of the class struggle with the aim of provoking a reawakening of the working class struggle. Other actions will be directed toward financing the party and the army.

Finally, we should not forget that every revolutionary struggle inevitably goes through three stages. At first the revolution has a limited development under adverse conditions and maintains a defensive strategy. In the second stage, *thanks to the revolutionary struggles*, there is an equilibrium of forces and the revolution prepares to take the offensive; the enemy is placed on the defensive. This inevitable dynamic will almost certainly provoke imperialist intervention, transforming the revolutionary civil war into a national anti-imperialist war. But in that stage the development of the continental colonial revolution and of the socialist revolution will bring about the final defeat of imperialism, and the triumph of our revolution will be inevitable!

CHAPTER FIVE

THE TASKS AND ORGANIZATION OF THE PARTY

What are the main *external* tasks of the party?

We start with our characterization of the stage the working class is going through (transition from economism to truly revolutionary forms of struggle). To accomplish the tasks before us the party must leap from propaganda and trade-union work to a politico-military revolutionary party.

Lenin provides us with a general description of the tasks to be accomplished during a period of transition like the one we find ourselves in. Comrades will forgive us if to this already lengthy work we now add extensive quotes from Lenin. We do this because of our conviction that the opportunists in our party, under the leadership of Moreno, have distorted revolutionary theory in the most outrageous manner.

In view of the difficult period ahead, we feel that all the party's theoretical work must start from and be based upon a serious study of the great revolutionary Marxist positions on the general questions of revolutionary strategy and tactics. Starting from such a study, we will be able to see what is "classic" about the conditions of our country and what is "new." This is nothing more than the application of the laws and principles of revolutionary Marxism to new conditions in the present epoch of world, continental and national revolution. We will then let the opportunists polemicize, if they wish to, or if they are able to, against the principles of revolutionary Marxism.

The works of Lenin that we will quote belong to a period when the relationship between the party and the masses in Russia was similar to the situation in Argentina today. The revolutionary party was very small, had just been organized and had influence over only small sectors of the vanguard of the working class. During the period 1899-1900 the class as a whole had just begun to mobilize itself in strikes over economic issues. Lenin faced in Russia the same problem we face here today: to apply the general program of revolutionary Marxism to these particular conditions. He was also forced from the beginning to fight against economist tendencies that attempted to center the basic activity of the party around trade-union struggles of the working class. The substantial difference here lies in the stage of development of the world revolution: *today* we find ourselves forced to incorporate armed struggle into party building at the start.

In our party we have reached the moment when, unfortunately, we have to ask ourselves, as Lenin did in 1899, about the meaning of certain concepts that seem to be generally accepted but that apparently everybody interprets in the way most convenient to themselves.

We completely agree with the following paragraph and we take it as if it had been written in 1968 just for the special situation through which our party is passing:

"We are all agreed that our task is that of the organization of proletarian struggle. But what is the class struggle? When the workers of a single factory or of a single branch of industry engage in struggle against their employer or employers, is this class struggle? No, this is only a weak embryo of it. The struggle of the workers

becomes a class struggle only when all the foremost representatives of the entire working class of the whole country are conscious of themselves as a single working class and launch a struggle that is directed, not against individual employers, but against the *entire class* of capitalists and against the government that supports that class. Only when the individual worker realizes that he is a member of the entire working class, only when he recognizes the fact that his petty day-to-day struggle against individual employers and individual government officials is a struggle against the entire bourgeoisie and the entire government, does his struggle become a class struggle. 'Every class struggle is a political struggle'—these famous words of Marx are not to be considered to mean that any struggle of workers against employers *must always be* a political struggle. They must be understood to mean that the struggle of the workers against the capitalists inevitably *becomes* a political struggle *insofar as* it becomes a *class* struggle. It is the task of the Social-Democrats, by organizing the workers, conducting propaganda and agitation among them, to *turn* their spontaneous struggle against their oppressors into the struggle of the whole class, into the struggle of a definite political *party* for definite political and socialist ideas." (Emphasis by Lenin.)

Those who accept the opportunist ideas of Moreno call the most minimal economic conflicts the class struggle, and assert with an arrogant pedantry that our party has been built "in the class struggle." They should carefully study the above quote from Lenin to understand what we mean when we say that our party is a propaganda circle constructed by participation in trade-union struggles. We define the term "class struggle" in the Leninist fashion, and we oppose those who, in the name of the *trade-union struggle*, destroy the essence of revolutionary activity which is the political struggle. By doing this they castrate themselves and are unable to carry out the task of revolutionaries—to *transform* the trade-union struggle into a political-revolutionary class struggle.

Our opportunists will call us sectarian and ultraleftists. They will claim that we want to isolate ourselves from the masses in the name of the "political struggle." They will say we don't understand that in this stage the economic struggle is fundamental and that after the party has penetrated the class sufficiently and has changed the situation of the class then the political struggle will assume greater importance, because it will be conducted by and through the class.

With this kind of argument all they do is repeat what had already been said by the economists in their fight against Lenin. Let us see how Lenin responded to those attacks:

"Some Russian Social-Democrats regard the economic struggle as incomparably the more important and almost go so far as to relegate the political struggle to the more or less distant future. This standpoint is utterly false. All Social-Democrats are agreed that it is necessary to carry on agitation among the workers on this basis, i.e., to help the workers in their day-to-day struggle

against the employers, to draw their attention to every form and every case of oppression and in this way to make clear to them the necessity for combination. But to forget the political for the economic would mean to depart from the basic principle of international Social-Democracy, it would mean to forget what the entire history of the labor movement teaches us." (Our emphasis.)

Here is the Leninist answer to those who subordinate political propaganda and agitation to the trade union struggle!

Then Lenin says:

"Social-Democracy is not confined to simple service to the working-class movement; it represents 'the combination of socialism and the working-class movement' (to use Karl Kautsky's definition which repeats the basic ideas of the 'Communist Manifesto'); the task of Social-Democracy is to bring definite socialist ideals to the spontaneous working-class movement, to connect this movement with socialist convictions that should attain the level of contemporary science, to connect it with the regular political struggle for democracy as a means of achieving socialism—in a word, to fuse this spontaneous movement into one indestructible whole with the activity of the revolutionary party."

In "A Protest by Russian Social-Democrats," one of his first propagandistic political works, Lenin tells us:

"Marxism linked up the economic and the political struggle of the working class into a single inseparable whole; and the effort of the authors of the 'Credo' to separate these forms of struggle is one of their most clumsy and deplorable departures from Marxism."

And later: "The conviction that the class struggle must necessarily combine the political and the economic struggle into one integral whole has entered into the flesh and blood of international Social-Democracy. The experience of history has, furthermore, incontrovertibly proved that absence of freedom, or restriction of the political rights of the proletariat, always make it necessary to put the political struggle in the forefront."

What vivifying air! What an evil odor of putrifying economism seeped into the party during the last period with the "opinions" of Moreno and his tendency. These are the champions of "linking up" by way of a syndicalist cover with a union program. They get angry when a *companionero* asks an unaffiliated worker for his opinion on armed struggle. They are the ones who complain because the union bureaucracy didn't raise the question of power. They artificially distinguish agitation from propaganda, reserving the latter only for "upsurges" of the "class struggle" (trade-union, of course) and using the former for a few groups of workers previously "linked up with" in union activity. Pressured by our tendency they have all, like good opportunists, been forced to recognize the importance of political propaganda. But they invent all kinds of excuses for their change of position. They now find it is correct to put forth political propaganda "because the period has changed," and that due to the great union struggles, it would not have been correct to do this before. But sirs! The mission of a revolutionary party is to always carry out political propaganda and *agitation*, independent of the mood of the working class. What varies in different stages is the content of the slogans, not the activity.

The economist deviations and conceptions of the Russian Social Democratic Party had a similar origin as

those of our party. In "A Retrograde Trend in Russian Social Democracy," written in 1899, Lenin describes its historical development and we see striking similarity with the economist conception of the Moreno tendency. Lenin tells us that is the decade of the '80s, "In their struggle against the narrow conceptions of the Narodnaya Volya adherents, who reduced politics to conspiracy-making, the Social-Democrats could be led to, and did at times, declare themselves against politics in general (in view of the then prevailing narrow conception of politics)."

And later, "Naturally, the Social-Democrats conceived a hatred for such people and their phrases, and they turned to the more mundane but more serious work of propaganda among the factory proletariat. At first it was inevitable that this work should have a narrow character and should be embodied in the narrow declarations of some Social-Democrats."

Lenin maintains that they did not become too alarmed with these narrow manifestations (economist conceptions) because they relied on the fact that these concepts would disappear as social-democratic propaganda and *agitation* was extended.

As we see thus far, the historical interpretation contains an astonishing similarity with what has happened up to now in our party. The fight against the putschist conceptions of the petty bourgeois left has led us to work in a workers' movement dominated by a reformist-economist tradition. This explains the *companioneros'* "narrowness," especially the petty bourgeois *companioneros*, who follow Moreno's economist ideas. This does not, of course, explain the origin of Moreno's opportunist and economist nature which has other social and historical sources.

As we have said, Lenin hoped that the diffusion of social democratic propaganda and agitation within the proletariat would eliminate the economist conceptions.

"But things turned out differently: the spread of their agitation brought the Social Democrats into contact with the lower, less developed strata of the proletariat; to attract these strata it was necessary for the agitator to be able to adapt himself to the lowest level of understanding, he was taught to put the 'demands and interests of the given moment' in the foreground and to push back the broad ideals of socialism and the political struggle."

The lack of political firmness which could resist the most backward sectors of the proletariat, a character which is still minuscule in the workers' vanguard in our country, explains why economist ideas sown with opportunism have born fruit in many *companioneros* of petty bourgeois origin. Because of their class origin they are incapable of overcoming the reformist pressures of the proletariat. This also explains the deplorable level of our propaganda, especially our newspaper, that is definitely not agitational, but also is not useful for educating the workers' vanguard in the theory of scientific socialism.

We have been struggling to change this state of things in the party. We put forth the need to incorporate armed struggle, propaganda and agitation into the party's daily activity. The economists have only known how to reply with childish accusations of "putschism," "propagandism," or "adventurism by elements isolated from the working class." Little by little our political conceptions have reached the party's worker vanguard and more experienced ranks. These have already overcome the disease that afflicts petty bourgeois elements when they begin to fight in the working class and makes them give in to reformist pres-

tures from the most backward elements of the proletariat. This change in the consciousness of the best elements of the party has forced the theoretician of the economist wing to manufacture a theory that justifies the reason for the economist character of our activity during these last years: the reason political activity was always contemptuously branded as "propagandism." The theory is as original as it is infantile: now it is correct to carry out political propaganda because there are no big union struggles (!?)

To overcome the propaganda-circle character of our party in the union struggle we must adopt, along with preparation for armed struggle, the principal tasks of propaganda and agitation.

To properly prepare ourselves for this task which is a major area of our work we must study the relationship between the most advanced layers and the more backward layers of the proletariat, we must establish the importance of our work in each area and determine the propaganda methods for reaching them, and the basic slogans to raise.

As one result of economist conceptions our party coined the term "union vanguard." This is one of the many confusing terms that are now in vogue and it must be clarified for it obscures our basic area of work. Marxism has always used the term workers' vanguard to mean that politically conscious sector of the workers' movement that comes to the Leninist conception of the class struggle. By substituting the word "union," our economists built us a trap into which we fell for many years. They have distorted the Marxist meaning of the expression "vanguard," using it to direct the party's main work almost exclusively toward union activities. Thus our cadres and activists have for years believed that the vanguard in a factory or in a company was composed of union activists who fought for minimal demands or against the bureaucracy (although sometimes they did not require this) but who had extremely limited political consciousness. A worker could be a military supporter, a *Vandorista*, a raving anticommunist, he could support the Yankees in Vietnam, but if he was capable of mobilizing a section of workers to demand toilet paper for the bathroom, he was considered part of the workers' vanguard.

We believe the party must stop using this economist characterization of the "vanguard" so it can better grasp the Marxist conception.

Vanguard workers are those who understand that the historic mission of their class is to politically overthrow the bourgeois government; even if these *companeros* have a narrow conception of politics that leads them to scorn economic struggles. If this is the case the party will have to educate them on the need for revolutionaries to pay attention to *all* forms of struggle.

We will still have to join the economic struggles of union activists who have not yet reached a political understanding of the class struggle. But we must be very conscious that they are not vanguard workers and that our duty is to transform them into vanguard workers without making the least concession to their reformist ideas.

Given this explanation, which we consider indispensable, let us see how we should work with the different layers of the proletariat. Again, we take the general lead of Lenin.

"The history of the working-class movement in all countries shows that the better-situated strata of the working

class respond to the ideas of socialism more rapidly and more easily. From among these come, in the main, the advanced workers that every working-class movement brings to the fore, those who can win the confidence of the labouring masses, who devote themselves entirely to the education and organization of the proletariat, *who accept socialism consciously, and who even elaborate independent socialist theories.*

"The newspaper that wants to become the organ of all Russian Social-Democrats must, therefore, be at the level of the advanced workers; not only must it not lower its level artificially, but, on the contrary, it must raise it constantly, it must follow up all the tactical, political, and theoretical problems of world Social-Democracy. Only then will the demands of the working-class intelligentsia be met, and it itself will take the cause of the Russian workers and, *consequently*, the cause of the Russian revolution, into its own hands." (Emphasis in original.)

As we see Lenin removes all the confusion of our economists about what is the workers' vanguard. In the second place, he shows us what kind of newspaper should be directed at this vanguard. Our newspaper—in spite of all the efforts that we have made to improve it since the hard criticisms of the CC on October 8—always was, and still is, very far from being the organ that Lenin demanded to educate the workers' vanguard. Serious socialist propaganda is never made in it, and it doesn't "reflect all tactical, political and theoretical questions" of world revolutionary Marxism. Most of its articles refer to union or international problems. The lack of theoretical and political elaboration in its pages is notorious. It has the character of a superficial weekly, that is, half way between propaganda and agitation, between unionism and revolutionary politics or, more precisely, it is economist on national problems and "revolutionary" on international ones.

Further on Lenin distinguishes a layer of middle workers "who can not become converted into leaders totally independent of the social democratic workers' movement." For the education of this sector he maintains that the daily paper "must indispensably tie together socialism and the political struggle with every smaller local problem." This layer would be that of our "activists."

"Lastly," Lenin continues, "behind the stratum of average workers comes the mass that constitutes the lower strata of the proletariat. It is quite possible that a socialist newspaper will be completely or well-nigh incomprehensible to them . . . but it would be absurd to conclude from this that the newspaper of the Social-Democrats should adapt itself to the lowest possible level of the workers. The only thing that follows from this is that different forms of agitation and propaganda must be brought to bear on these strata—pamphlets written in more popular language, oral agitation, and chiefly leaflets on local events."

And later, "On the contrary, only an organized party can carry out widespread agitation, provide the necessary guidance (and material) for agitators on all economic and political questions. . . . From this it can be seen that whoever forgets political agitation and propaganda on account of the economic struggle, whoever forgets the necessity of organizing the working-class movement into the struggle of a political party, will, aside from everything else, deprive himself of even an opportunity of successfully and steadily attracting the lower

strata of the proletariat to the working-class cause."

As we see, Lenin considers agitation among the most backward layers of the proletariat a regular and very necessary activity of the revolutionary party. He defined agitation as "the art of explaining a small number of political ideas to a large number of people." This is the opposite of propaganda, which is "the art of explaining a large number of political ideas to a small number of persons." And agitation depends not on the mood of the masses, but on the ability of the propaganda groups to become agitators.

Moreno, in his conservative and economist mania for subjecting party activity to the fluctuations in the economic struggles of the working class, has also invented a curious distinction between propaganda and agitation. For him, propaganda is the party's correct activity during periods of "downturn" and agitation is for periods of "upturn" when the slogans thrown out by the agitator can be accepted for action. This is how he confuses the character of the slogans with the character of the activity. If the mood of the masses indicates that they will not accept slogans "for action" this does not indicate that agitation should not be carried out as an activity of the party, it only indicates that it should be carried out with propagandistic and agitational slogans.

In their rejection of agitation as a permanent activity of the party, and regarding the relationship they have established between the activity of political agitation and the mood of the class; the minorities once again agree with economists of all times and, like them, cause great harm to the workers' movement.

As Lenin said: "The lower strata of the proletariat, the very undeveloped workers, might, under the influence of the preaching of '*Rabochaya Mysl*', fall victim to the bourgeois and profoundly reactionary idea that the worker cannot and should not interest himself in anything but increased wages and the restoration of holidays ('the interests of the moment'); that the working people can and should conduct the workers' struggle by their own efforts alone, by their own 'private initiative,' and not attempt to combine it with socialism; that they should not strive to turn the working-class movement into the essential advanced cause of all mankind."

"To reduce the entire movement to the interest of the moment means to speculate on the backward condition of the workers, means to cater to their worst inclinations. It means artificially to break the link between the working-class movement and socialism, between the fully defined political strivings of the advanced workers and the spontaneous manifestations of protest on the part of the masses."

Let us assume that to all this Moreno could respond that his tendency is not economist because, different from the Russian economists, he insists on the need for a revolutionary party.

To this objection we answer: His economism, of course, is not *identical* to that of the Russian economists. That economism, in its most vulgar and primitive manifestation, has already been removed from Marxism by Lenin.

Moreno's is a newly coined economism that does not claim the revolutionary party is not needed. But it does suggest we might use the "worker's party of Vandor" or the CGT "political party." It is an economism that takes its phraseology from revolutionary Marxism and dumps it out before a group of "new recruits," and in its daily

activity manages to "adapt itself" to the level of the most backward layers of the proletariat. It puts forth almost solely economist slogans and propaganda. Its original invention, that agitation is for an "upturn" and propaganda for a "downturn," is a way of performing the most treacherous economism through omission, since it leaves the field open to the trade union bureaucracy. This can inculcate the most rotten economist ideas into broad layers of the proletariat without the revolutionary party doing anything to spread the ideas of socialism and revolution there.

We believe that, along with the preparation for and beginning of armed struggle a second big leap must be taken by our party. That is, to transform itself from a propaganda circle that does union work, into a revolutionary party that carries out a high level of political propaganda in the *political* vanguard of the workers' movement and permanent political agitation within the broadest layers of the proletariat.

Going from a propaganda circle to agitation is a political step that will demand profound reaccommodations in our party and should give rise to a new type of specialist, the agitator. Not all militants can successfully carry out this task. We will have to take special care to avoid the mistake we made at other times under the influence of economist conceptions, the unilateral development of a one-sided task at the expense of others. This is a typical feature of economism that was also exhaustively analyzed by Lenin. (See "What is to be Done?") It has as its origin the ideological and class roots of the economists—at least those who swarm in the field of Marxism—the impressionism of petty bourgeois intellectuals who—according to Lenin—"do not know how to, or are incapable of linking revolutionary work with the workers' movement to form a unity."

Moreover, instead of having a political line that embraces *all* aspects of revolutionary work, petty bourgeois intellectuals daily change their "line" as a result of the latest headlines. Now the "line" is union work, tomorrow propaganda on "continental civil war," yesterday the means of taking power through trade union organizations, today the "*foco*" (1961-62), etc. They also change their ideas on the fundamental area of work—yesterday the "vanguard" was the metallurgical workers, now it is the bank workers, or the Bolivians (!?), tomorrow it could be the small shopkeeper; "any country and any region is fit for the permanent revolution"; "the urban middle class, at a given moment can be the vanguard." (Moreno, "The Latin American Revolution.") And all is confusion, all this lack of theoretical strength, all these opportunist vacillations in the name of "dialectics." Poor, mistreated dialectics!

In going from a propaganda circle to political agitation, we must not forget that the task of a revolutionary party is to develop all the aspects of revolutionary politics. In the first place, we must get to fundamentals, that is to say, the preparation and the initiation of armed struggle and *political* propaganda and agitation among the broadest sections of the proletariat.

In order to complete these multiple tasks and avoid the one-sided development of a partial aspect at the expense of others the party will have to cease the present inefficient approach to its work. This should be ended, not for metaphysical reasons, but because the unscientific approach is the property of economism. (Lenin: "What

Is to Be Done?") As a product of the ruling economist conceptions, our party wound up with 499 specialists on union questions and one specialist on "theoretical" questions. We must knock this relationship to smithereens. The entire party, from the national leadership to the smallest rank and file group, must tend toward specialization. Of course the degree of specialization will have to increase as we go up in the party "hierarchy."

The development of able agitators is a difficult task that, being new, will demand a lot of tact and patience. We should not force all the *companeros* to attempt this type of activity, but we should choose those who have an inclination toward it. Preferably we should select worker *companeros* with class action experience and equip them theoretically and practically for this work.

The national leadership will have to decide, week by week, the important themes for agitation, national and international. It will have to draw up minutes which give the general line for the agitation and indicate the social sector and region where it is most important to carry it out.

The regional and zonal leaderships, along with the team leaderships and defense specialists, will have to choose the appropriate places and times to carry out political agitation, oral and written. They will also have to assign the *companeros* who will be specializing in this task. Each agitational action will have to be carried out as a military action also because of the illegal conditions and all possible protection must be given to our activists.

The selection of the appropriate place and moment for political agitation is a problem that collective experience itself determines. We can perform small agitational acts—always in the name of the party, this is clear—at the personnel entrance of chosen factories (very rarely at the exit). We can work on public transportation vehicles where large numbers of workers travel and during hours when the danger of repression would be least. Wall painters will have to conserve their forces for the places selected by the leadership, etc.

As a political party we have not been part of the great political events of the past period. We have not made the broad layers of the proletariat aware of our existence as a revolutionary organization whose politics counters the thousand arbitrary acts committed daily by the dictatorship and employers against the workers' movement and the people, and the crimes that imperialism commits every day against people struggling for their freedom. We have until now left the field open so that those broad layers get *exclusively* the daily hammer of bourgeois, imperialist and bureaucratic propaganda.

From now on, no important union conflict, no major national or international political event should take place without our party bringing its word to the broadest layers of the proletariat through wall paintings, leaflets, and agitational actions.

In this way we will reawaken party members who have been put to sleep by propaganda group routine and exclusive trade union activity. We will give our activity another dynamic, we will create a more *combative attitude* in each activist.

In summary: To transform the PRT from a propaganda circle formed through trade union work, into a REVOLUTIONARY PARTY. We must incorporate the following fundamental tasks:

1) — Consistent political propaganda work in the conscious working class vanguard and consistent political agitation work among the most backward layers of the working class and the people.

2) — Preparation for armed struggle in a limited way linked to the workers' movement throughout the entire country. Our perspective to be the building of an army in the countryside and the promotion of urban guerrilla warfare. Urban warfare being just as much in support of rural guerrilla warfare as a part of the mass struggle.

Our Fundamental Areas of Work

The economists have coined a new term to designate the fundamental area of work of a revolutionary party: "structural." Here is another example of the confusions they introduce into the most precise and scientific theory of social relations. The term, structure, was established by Marx and Engels to indicate the relationship between groups of people in the process of production (between salaried workers and capital, or proletarians and bourgeoisie in capitalist society, for example).

Taking this classic definition of structure into account, "structural" work is one of the many ambiguous terms invented by our economists. It can mean anything. Just as they have used the term "concrete" to define trade union and immediate work, they have frequently used the term "structural work" as a synonym for trade union work. Thus, what began as an inadequate theoretical definition of our area of work has been converted into an opportunist definition of our basic activity. This is another subtle way of feeding grist to the economist mill.

We believe our party must stop the misuse of Marxist theory and that we must use each term with the meaning given to it by the great theoreticians of revolutionary Marxism. For this reason we specify that the fundamental *area* of work for the party is among the factory proletariat, especially in the largest factories and industries (metallurgy, beef, textiles, sugar, automotive).

We add two related considerations to this main definition of how the party's work should be directed: one is objective, we must work continually and consistently among the most exploited sectors; the other is subjective, we must throw some of our forces into the areas where vanguard elements and union activists are appearing, even though they may not be the most concentrated or the most super-exploited areas.

In the North our fundamental area of work is the rural proletariat and the poor peasant as well as the factory proletariat.

Another very important area of work is the anti-imperialist student movement and its organizations: anti-imperialist Christian-social centers and groupings.

Secondary areas of work are the following: a) The upper layers of the workers' movement, the student movement and the united front groupings of the left. Activity in these sectors should be aimed at penetrating still more the factory proletariat rank and file or the student anti-imperialist movement, or at defining common goals with organizations on the left seeking a revolutionary united front. b) The non-working class trades (bank workers, public employees) and the privileged sectors of the working class (privileged factories, state workers, etc.). c) The left intellectuals who can integrate themselves into rev-

olutionary activity providing special collaboration from the military point of view and doing intellectually creative work in their specific field, following the scientific principles of Marxism. d) the workers' barrios, especially the "emergency villas" resulting from the semi-fascist plan of the dictatorship where military-political forms of resistance could develop and where we can win conscious workers who can later be thrown into factory work.

We consider factory committees and delegate bodies as part of our work among the rank and file of the factory proletariat.

Having established our fundamental area of work, the party should assign the bulk of its membership to that area.

Our central objective is to penetrate deeply into the working class. To penetrate deeply means to form political party cells in the factories, to make these cells the recognized political and economic leadership in their area of work. We will achieve this through our political, economic and military activity. But mainly we will achieve it with just political and military work.

The problem is to decide which factories are the most important and how we can get into them.

In the previous section we outlined the criteria that should be used by all the leaderships to decide which factories and industries we should choose to work in; regular, long-term, *systematic* work.

To these selected areas we should obviously add factories where struggles are taking place and where it is relatively easy to integrate ourselves.

"Penetration" becomes harder when there are no struggles. But there are several ways to do it, one is fundamental and the others secondary. The fundamental method is the proletarianization of our members. The others—including the famous "combing" should be subordinate.

"Combing" is a tactical way to incorporate oneself in the workers' movement. It has been raised to the level of religious ritual by the economists. This is a product of their social and political character: "combing" makes it possible to do work "on" the workers' movement without having to proletarianize oneself, which goes along well with their petty bourgeois background. "Combing" is superficial quantitative contact and does not require intense political work. It can be kept at the level of chats over economic questions. We believe that this method has value only to win over some isolated conscious workers to our party and to extend our work to other industries after having consolidated a cell and a strong current in some important factory.

During this period penetration in depth is most important. To achieve this we must concentrate our efforts in the most important factories and in those where we have workers or proletarianized *companeros*. The student members that do not become proletarianized should help the work of the other *companeros* by concentrating their efforts on these factories. They should carry out regular propaganda and agitation from the outside in order to make it possible to do political work within. They should place themselves at the service of the worker members to visit contacts, edit a factory bulletin and provide other kinds of collaboration. This "bloc" will, after a short period of regular and systematic work, give more results than superficial and quantitative "combing."

"Combing" should be put at the same level as any other

tactic for penetrating the workers' movement. It is no more important than living with the workers in a barrio, going to their meeting and entertainment places, or organizing the defense of a slum area attacked by the police.

Economic Struggles and Demands

The "downturn" of our working class after the defeat of the bureaucrats' strategy led to an almost total halt of economic struggles. Our impressionists draw from this the conclusion that it is practically impossible to carry on—in the present circumstances—a successful economic struggle. We, on the contrary, basing ourselves on the experience of the entire world proletariat, are convinced that the appearance of a revolutionary leadership that initiates armed struggle—or even without the existence of that leadership—the working class will slowly begin to battle around economic problems. The dynamic of those struggles, thanks to the present ruling regime, and the existence of a revolutionary party will result in their transformation into political struggles. Whether economic struggles are won or lost is a matter to be decided in the actual situation. In the last analysis it will depend on the tenacity and depth of the proletarian struggle. We should give fundamental importance to this form of struggle which will draw in the most backward layers of the proletariat, even during revolutionary epochs.

The general orientation our members should take in order to lead this kind of work and to initiate all trade union work is presented in the "Annex to the Thesis" of our 3rd Congress which we believe still applies.

Our party has a program made up of minimum, transitional and maximum demands; the character of these demands has been correctly defined by the party on various occasions making it superfluous for us to take them up. We should add that we distinguish between propagandistic, agitational and action demands on the basis of whether they can be taken up by the workers' vanguard, by the trade union activists, or by broad sectors of the class.

In all our programmatic demands the predominance of economist conceptions has led to raising the maximum, transitional or political slogans only before limited numbers of workers, or reserving them for holiday use (or for when we argue with Stalinists, for example). Thus our members limit themselves *almost exclusively* to propagandizing the minimum slogans as the daily practice of the party in the working class.

This situation should also be changed. All members should pay attention to the minimum problems in the factories and the many minimum demands which these conditions create. But the art of revolutionary propaganda consists in tying minimum demands to political demands, to continually make the workers see the link between particular small problems that arise daily due to capitalist exploitation and the general political problems. They must be shown the tie between the particular form of exploitation which exists in the place of work and the general form of exploitation by one class of another. We should point to the need for class struggle—in the Leninist sense—against the whole bourgeoisie and its government for the installation of a workers' and a peoples' revolutionary government and the construction of a socialist society.

Each *companero* that continues to pursue minimum goals in his daily propaganda without tying them into the general political class struggle is a consistent economist.

Our program has various demands related to the problems of the working class organizations. We are for defense and reorganization of the factory committees, we organize class-struggle opposition to the trade union bureaucracy, we organize defense commissions and armed detachments and recently, rank and file committees of the OLAS.

We consider all those slogans *correct and useful* for one aspect of our activity.

For a year now we have been fighting to have our party incorporate transitional organizational slogans, from trade unionism to politics. For example we proposed factory resistance committees and armed detachments. The economists first opposed these demands tooth and nail which could take them—oh terror!—into armed and political activity. They raised all kinds of baseless charges against our best worker members. They used ideological terrorism by calling these workers "desperate petty bourgeois elements who wish to separate themselves from the workers' movement." They accused us—as the economists accused Lenin—of wanting to abandon the trade union struggle and the working class organizations. We reply patiently—as did Lenin, to the economists—"This 'activity' among workers that you all want to carry on by raising concrete demands that promise tangible results already exists among us. In our daily trade union work we are raising these concrete demands in detail without any help from the intellectuals. But that activity is not enough for us. We are not children that can be fed only with the pap of 'economist' politics. We want to know everything the others know, we want to know in detail all aspects of political life and to take an active part in each and all of political knowledge." (Lenin: "What Is To Be Done?")

Afterwards, under pressure from a large sector of the party, they conceded and accepted "for exploratory work" those organizational demands. Later, throughout an entire year of activity, they blocked the party from centering its activity on the organization of resistance committees and armed detachments. Now, in another curious theoretical somersault, without the slightest self-criticism, they consider these the fundamental tasks of the party. As if they don't realize they will confuse the rank and file of the party so they will never be able to tell the difference between authentic revolutionary politics and reformist-syndicalist politics.

We wish to put an end once and for all to this polemical entanglement with the petty bourgeois elements who live off the cult of class spontaneity that they are incapable of leading and can only follow. Following the example of the great revolutionary Marxists we state clearly and unambiguously: **WE WANT TO ELEVATE THE WORKING CLASS TO NEW FORMS OF ORGANIZATION AND STRUGGLE.** We expect that the fusion of revolutionary ideology and practice with the spontaneous forms of working class organizations and struggle will lead to *new* forms of struggle and organization. These will be superior to those of our working class's reformist past and will push it toward the taking of political power by means of political and armed struggle.

You forget that the first task of revolutionaries is to

"implant" in the working class a *new* form of organization that the workers by themselves cannot achieve: **THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY.** For us, resistance committees and armed detachments are an intermediate step between trade union organization of the working class and the highest organizational form of the class: the revolutionary party. For that reason we also hold that the necessity to construct that party, whose nucleus is our party, should be one of the central slogans in our propaganda and agitation.

As is well known, there is no working class organization now contesting with the dictatorship for power in our country. There is not even a revolutionary party with mass influence and even less organs of dual power or an army of liberation.

That being the case, our slogan for power can only be propagandistic since no concrete organisms can be named as the instruments for taking power. Because of this our formula will be of a "algebraic" character, indicating the type of government that we wish to establish and the fundamental tasks it must undertake.

The slogan "Workers and Peoples Revolutionary Government" is the only really appropriate one. We should withdraw the "call for a constituent assembly" which is an imitation of the experience of the Russian revolution where large sectors of the bourgeoisie fought for the constituent assembly and that became their main political objective. That situation has nothing to do with ours where a constituent assembly would not even mobilize small sectors of the petty bourgeoisie. To demand a constituent assembly is: 1) an unnecessary and useless concession to the petty bourgeoisie, 2) an abstract demand which can be replaced by democratic demands with real content, and 3) an ambiguous demand utilized by our economists to give a confused and liberal character to our demand for power around the question of who should call a constituent assembly.

In place of this slogan, we should indicate in our propaganda and agitation—depending on the circumstances and places where we carry out the agitation—the revolutionary tasks which our government should carry out. Demands of a national character that should be raised all the time: "Break with Imperialism," "Build Socialism," "Nationalize the Land," "Expropriate the Monopolies and Banks," etc. Other demands of a local type or that should only be presented in favorable political conjunctures are: "Expropriate the Industries," "Carry out Urban Reform," "Expropriate Major Commerce," and "Stop the Rising Cost of Living," etc.

The "Centrifugals"

Our self-criticism of the party's activity and conceptions has earned us another original accusation invented by the economists: that of being "centrifugal forces."

Thus came about a curious situation, the petty bourgeois minority in the party considered themselves its owner and all those who wished to submit party policies to self-criticism are "centrifugals," even though they are the majority.

Recent events have shown that the centrifugal forces are those who provoked the split in order to avoid revolutionary tasks. They are the supporters of the petty bourgeois circle and apparatus of Moreno and Company.

In the "Annex" which follows this work we will make

a detailed analysis of what they, the real centrifugals have called "the party crisis." But it is already clear that the only centrifugal forces are those who maneuvered the split in order to hold back the theoretical struggle which could arm the party for its historic tasks.

The great majority of the party repudiated that attitude and called for "the maximum democracy in the discussion with the maximum discipline in the leadership bodies." The splitist clique made an effort to achieve an unprincipled bloc in the Central Committee. Then, corralled and confronted with the obligation to discuss politically, they preferred to leave and set up a petty bourgeois sect out-

side the party. We have constantly called for party unity but have taken up this theoretical struggle because we are convinced it is the only way to purify the party. It is the only way to correct the erroneous conceptions which blocked its growth, the only way to help it through the course of revolutionary struggle.

We end this work with the same quote from Lasalle with which Lenin opened "What Is To Be Done?":

". . . Party struggles lend a party strength and vitality; the greatest proof of a party's weakness is its diffuseness and the blurring of clear demarcations; A PARTY BECOMES STRONGER BY PURGING ITSELF. . . ."